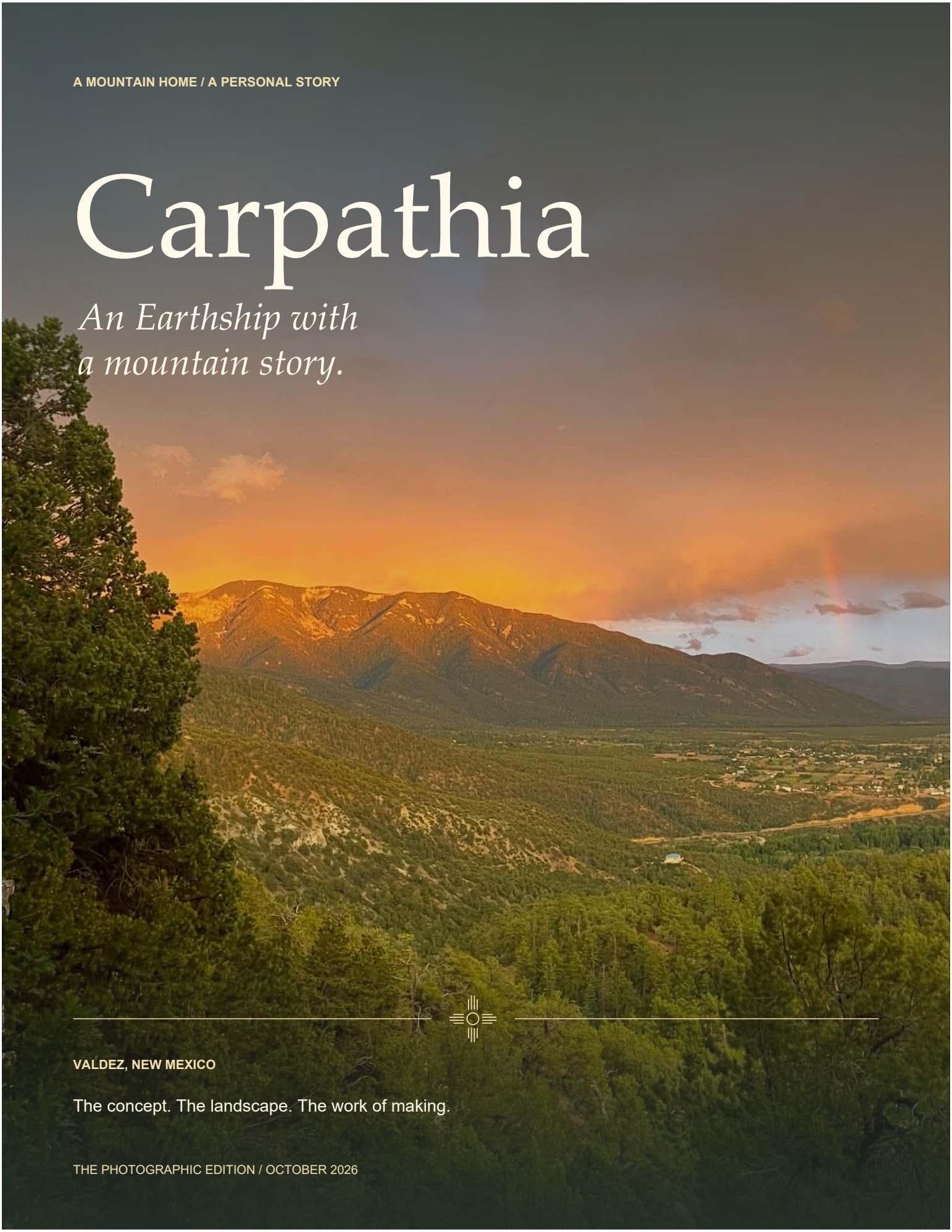


A MOUNTAIN HOME / A PERSONAL STORY

Carpathia

An Earthship with a mountain story.

VALDEZ, NEW MEXICO

The concept. The landscape. The work of making.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EDITION / OCTOBER 2026

INSIDE THIS EDITION

A place to begin.

Carpathia is an Earthship in the wooded mountains above Valdez Valley. Its story moves between a personal idea of home, the landscape beyond the windows, and the hands-on work of building.

This edition follows that story through the owner's photographs. It begins with the idea, moves into light and materials, and ends with the practical record of the home and its place in REACH.

