



VILLA MONTANA



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502 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE BOZEMAN, MONTANA

## DESIGN

From 1997 to 1999, the residence underwent a complete renovation, including a new addition and new landscaping. Architect-owner Thomas Bitnar AIA did the work. European-born, educated in Prague, he had been practicing architecture internationally for more than twenty-six, years with offices in Prague, New York and Bozeman, when he began the project.

The task of the renovation was to bring the house back to its original glamour and to develop the service alley, the east part of the house. The project went through three phases after intensive historical surveys, as well as studies of the original plans and existing conditions.

**First Phase:** To clean and repair the brick façade, ornaments, patterned façade, wood shingles; to replace inadequate windows; to repair the cornice; to repair the porch and add twenty one classic ionic columns, a new railing and new balustrades; to design a new balcony; to add new brick pattern capitals for three chimneys; to repair the ninety-three year old shingled roof; to paint the entire buildings.

**Second Phase:** To completely demolish the four apartments and renovate all interior spaces; to install new boilers, new plumbing, new electricity in all four floors. This represented replacing walls, ceilings, floors, staircases and woodwork. Of great importance was the renovation of the ground floor which included a new custom made library, a new decorated staircase, new ionic columns and a new kitchen. The third floor, formerly the ballroom, was also completely renovated. A new exposed steel strut and cable structure and new column-beam substructures replaced the original wood trusses along with new insulation. The third floor becomes a flexible open space with a tower, and is used as an architectural atelier and gallery.

**Third Phase:** The final scheme for the new addition was chosen after careful analysis of five architectural models. The new construction consists of glass enclosed veranda and breakfast room with skylights, a glass and steel conservatory, and a steel pergola with wooden deck. The back property was elevated, a retaining wall constructed with fence and sliding gates. The landscaping design is minimalistic, the space divided geometrically into the three surfaces: grass, wood and concrete.

The completed final project respects the urban, historical and social context of the historical district. It also respects the original architectural style, its scale, proportion, hierarchy, formal and colors and the logic of the spatial relationship and elevations of the original design was the leading inspiration for the addition and renovation. The new design develops a harmony between the old and the new.

In 1999, the project received the Bozeman Historic Preservation Advisory Board Award for Excellence and is featured in the book, [The Historic Homes of Bozeman](#). It is truly a work of art.

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