

THESE PAGES On a clear day you can see forever says Lisa Tinning of the views that extend to the majestic Ben Ohau Ranges from her and husband Mark's holiday home; keen to keep the section as natural as possible, the couple planted mainly tussock grasses that can handle the region's extreme hot and cold temperatures.

INTO THE LAND

A holiday home designed in honour of its majestic surroundings

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The visitors' book at Lisa and Mark Tinning's Twizel holiday home says it all: "Thanks for letting us share your slice of paradise," reads one entry. "The best weekend ever," says another. Their stylish home snuggles deep into Mackenzie country, its rock and timber facade barely disturbing the surrounding tussock grass.

The Christchurch couple, who co-own a roofing business, know the region well. "We'd often come down at weekends to stay with friends," says Lisa. "We fell in love with the area."

Catherine, could decompress from busy city lives.

Three years ago they found this 8500sqm block of land a short walk from Lake Ruataniwha with standout views of the snow-quilted Ben Ohau Range.

Not wanting to compete with Mother Nature, their brief to Christchurch architectural designer Barry Connor was for a house that blended into its environment. "We were very clear we wanted a home that took its inspiration from its surroundings and used materials to help anchor it to the land," says Mark.

Having built three other homes before, they were also clear on their preferred style: "We were after a single-storey, low-maintenance building with the simple,



THIS PAGE (clockwise from top) Cedar decks on both sides of the house provide options for a windy day; Lisa sourced the outdoor furniture from Christchurch; the large glass front door and windows throughout are by Nulook in Christchurch. The deck running the length of the front of the house was originally meant to be concrete but the couple opted for cedar for consistency. The outdoor fire nook with its cedar-lined ceiling has proven its worth in both summer and winter; the Warmington wood fire sits back-to-back with a gas fire inside. **OPPOSITE** Lisa's netball team often climbs the hill behind the house for exercise – they've affectionately nicknamed it Fog Hill because it's frequently shrouded in mist.

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rustic lines of an alpine ski lodge,” says Lisa. “But with modern touches.”

The result is a long, barn-like building that contains the main living, kitchen and dining areas. At either end are two separate wings, one of which houses the master bedroom, the other containing three guest bedrooms, a generous bathroom and laundry.

True to the intention, natural-looking materials do the talking here with ample use of cedar and schist both on the interior and exterior. It surprises many guests to learn the stone comes from Christchurch.

“It’s actually architectural schist veneer,” says Lisa. “Aside from looking natural, it worked out at around two thirds of the price of real stone.”

The couple also had help from family. “We were fortunate that our son had just started his own painting and decorating business, so he did all the interior and exterior painting, including staining the internal beams,” says Mark.

No stranger to feeding large crowds of people, Lisa wanted a kitchen and scullery that allowed her to do so without being cut off from her guests. She opted for streamlined black cabinets in both, with a mirrored splashback that reflects the mountain views.

This is a family that likes to spend as much time as possible outdoors, which meant three separate decks from which to follow the sun around the house. The largest of these has an outdoor fire and pizza oven that get a lot of use during cold southern winters. In summer, it’s the

THESE PAGES The window seat is a favourite spot with family members, including daughter Catherine, for reading, contemplating life or having a snooze; having first decided on polished concrete floors the couple switched to 800 x 800mm tiles, which provide the same industrial look without the “unpredictable worry” of pouring and setting concrete.



THIS PAGE (clockwise from top) Views of the Ben Ohau Range are a dominant feature of the house on one side, with rolling hills on the other. Mark, Lisa and daughter Catherine with Ollie the beloved family dog. Schist veneer is a key feature of the home appearing in the kitchen, living rooms, bedrooms and on the exterior. **OPPOSITE** The streamlined kitchen bench is made of Caesarstone Rugged Concrete, which works well with the black cabinetry and provides the industrial look Lisa was looking for; the mirrored splashback reflects the surrounding mountains.

‘There’s just this incredible feeling of serenity and relaxation’



perfect spot to watch the sun slide behind the mountains.

One of the three guest bedrooms is fitted with six bunks, including a double bunk bed. Builder Mitch Frost came up with the clever solution, and also conceived the pine bedheads in the master bedroom and main guest bedroom that he built into the schist walls.

“We’ve worked with Mitch before and he understood exactly what we were after. We hired a house for his crew who would arrive on a Monday morning from Christchurch and leave Friday lunchtime,” says Lisa. In fact Mitch got to know the area so well during the nine-month build he bought his own section nearby.

When it came to decorating their home Lisa wanted pieces that fitted the space, rather than shoehorning older furniture into a new build. The choices included 3m-long blue couches that were inspired by a blanket Lisa bought in London in 2018.

“I’d gone to the hockey world cup with my daughter and it was freezing, so I had to buy this blue blanket. I loved the colour so much it ended up being the inspiration for our living room’s colour scheme.”

Although they only got the keys to the house in November 2018, the couple say it feels as though it’s been part of their family for years. “There’s just this incredible sense of serenity and relaxation we get whenever we pull into the driveway,” says Mark. “The plan is to eventually split our time between here and an apartment in central Christchurch.”

THIS PAGE (from top) The bunk bedroom sleeps seven so is handy extra space when friends come to stay. The artwork in the main bathroom is by Christchurch artist Ros Beck.

OPPOSITE The master bedroom features the handiwork of builder Mitch Frost, who set the pine bed into the schist wall; Lisa found the wooden chair at a garage sale in Twizel; the ensuite lies to one side of the bedroom and the walk-in wardrobe to the other.

Q&A

Our decorating style: Rustic looking, combined with modern touches.

Visitors often comment they feel at home here, which is lovely. *(Lisa)*

Best money spent: The architectural stone veneer from Hard as Rocks in Christchurch. *(Lisa)*

Purchasing the section at a bargain price at just the right time. We will never lose that view and the timing couldn't have been better for us. *(Mark)*

The best thing about building this house: Compulsory relaxing time – you can't help but feel on holiday straight away. *(Mark)*

Best seat in the house: The window seat that looks out at the mountains. It's mesmerising. *(Lisa)*

Best decorating tip: I love ripping pages out of magazines until I have lots of great ideas for a new build. I've already started doing this for our new apartment. *(Lisa)*

Mark and Lisa Tinning ■



THIS PAGE (from top) The master bedroom wing glows at night. The holiday home sits neatly on the plains on the outskirts of Twizel; the town was built in 1968 for construction workers on the Upper Waitaki hydroelectric scheme. **OPPOSITE** The couple love the many different spaces to enjoy the view especially on the long summer evenings Twizel does so well.