

ALL ABOUT THE VISTA

With panoramic views of Lake Wanaka and the mountains beyond, it's little wonder that this spectacular New Zealand home was designed to make the most of them, writes Joanna Tovia. Photography by Simon Larkin.



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walkway to the hefty Corten steel front door, which is set into a wall of local Otago schist stone that extends along the spine of the home.

Step inside and the vista before you takes your breath away. Knowing this was always going to be the case, the homeowners worked with their architect to allow views from every room with the use of glass, cantilevers and enormous spans; the roof over the 1.8-metre-wide verandah facing north, for example, has no posts to obscure the view.

The interiors, too, were designed to cocoon the inhabitants without competing with the natural beauty laid out before them. Cedar-lined ceilings and walls create a warm, inviting ambience, with the earthy tones of stone floor tiles and stacked-stone features balancing out the interior materials palette. The exterior is largely clad in dark grey metal panelling to make the home disappear into the surrounding landscape, along with stone and glass. Cedar and metalwork has also been brought into the lake-facing bedrooms to blur the boundaries between inside and out.



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01 Endless Lake Wanaka views 02 Cedar panelling adds warmth 03 The entryway is reminiscent of arriving at a boutique lodge 04 The fully equipped kitchen 05 The Dacha seamlessly blends into its surroundings. All images © Simon Larkin, courtesy Eliska Lewis

Named The Dacha, Russian for 'second home', this holiday house was built to accommodate not only the homeowners and their teenage daughters, but also their guests. A location like this – its dramatic outlook mesmerises, its remoteness prompts instant get-away-from-it-all relaxation – meant guests were likely to want to linger, so architect Eliska Lewis designed a four-bedroom guest wing with its own lounge at the opposite end of the house to the impressive master suite, study and open-plan lounge/dining/kitchen.

Arriving here is a little like pulling up to a boutique hotel, its vast timber-lined portico creating a grand entrance. A double-car garage and boat garage flank the entry



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"This, combined with the floor-to-ceiling glass panels and a cantilevered shade canopy, gives the feeling of glamour camping and a close connection with the landscape," says architect Eliska Lewis.

The house achieves Lewis' aim of blending into its surrounds. "The house is a substantial development, yet when viewed from a distance by boat on the lake, it's hard to see with the naked eye."

The outdoor dining and lounge area can be used year round; stacking glass doors provide shelter from winds off the lake when needed, and the fireplace turns the space into a cosy spot to congregate on cool evenings.

The home also has a sunken lakeside Jacuzzi and swimming pool, set low so pool fencing didn't interrupt the views, and a separate one-bedroom guest cottage called The Banya, aptly named after the traditional steam baths many Russians frequent for health and rejuvenation.

When not in use, The Banya and The Dacha are available as holiday rentals. ♦ www.releasesnz.com