

# case study: a closer look at **MARIPOSA GARDEN HOUSE**



Ebonite Velour

## Mariposa Garden House • Boulder, CO

The Mariposa Garden House reimagines a modest 1948 ranch into a modern, durable, and materially expressive residence—rooted in strong architectural form and anchored by a sculptural masonry chimney. Designed by Renée del Gaudio Architecture, the home preserves the original concrete slab while completely rebuilding the structure above, allowing the design team to maintain the footprint's quirks while introducing bold exterior moves that elevate the home's connection to its Colorado surroundings.

At the center of the exterior expression is the two-story brick

chimney, which functions as both an aesthetic landmark and a structural anchor. As Residential Design Magazine notes, the chimney “grounds the house” and unifies indoor and outdoor gathering spaces. It houses a fireplace on the interior and an outdoor grill on the terrace side, allowing the masonry volume to act as an architectural hinge between levels. This brick massing also breaks up the home's horizontal form, giving the low-slung ranch profile a vertical counterpoint. A stacked bond pattern is used to enhance this design element.





The architecture leverages simple, durable materials—brick, steel, and cedar—to create a clean, modern façade. Black-painted steel framing and ebony-stained cedar siding form a crisp backdrop for the masonry, highlighting the chimney's texture and permanence. Large overhangs and exposed rafters extend the roofline and create deep shadow lines, reinforcing the home's strong geometric presence.

Del Gaudio's design introduces taller rooflines and a clerestory that lifts the original ranch profile, creating a more dynamic silhouette while improving daylighting and ventilation. Oversized glass openings and a 16-foot sliding door system connect the main living spaces to the exterior, but the masonry chimney remains the defining feature—visually grounding the home amid its rugged setting.

The Mariposa Garden House was designed to achieve net-zero electric performance, pairing a high-performance building envelope with an 8 kW rooftop solar array that offsets the home's annual energy use. The all-electric residence incorporates radiant-heated floors and EV charging, allowing the home to generate as much energy as it consumes over the course of a year.

Durable, timeless, and materially honest, the Mariposa Garden House showcases how strategic use of brick can transform a simple ranch structure into an architectural statement built to last.

### key players:

Architect • Renée del Gaudio Architecture

Photographer • David Lauer

Awards • AIA Colorado Award of Excellence, AIA Colorado North Award of Distinction, AIA Editor's Choice Award

### the brick breakdown:

Ebonite Velour

Ebonite Velour Thin Brick

A brand of Brickworks

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