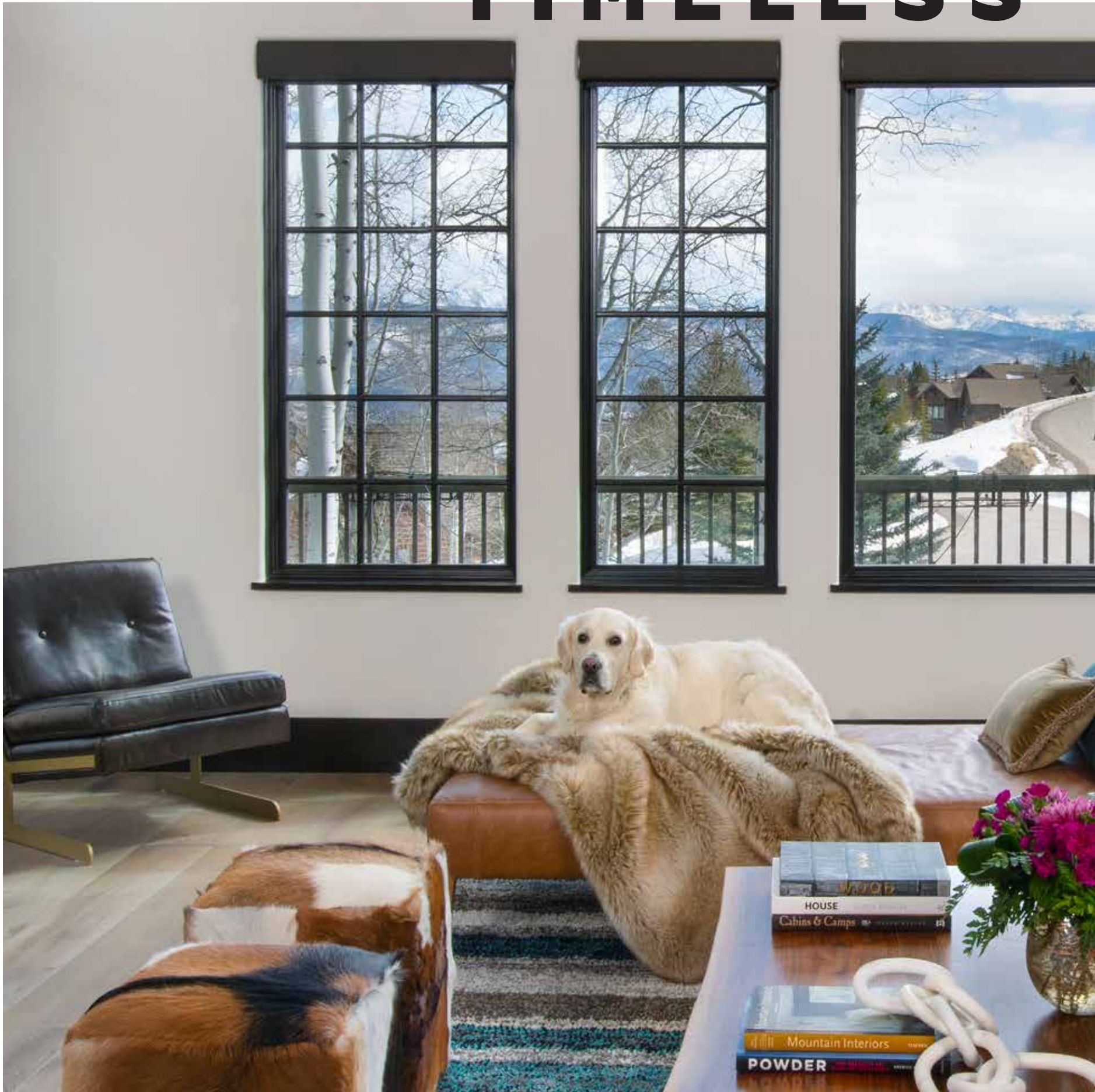


classic &
TIMELESS



Interior designer Elizabeth Basso's well defined design style

By Laura Lieff • Photos by Ric Stovall Studio



Longtime local Elizabeth Basso's Vail Valley transplant story is similar to stories of many longtime locals — she was only planning to be here for a year or two and then never left. Twenty-five years later, Basso is a sought-after designer known for her classic interior design taste that is always in style.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Basso attended Indiana University of Pennsylvania because she was attracted to their interior design program. "I went there thinking I wanted to do architecture and engineering but I was also very interested in design," she remembers. "I ended up focusing on design because doing so allowed me to dabble in everything while using the creative side of my brain." Following college, she gained experience in Pittsburgh

