

**HOME
OF THE
MONTH**

Clients: Karen Neset, David Estreen. **Architects:** Katherine Hillbrand and Meghan Kell Cornell with Deb Kees, of SALA Architects with consulting architect, Jim Larson.



The house sits parallel to the river, which is behind the house, the view of the front entry shown here. Clerestory windows at roof level allow light to spill into the house regardless of the position of the sun. Photos by CHABRIELLE CARTRETTE • Special to the Star Tribune

RIVER PLACE

• Karen Neset and David Estreen wanted their Black River getaway to honor the river, not compete with it. Mission accomplished.

By JIM BUCHTA
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Karen Neset and David Estreen weren't shopping for a second house. But while visiting some friends who have a getaway near Black River Falls, Wis., they ran across a rugged piece of land overlooking the Black River. It was a perfect building site, so they bought it.

They spent the first several months exploring the woods, getting to know the mix of trees and the best views of the river. They also discovered a narrow animal path that cut through the thick mass of hardwoods and pines, up and down a series of deep ravines parallel to the river. Some say it was an ancient footpath, but for Neset and Estreen that path became a direct route to the solitude the site offered them again and again.

It was that sense of serenity that the couple wanted to preserve when they started working with architects Katherine Hillbrand and Meghan Kell Cornell of SALA Architects in Minneapolis. The architects used that trail as the inspiration for the couple's new getaway house, a restrained, but very modern-looking 2,200 square-foot glass and cedar aerie perched on a bluff overlooking the river.

Home continues: Design suggests living as part of forest, not separate from it. **H10 ▶**



Public and private rooms are divided by a long corridor that's situated over what used to be a foot path, which ran behind what is now the gathering room sofa.



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