

MARIN

Chilling & Grilling

4 CHEF-INSPIRED RECIPES

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Macdonald, who grew up in the Bay Area and was a protégé of the wine country firm Backen Gillam & Kroeger Architects, was equally resourceful in materials use; she felt all she had to do was “layer on to what Karen had started.” She detailed all the cabinetry to cohere with the home’s informal elegance and chose hardy finishes and furnishings. “We did not need to add walls or make any structural changes,” she notes: to make the large spaces visually and literally comfortable, she went for a kind of spatial alchemy, mixing textured surfaces with smooth.

Along with the herringbone floors, she introduced tactile notes with design features like smooth troweled-plaster walls, three-dimensional Ann Sacks tiles for the kitchen backsplash and a heavy jute Christopher Farr rug for the living room. “To blur the lines between inside and outside I also tried to create a color palette of greens and blues that matched the view without overpowering it,” she says.

Large wagon-wheel-like chandeliers from Restoration Hardware likewise help anchor the lofty space and enhance the farmhouse aesthetic, and stain-resistant fabrics — Perennials outdoor fabric on the sofa, for example — can handle heavy wear. “We’ve mixed off-the-shelf and custom pieces and old and new things to stay within a budget — but it also helped make this home feel less formal,” Macdonald adds.

One other trick: for “a more calming effect,” materials such as woods for cabinetry and vanities are repeated. For visual continuity, even the Taj Mahal granite Macdonald specified for a waterfall countertop in the master bath reappears in the kitchen and powder room. Such elements “are not just long-lasting,” she says. “They don’t quickly go out of style.” ■