03	The concept
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Sunset from the hillside / 2016 / Owner archive

This house is an Earthship.



A home imagined around the sun, the earth and the rain.

An Earthship is a kind of passive-solar home built with natural and reclaimed materials. Thick earth-filled tire walls store heat; sun-facing glass, insulation and ventilation work together with the place the house stands.

Developed by Michael Reynolds, the wider concept connects renewable electricity, rainwater collection, on-site wastewater treatment and food growing. Carpathia is a personal expression of that approach, still a work in progress.

Explore Earthship Biotecture's design principles

The glazing, lit from within / February 1, 2022 / Owner archive



Carpathia beneath the mountain / April 19, 2021 / Owner archive

02 / THE NAME

A name carried from the Carpathians.

Carpathia takes its name from the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine, near where its owner was born and where his parents used to camp. Forested slopes and a family history found another mountain setting in New Mexico.

There is a maritime echo, too: RMS Carpathia rescued survivors of the Titanic in 1912. For the owner, the name carries an idea of refuge, alongside the optimism about Earthships that the film Garbage Warrior helped inspire.

A personal mountain connection.
A name for an Earthship.

A view worth coming home to.



Looking south over Valdez Valley / June 2024 / Owner archive

The farther you can see, the less you need to say.

The view has its own quiet unfolding. As the sun moves, light and shadow draw out the folds of the land, revealing contours that seemed to disappear an hour before. Storms cross the valley, sometimes lit from within by lightning. At sunset, the sky opens into layers of gold, rose, and violet. Then the lights of the Taos Valley begin to flicker below, and on clear nights, stars fill the darkness above. There is room here to watch it all - and enough quiet to lose track of time.

Looking south, the Valdez Valley opens below the house in folds of wooded land. Rim Road crosses the middle distance, with the broader Taos Valley beyond. To the east, Pueblo Peak rises in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, giving the shifting sky a familiar silhouette.

Watch the valley film



Evening over the valley / August 27, 2021 / Owner archive

VALDEZ & THE RIO HONDO

A valley shaped by water.

Follow the water. The valley has a story.

The Rio Hondo emerges from its mountain canyon at Valdez, then passes through Canoncito, Turley Mill and Arroyo Hondo before meeting the Rio Grande near the John Dunn Bridge.

Village agriculture and acequia building developed together here in the nineteenth century. San Antonio, on the north side of the river in Valdez, dates its founding to 1823.

River water made fields and food possible. A 2018 Valdez-focused study describes regional hay, alfalfa, orchards, grains, beans, corn and green chile.

Downstream in Arroyo Hondo, the Martinez family has tended irrigated grazing meadows for generations. Protected land also shelters cottonwoods, willows and wildlife.

