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ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN / **NANCY S. WEINMAN,**
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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / **PETE CURE, ARTERRA INC.**

HIGHER GROUND

DRAWING ON HER NEW YORK ROOTS, AN ARCHITECT CREATES
A STYLISH SEDONA HOME THAT MAXIMIZES ITS STELLAR VIEWS.

WRITTEN BY **JEFF TURRENTINE** / PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LAURA MOSS**



Architect and designer Nancy S. Weinman, who has practices in Sedona and Manhattan, recently completed her Sedona residence, embracing ideas and materials from New York while maximizing exposure to the dramatic Southwest landscape. In the entryway, she composed a mosaic-like aggregation of highly reflective black tiles from Porcelanosa in New York.



Nancy S. Weinman left her native Manhattan for the Southwest as a college student. Yet even though the architect and designer fell in love with the region instantly and knew it would become her home, she looks back on her place of birth frequently—and to great effect.

In the five years she's been practicing in Arizona, Weinman—who has offices in Sedona and New York City—became known for a contemporary style that respects her adopted region's aesthetic while borrowing ideas, materials and inspiration that initially might seem more at home among actual skyscrapers than skyscraping red rocks.

For the Sedona residence she shares with her husband, Richard S. Witlin, built on a 4-acre lot facing the iconic Cathedral Rock, Weinman eschewed the adobe-and-*viga* territorial style that predominates in the area, opting instead for a clean, open, light-flooded structure that

quite literally reflects the surrounding environment. The lacquered-white cabinetry in the kitchen, for instance, is inspired by contemporary Italian design, she says, and certainly "isn't the norm in Arizona." Nevertheless its glossy surfaces act as a mirror for the scenery through the windows, "picking up the juniper trees that surround the home," she explains. Likewise, some people buy throw pillows to complement the fabric of a nearby chair or rug; Weinman selected the clay-colored velvet for the pillows adorning her bed based on the way "their sheen mimics the color changes in the landscape," she says.

Although they were only half-seriously thinking about moving when a real estate agent showed them the site three years ago, Weinman and Witlin were so transfixed by the location and views that they made an offer almost instantly. The architectural brief was a classic example of something that's simple without being easy.

Sliding glass doors from the great room retract into a central pocket so "the patio becomes an extension of the living and dining areas," Weinman says. "You can physically sit in the living area with the glass all the way open. There are no bugs here, and the air is perfect." The grounds were filled with native stones and plants by landscape architect Pete Cure.



Opposite: Weinman likens the great room's serene glass-enveloped volume to a museum, albeit one where "the main artwork is outside." The living area's chandelier, sectional sofa and matching gray armchairs are from RH Modern in New York; the pillow fabrics were purchased during trips to India and Thailand. In the niche rests a sculpture by Dutch artist Den Bar.

Below: Weinman arranged a quartet of small square coffee tables from RH Modern into a larger single table, which holds a cast-bronze sculpture by Dick Shanley and a piece of Japanese raku pottery by Tanoue Shinya from Robert Yellin Yakimono Gallery in Kyoto, Japan. Above the fireplace is an oil on canvas by Yan Marczewski.





Weinman envisioned a linear plan: a rectangular box with an eastern façade done almost entirely in glass, “because that eastern view”—of Cathedral Rock and its impressive sandstone cohort—“is so enormous, you want to capture as much of it as you can,” she says. Over time, she would deconstruct that original rectangular box little by little, adding alcoves here and carving out private spaces there until a home had emerged.

To maximize the stellar views, which take in the desert grounds by landscape architect Pete Cure, Weinman worked with builder Bill Brann to arrange the house around a massive central volume, a 50-foot-long great room—comprising the living area, kitchen and dining area—whose full length of glass dazzlingly frames the Red Rock tableau to the east. Two-thirds of the glass can be slid into a center pocket wall, erasing any physical barrier separating the living and dining areas from the

outdoors. “We don’t even have seating on the patio,” Weinman notes, “because you can just sit in the living area with the glass all the way open.”

Surfaces in this great room were chosen for not only their material elegance but also their ability to reflect light. “The couch is off-white, the wall tile has a kind of white limestone feel, and the floors are sort of a grayish porcelain—it looks like concrete but much more refined,” Weinman says. In the entryway, facets of a wall-mounted black ceramic tile scatter reflected light kaleidoscopically. The feature provides an early clue “that this whole place is about reflectivity: It’s a reflection of what’s outside,” Weinman says. It’s also, she admits, “a little Manhattan-ish. Not a hundred percent. But I wanted to bring that in, because that *is* who I am.”

By playing three roles at once—architect, designer and client—Weinman was able to see the house in its

Above: Surfaces in the kitchen, which was inspired by contemporary Italian design, were chosen for their reflectivity. The island’s Silestone countertop is from Cosentino; a light fixture from RH Modern hangs above. The Lyon cabinetry is from Lucenti Interiors in New York. The leather-and-brass-finish barstools are by Arteriors.

Opposite: Among Weinman’s collections are a bust from Cambodia in the living area and a wood sculpture by Joël Urruty at one end of the dining area, located on the other side of the kitchen. The window provides a glimpse of the wine room.



Opposite: Weinman oriented the dining area "to ensure a glimpse of the sunset would not be missed," she says. A hand-blown chandelier by RH Modern "enhances the light," she notes. The Calligaris dining table, surrounded by upholstered chairs from Ladlow's, is arranged atop a rug from India.

Below: "We didn't want a hallway to lead to guest rooms, so we created a space with a purpose," Weinman says of the art gallery, which holds pieces she collected with her husband, Richard S. Witlin. Clerestory windows offer additional illumination in the space, which includes a painting by C. Gregory Gummersall and a sculpture by Kathleen Caricof, both from the Lanning Gallery.





A deck, outfitted with chairs by Outdoor Interiors, hovers above a captivating site. “We have a panoramic view of the red rocks,” Weinman says, “but that view changes every season, every hour, every second. At different times of day, the light changes their color. And then at about five o’clock, there’s this magical moment when the light is so intense, and the edges of the rocks become so accentuated.”

harmonious totality at all points along the way. “It meant the ideas came together earlier than normal in the process,” she says. With so much information swirling in her head and accessible in her notes, every action and purchase was subtly informed by every other action and purchase. “For instance, a partition behind the headboard in the master bedroom was adjusted, prior to drywall, to match perfectly,” she says. “And the fireplace boxes were designed on-site to match the exact dimensions of artwork that was in storage during the build-out.” During a shopping trip in India, she knew a particular rug would go perfectly in a room before the space had even been

constructed, because “I had the floor plan drawing and dimensions with me at all times,” she says.

Weinman’s incorporation of unexpected elements into the home has piqued interest, thanks to her astute vision. “If I pick something off the shelf in New York and bring it to Sedona,” she says, “people are like: ‘Wow, that’s so fresh and contemporary!’ Quartz countertops, Italian cabinets and large-format tiles from Spain—some people here may have never seen it, but they like it, and they want it. You just have to make sure you’re doing it in a way that works with everything else—including the view out your window.”

Weinman and Witlin visited Sedona for the first time about five years ago—and made a bid on a plot of land that same weekend. “It happens to a lot of people who come here; you just get overwhelmed by the beauty,” she says. The dining table and chairs in the outdoor area are Janus et Cie; the sofas and armchairs by the fire pit are from RH Modern.



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