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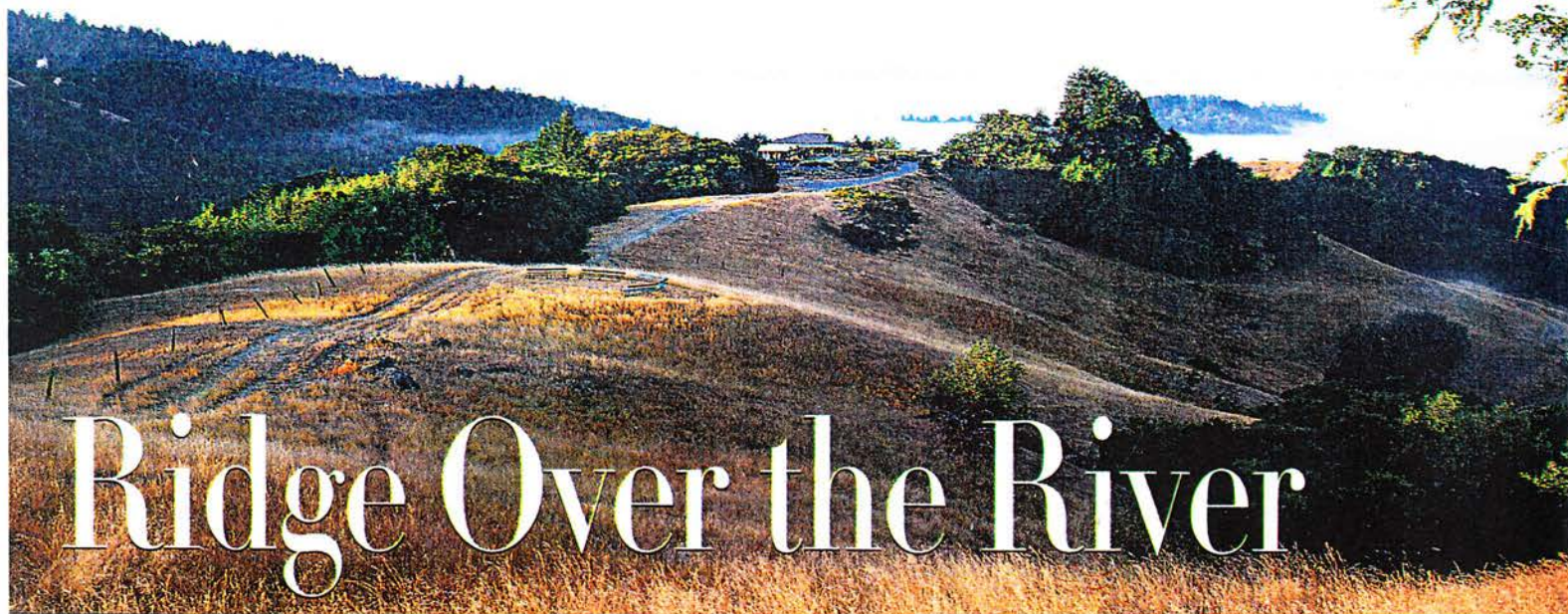
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Second Homes

Tapping New Sources

By Zahid Sardar

Telegraph Hill residence by architect Jim Jennings



Ridge Over the River

BY ZAHID SARDAR PHOTOGRAPHS BY J.D. PETERSON



Hawaii is never far away at Sweetwater ranch, over 240 acres in the mountains near Guerneville, not far from the Russian River. On their ridge overlooking the river valley, Judith Flanders and investment banker James Staub decided to build a family compound in the spirit of the island homes of Hana, where the wild turtles still roam. It would be a place for their now scattered brood to gather on weekends.

"We are of Hawaiian descent on my mother's side," explains their son, Jonathan Staub, a San Francisco-based interior designer and entrepreneur who no doubt bears a closer resemblance to his Scottish great-grandfather. "I grew up in Hawaii. This is as far east as I have ever gone to live."

At first, Staub, an avid remodeler himself, envisioned an Arts and Crafts style bungalow such as the Maybecks he used to admire during the years their large family spent together at Hawthorne Terrace in Berkeley. Working with Guerneville architect Dirck Bass, Staub helped to design a large structure within the area's building codes but still not roomy enough to accommodate parents, siblings, cousins and grandchildren. It would have taken them three years to build.

The plan never felt right. It wasn't the hacienda or compound model the family wanted so much. "We wanted to spread out enough so we could engage with the land," Staub says. The in-

A view from Staub's favorite meadow looking back at the ranch house, top. The dining area just below a reading loft, left, is conveniently close to an open kitchen. A cinderblock fireplace soars upward to high, beamed ceilings where clerestory windows let in light. An outdoor fireplace warms the terrace, facing page. In the distance are a lap pool and poolhouse.



ent to have a structure that was diffused to minimize the visual impact on the site seemed to have failed.

And then, quite serendipitously, a solution emerged when Staub and other family members mulled the idea of pitching Camp Currie-style tents with raised platforms as temporary shelter during construction, rather than sleeping in trailers.

"We threw away our old drawings and started over. We decided to keep the tents permanently, and surround the main building," says Staub. For the family, Bass designed a couple of simple wood frame buildings clad with stained cement boards with pitched shed roofs that overhang deep porches. One of the houses belongs to Staub's mother, while the larger of the two is shared by everyone.

The tents were set up quickly along the ridge, using a wood frame, real doors and windows, galvanized brackets and a poly-canvas skin that can last up to five years.

"You can get a plan and build your own," says Staub, who has since that time gone into business with the tent manufacturer. Nestled among the live oaks, they disappear from view until dusk when their lantern glow becomes mesmerizing, linking the living spaces in the main house with individual bedrooms.

Each "room" has antiques, flea market finds and personal memorabilia to give it a sort of *Out of Africa* look that Staub enjoys. His own tent is even fitted with windows removed from the Presidio and mosquito netting. A pair of guest tents installed near the house are the only ones with electricity.

Even the main house has a tent-like quality inside, with an armature of wood beams

The inside of Staub's tent seems remarkably like the main ranch house with exposed 2x4 wood framing, facing page. Antiques and flea market finds decorate each of the eight tents nestled among live oaks, right. At night the tents glow like lanterns within the landscape. Tin roofing covers a wood and stucco shower in the poolhouse, inspired by outdoor living in Hawaii and Bali, below.