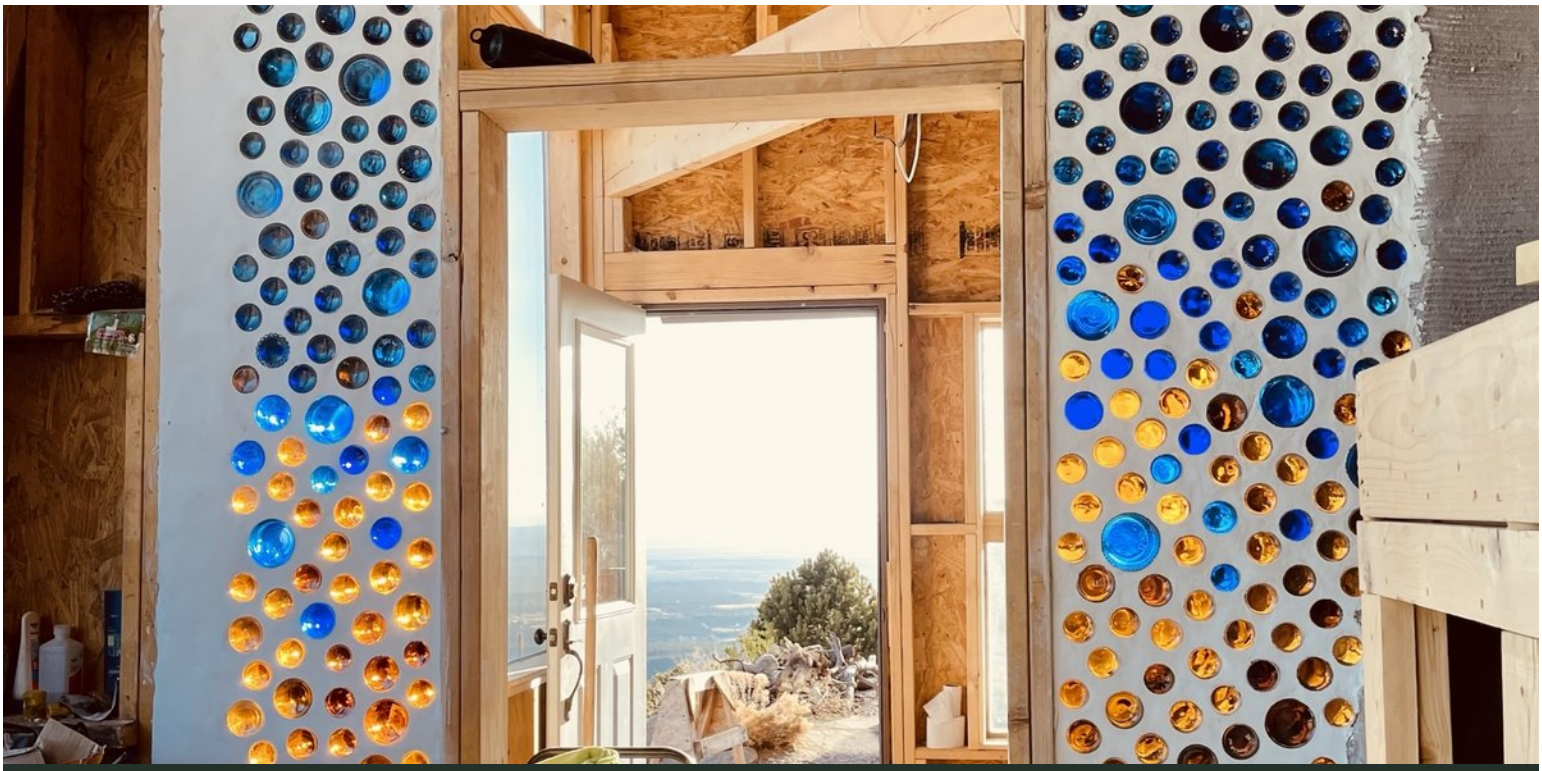
Acequias are shared responsibilities as well as channels. In Valdez, neighbors gather for annual ditch cleaning, repairs and preparation for irrigation season, with a mayordomo overseeing water releases.

The river and its villages

A family living landscape

San Antonio / Ditch Day photographs

Watch Acequias: The Legacy Lives On / PBS



Light through bottle glass / April 2022 / Owner archive

04 / LIGHT & MATERIAL

Shaped by hand and hillside.

The mountain is part of the architecture.

Light passes through the handmade bottle wall, bringing color into the room. It's a striking detail, but it also speaks to the character of the house: a place shaped by individual choices, craft, and the land around it.

Bottles, tires, cans, cardboard, tin, and metal lids all have a place in its construction. Familiar materials find unexpected uses, becoming part of a home whose character comes as much from what it's made of as how it's put together.

Built into the mountainside, the home makes the terrain part of the experience. There's a tucked-away sense of shelter within, balanced by rooms that open toward daylight and the valley. The mountain is more than the view beyond the windows - it helps shape the spaces within.

Follow the build journey

A home takes shape.



Inside the build / 2018



Earthworks beside the facade / 2018

The archive keeps the work visible: exposed earth, timber, pipes, tools and the changing outline of a house. It follows the hillside and early interiors into the bottle walls, floors and glazing of later years.

The Journey also includes original construction films: bottle-wall work in May 2020, floor work in July, and a room floor taking shape in August. Together, the stills and films make the sequence tangible.



Earth-filled tire walls / Date unconfirmed / Owner archive

Timber. Tile. Colored light.



Timber & bottle walls / February 1, 2022



Tile work / 2022 / Owner archive

Raw-log posts, exposed roof framing and bottle walls sit beside the sloping glazing. In another room, dark chevron tile meets unfinished wallboard. These are photographs of making, with tools and work materials still in the frame.

Follow the complete build journey

Across the seasons.

A little different every time you look.



