

# Refined Farmhouse

"This house is designed to be barefoot and jeans, topped with a silk shirt."

— PAULINA PERRAULT, PRINCIPAL, PAULINA PERRAULT INTERIORS

**Janet Hayes and her husband Jason Daniel searched for three years** before finding the perfect parcel of land in the wine country. A native of Marin County, Janet has always loved the Napa Valley wine country, and the couple envisioned a weekend getaway for their family of four—a place where they could gather friends and family to enjoy the valley's slower pace of life. They wanted a flat parcel on the valley floor, with enough land to spread out, but not too much.

The site they found is perfectly situated between Calistoga and St. Helena, on a tree-lined lane that feels removed but is in fact close to everything. The couple, and their twin girls, fell in love with the lane, lined with iconic valley oaks. Not long before, their friends and neighbors the Hagans had purchased a similar parcel just down the street (that home is also included in this book), so when this second parcel became available they jumped on it. Describing the first time she walked the property, Janet says, "I couldn't breathe, it was so perfect. It was meant for us."

With a decades-long tenure as an executive in the home furnishings industry, Janet is a design leader, and she had a clear vision for their new home. She wanted a contemporary take on the farmhouse vernacular, executed primarily in black and white—a casual indoor-outdoor house with a refined aesthetic, designed to be lived in and enjoyed.

Janet turned to Marin County-based designer Paulina Perrault. Friends since their children were in kindergarten, Janet and Paulina each have strong design vision. They also share a large common denominator. Having known Janet for years, Paulina is able to discern and narrow the choices for her friend, and they are nearly always in line with Janet's vision. "We are amazingly in sync," says Paulina. "We're both fans of fiercely editing until the project becomes just what it needs to be." Casually elegant and effortlessly pulled together, Paulina describes the house as "barefoot and jeans, topped with a silk shirt."

Paulina introduced her clients to architects Jared Polsky, Rich Perlstein and Laura Van Amburgh at Polsky Perlstein Architects. The project started ambitiously, and then scaled down through the design process to be just what the clients needed, but no more. The couple had collected inspiration images showing tall, two-story structures with a strong sense of verticality and steep roof pitches. As it became clear that this house would be more









modest in scale, the challenge for the architects was to translate that sense of scale and verticality to a single-story structure.

"We spent a lot of time on the proportions, working to keep the gables narrow, lengthening the vertical windows and paying close attention to the pitch of the roof, not letting it get too low," says Laura. "As the scale was trimmed back, it became better and better."

At under 3,000 square feet with three bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths, this is not a large house, but its open plan, expansive covered porches, and multitude of places to gather both inside and out make it live far larger than its size. The U-shaped plan is straightforward, with kitchen and media room to one side and bedrooms to the other, linked by the open living and dining area defined by artfully milled passageways. The primary entry lies to the right of the symmetrical front facade, but expansive doorways on both front and back facades can be thrown open to create a contiguous indoor-outdoor space that flows easily and accommodates gatherings large and small. The rear facade faces south toward the vineyards, creating the illusion of a far larger site.

"The whole valley is their backyard," says Rich.

Sheltered outdoor space is key to living in this part of the wine country, where the temperatures can soar in the summer and early fall. Outdoor dining, kitchen and entertaining spaces align under trellises and roofed areas for an atmosphere that is low key. The outdoor entertaining kitchen, complete with outdoor television for sporting events, was Jason's dream. "It's the only part of the house I let him have on his own," jokes Janet. "The rest of it was mine."

Janet was looking for a very specific take on the farmhouse aesthetic, eschewing many of its trappings to create an effect that is highly sophisticated. The vision moved in an increasingly contemporary direction as the design progressed: millwork was simplified, fixtures and fitting choices became more streamlined.

A self-professed "millwork girl," Paulina's passion lies in the details of the interior architecture. Years of experience working directly with developers and builders fueled her passion, leading to a practice in which she works closely with architects on every detail of the interior. "The architecture team was so generous," says the designer. "They let me run with it." This house was, in fact, a truly collaborative effort, with the architecture team, interior designer and clients all actively working through each decision.

Paulina's favorite memory revolves around the porch swing, which had been on the couple's wish list from the beginning. When custom options proved to be inordinately costly, Jason found another more affordable option, a swing crafted in Pennsylvania by the Amish. The swing illustrates the project in miniature: design-driven, collaborative, resourceful and, in the end, just right.

**PREVIOUS OVERLEAF:** The result of a true collaboration between the owners, architects Polsky Perlestein and interior designer Paulina Perrault, this home is casual but sophisticated. Landscape architects Lucas and Lucas created an overall vision for the property and planting; then architects, designer and clients all made contributions to the final design.

**OPPOSITE:** The dining room table is really the daily table—this is wine country, and the atmosphere is casual.

**OVERLEAF:** Executed primarily in black and white, this is a casual indoor-outdoor house with a refined aesthetic, designed to be lived in and enjoyed. Sofas, pillows and area rugs by Williams Sonoma Home. Artwork over the mantel was selected by the owner.









**BELOW:**  
Paulina tucked an AV closet, broom closet and Hestan wine refrigerator into the laundry room, adjacent to the kitchen. Farmhouse sink by Franke and pendant light by Williams Sonoma Home.

**RIGHT:**  
The design is a very specific take on the farmhouse vernacular, eschewing many of its trappings to create an effect that is highly sophisticated. Backsplash tile by Jeffrey Court, pendant lights by Visual Comfort, counter stools by Williams Sonoma Home, kitchen appliances by Hestan, in the company's first residential installation.







**ABOVE:**  
 Nearly everyone challenged owner Janet Hayes on the size of the pool, but it had always been part of her vision. When asked why she wanted such a large pool, her answer was, "Why wouldn't I?"

**OPPOSITE ABOVE:**  
 Life here is lived indoors and outdoors in equal measure. Outdoor furnishings by Williams Sonoma Home.

**OPPOSITE BELOW:**  
 Together the design team decided to relocate six mature olive trees that existed on the site to create an allée leading to the rain man sculpture they reclaimed from the site's previous home.



