

MICHAEL BOOTH  
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BRINGING

# OUTSIDE IN

BAMO FOUNDING PRINCIPAL MICHAEL BOOTH AND HIS EXPERT DESIGN TEAM HELP CREATE ONE OF THE GREENEST HOMES IN THE COUNTRY.

Interior Design: Michael Booth, Principal BAMO

Photography: Blake Marvin, HKS





In 2006, a Portola Valley family embarked on a journey that would forever change the way they, and those who followed their lead, would live. Their core belief is manifested in the idea that: "in an ideal world, every house would be environmentally regenerative, seamlessly integrating into its ecosystem, highly efficient, producing more energy than it consumes, restoring habitat, saving and re-purposing water, reducing and reusing waste, reclaiming materials, eliminating its own and its occupants' total carbon footprint (including transportation)." These are not humble goals. And 10 years ago they were audacious ones.



To meet the task, the homeowners assembled a dream team of over 50 architects, contractors, and designers. Booth and his award-winning team at BAMO are credited with dozens of the most beautiful and enticing interiors around the globe including the Four Seasons Hualalai, The Peninsula Chicago, Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel, and Grand Hotel a Villa Fetrinelli on Lake Garda.

For this unique project, Booth took inspiration from his clients' goals and the land. The beautiful Portola Valley 2.6 acre property that the home embraces has been in the care of a single family since 1967. The wife and her husband purchased the property from her parents and sought to create a residence that was every bit as warm and welcoming as her childhood home, but completely re-imagined as green and suitable for another generation of family memories.

What evolved in the design process was a modern barn-like structure with a deep connection between the interior and exterior. Booth used interior finishes sourced from reclaimed and rapidly renewable materials that exemplify the sustainable initiative. He also incorporated high-end furnishings that were designed with environmental sensitivity.





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The basic pattern of the 5,600-square-foot home and its guest cottage is an X with a dramatic living room at the center. Massive facing glass walls recede opening the room to a dramatic eastern hillside and a gracious garden, pool, ponds and the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west. An impressive stone fireplace crafted of reclaimed limestone soars to the apex of the beamed ceiling, drawing the eye upward to the room’s exquisite woodwork. The ceilings throughout the home were built from reclaimed western red cedar planks and the trusses and purlins from reclaimed Douglas fir. Booth added a mix of found antiques with a global influence that reflect the family’s travels, upholstered seating using traditional hand tied methods with horsehair, wool and natural latex foam, and wood furnishings created by local craftsman.







Off of the living room is a dining room that also opens to the landscape on two sides featuring a monumental live edge table, bench, and marvelous curved wooden chairs. Like the living and dining rooms, the kitchen ceiling rises almost two stories. Energy efficient appliances are run by the home's solar panel system and elegant reclaimed Belgian blue stone countertops add an elegant luminosity to the space. A spectacular kitchen hood and dining stools were forged from scrap metal and iron lending a rich-time worn patina.

When the project was completed the homeowners named the property Tah Mah Lah, a Native American Ohlone word for mountain lion, chosen out of respect for the native cats that share the Portola Valley ecosystem. Their ultimate goal was to create a livable net zero-energy, zero carbon emission home, but more importantly they wanted to be thoughtful stewards of the land that it exists on. The result is a home that will sustain itself for generations to come, serving as a living demonstration of what building green can be. It is quintessentially Californian—sophisticated and casual, smart and functional.