Double rainbow over the valley / July 5, 2020 / Owner archive

Around Taos and Valdez, the seasons arrive in shifting light: snow tracing the mountain ridges, clouds gathering over the valley, a hillside turning gold. Sometimes the change takes months. Sometimes it passes across the view in an afternoon.

Winter brings cold nights and mountain snow. Spring is a gradual thaw, with wind, warmer afternoons, and the possibility of another snowfall. Summer often starts warm and dry before monsoon storms bring bursts of rain and dramatic skies. Autumn brings golden aspens, crisp mornings, and the return of frost.

The weather changes with elevation, so the valley and the higher mountains can feel like different seasons on the same day.

Climate, Altitude, and the Seasons / HeyTaos

Then winter comes.

The same mountains, a quieter palette. Some mornings, you wake to clouds gathered in the valley below the house, with snowy treetops rising above them. Snow through the trees and warm light through the glass.

Taos takes on a different rhythm in winter: cold air and snow quiet the landscape, while galleries, warm places to eat and the ski season keep life moving. Around the holidays, farolitos bring a soft glow to adobe streets. Winter traditions in Taos

Snowfall changes with elevation, from the valley below to the deeper mountain snows above. Taos Ski Valley is about 20 minutes up the road in good conditions, by the owner's estimate - close enough for a mountain day, followed by a quiet evening looking back across the valley.



Winter from inside Carpathia / Date unconfirmed / Owner archive

Winter traditions in Taos

Taos Ski Valley

FIRST VISIT TO NORTHERN NEW MEXICO?

A home in the hills.
A whole region to discover.



Mountain light from the house / Video still, 2024 / Owner archive

There’s a richness here that takes time to unfold: adobe walls holding the afternoon light, the scent of chile roasting, a courtyard alive with conversation. Beyond the wide-open landscape are places full of detail - an artist’s workbench, a well-worn doorway, a meal you’ll remember long after the journey home.

From this quiet place above the valley, Northern New Mexico opens in every direction: small towns, winding roads, art, food, and histories that invite a closer look. Follow whatever catches your curiosity. Come home with something you didn’t set out to find.

Taos & beyond

Media & print



Sunset through the trees / April 12, 2015 / Owner archive

08 / THE PLACE & THE COMMUNITY

Part of the mountains. Part of REACH.

Carpathia is set into the wooded slopes below Lobo Peak in Valdez, New Mexico. At roughly 8,600 feet above sea level, the house looks south over Valdez Valley toward the wider Taos Valley.

Lobo Peak rises to 12,115 feet. Across the valley to the east, Pueblo Peak reaches 12,305 feet.

Carpathia is part of REACH - Rural Earthship Alternative Community Habitat. Under its Land Users Code, REACH is a nonprofit unincorporated association that holds title to the land and homes. Members hold a certificate granting the right to occupy a particular dwelling.

REACH / Ownership structure & hillside house locator

The practical picture.

The Components record brings source documents, equipment photographs and manufacturer references together. These are recorded specifications, with the current condition and remaining work to be understood alongside them.

3.84 kW

Solar array

12 Talesun modules at 320 W each.
2021 invoice nameplate rating.

19.0 kWh

Battery storage

Five SimpliPhi PHI 3.8 batteries.
Nominal energy, not a capacity test.

6,000 gal

Cistern records

Two 3,000-gallon tanks in 2018 records.
Current installation to be confirmed.

Power records also identify an OutBack FLEXpower ONE panel with a 3.6 kW inverter. Water equipment and the greywater planter have their own entries, photographs and document links in the online register.

Open Components / Equipment, specifications & manuals



Inside the work / February 1, 2022 / Owner archive

THE HOME / THE NEXT CHAPTER

A story still taking shape.

Setting	Valdez, New Mexico
Architecture	Mountainside Earthship
Community	REACH
Home state	Unfinished
Sale condition	Sold as is
Price & dimensions	To be confirmed

A visit connects the photographs with the house itself: the glazing, the rooms, the equipment and the work still ahead. Read the Components record and the REACH documents, then bring the questions that matter to you.

Plan a conversation & visit



Carpathia at night / April 2, 2022 / Owner archive

CARPATHIA / CONTINUE THE STORY

A home.
A mountain story.

The photographs

The build journey

Components & records

REACH & its history

Explore the website

Cover: mountain light, undated. Photographs: owner archive. Dates appear where documented; undated images are identified in captions. Edited from the current local Carpathia website, October 23, 2026.