working in design stores for seven years and gravitated to the high-end residential side of the industry. In 1999, Beth Slifer recruited Basso to Vail to work on a new Daybreak Ridge build in Bachelor Gulch. She was excited about the project but never thought the move would be permanent. Two years later, the project was finished and, during that time, Basso met her husband.

While working for Slifer for six years, Basso was introduced to a variety of brands, textiles, high-end fabrics and "beautiful things hanging from every direction" — all of which informed her style. She then worked for Vicky Ward for two years before ultimately starting her own business, Basso Interiors. While she was building her company, Basso and her husband welcomed into their family two daughters who are now teenagers.

INEVITABLE CHANGE

Thirty years into her career, Basso has witnessed a wide array of changes in styles and technology. "I've seen the industry shift a lot and we as designers have also changed how we work," she explains. "Things happen much faster now which has led to subcontracting some aspects of the job." For example, all the computer-aided drafting and design (CADD) work Basso used to do is now handled by her architect colleague. The two of them work as a team to create what her clients are looking for and make that desired look a reality.

While she says that CADD was very different when she studied it in college, her attraction to timeless design has endured. "I was brought up in a traditional area of Pittsburgh and I bring that with me in the way I design," she explains. "I gravitate to classic looks and bold colors and patterns, but if a

client wants something different I, of course, can do that, too. It's always exciting to take those steps and get out of my comfort zone."

When asked what a Basso Interiors house looks like, she says "a little more contemporary and classic and not overly modern — pieces that have style and longevity." Part of that longevity is ensuring that she is part of the building and/or remodeling process, alongside architects and contractors, from start to finish. Something as seemingly simple as lighting or the number of electrical outlets can make a big difference in a home and having guidance from the architect, contractor, and designer make the process run more smoothly. "Architects and contractors bring construction knowledge to the table that is invaluable," Basso points out. "So many ideas come about while working with them and I've learned that it's helpful to surround yourself with people smarter than you."



New flooring, lighting, wall and trim finishes suggest an edgy mountain contemporary palette in this Cordillera remodel project.



WIDE RANGE OF DESIGN

Basso's collaborative mentality has served her well as she has found that, after working with a client for a few years on a project, they end up contacting her again for additional projects. "I create great relationships with my clients and they usually end up coming back to do more," she explains. "Every client is different so I tailor my services to each person's wishes by making their personality come out. I focus on what will work for the client, interpret their lifestyles and desires, and gain an understanding of how they want their spaces to feel."

Over the years Basso has designed everything from one-room remodels to large, new construction builds. She has also worked on hospitality (Austria Haus condos in Vail) and retail spaces (the Land Title offices in Vail, Avon and Aspen) but now

focuses primarily on residential design. Another aspect of her business is art consultation for which she takes direction from her clients regarding what they like and don't like and either guide them to certain places to look for pieces or does the legwork and finds the pieces for them. Because "artwork is a very personal thing," Basso does her research ahead of time including working with art dealers who can bring pieces in for her clients to look at and following different artists on Instagram for

inspiration. She adds that, similar to interior design, "pieces of art are seen a lot quicker and the process has changed from walking into a gallery and selecting something."

In addition to the art side of her business, what sets Basso apart is her ability to customize each space to the passions and sensibilities of the client, always considering their lifestyles and preferences. She has a deep understanding of working with a variety of design styles and has worked at all levels of an assortment of projects. While Basso

is always striving to delight and inspire her clients, she also wants to ensure that they are heard. "Listening to what they are trying to achieve, problem-solving and paying attention to the details about how they want their home to feel and then taking it to the next level is my ultimate goal," she says. "I let the clients drive the bus and then I help reflect what they really want."

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This riverfront property in Vail got a complete remodel by Elizabeth Basso. Originally built in 1981, it was a dated and dreary home that now lives as a bright, updated and functional home for a young family.

