



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS  
Steel-framed windows and  
sliding doors by Hope's  
Windows give the great room of  
this Vail house a loft-like feel.



FORE FRONT This mountain retreat along the  
Vail Golf Club has ample outdoor living space,  
including a huge deck off the great room.

## *Sleek Shelter*

MODERN MOUNTAIN HOMES BRING A FRESH  
AESTHETIC TO SKI-RESORT LIVING.

*By Cindy Hirschfeld*

Today's most innovative high-country houses forgo the logs, elaborately gabled roofs and rustic trappings of traditional ski-resort retreats for an architectural style that's often called mountain modern. Think big expanses of glass mixed with exposed steel, clean rooflines and ample indoor-outdoor living space, tempered by a warm, neutral palette and natural materials like textured stone and wood. The design is functional too: "Contemporary architecture's simplified forms mean fewer nooks and crannies for snow and ice to build up," says Scott Gillespie, principal of Sandbox Studio in Tahoe City, Calif. Have designs on a mountain home of your own? We highlight three recently built residences sure to inspire.





**MODERN MOVE** When Scott Jaffa designed his own home recently, contemporary architecture was still a rarity in Park City.



**GRAPHIC DESIGN** Vain-cut marble is used in different patterns and surfaces in the master bath in this Park City home. "Mixing textures and finishes made the house feel more special," says Jaffa.

### CONTEMPORARY STYLE WITH A VIEW IN VAIL

When Larry and Lori Allen, who have a 28-year-old daughter, decided to scrape their 1970s second home in Colorado on a lot bordering the Vail Golf Club and build from scratch, they looked to architect Hans Berglund, principal of Berglund Architects (berglundarchitects.com). They wanted a modern residence with an open floor plan, clean lines and minimalist finishes that took advantage of spectacular views into Vail Village and worked well for entertaining. "We also wanted a connection to the outdoors," says Lori.

"The goal was to bring the view to them," says Berglund. Three of the walls in the great room are floor-to-ceiling glass in the new 4,000-square-foot house. "Views are all around us," says Larry.

Large sliding doors open from the living room onto a 1,500-square-foot deck. A freestanding stone tower encloses a fireplace and provides a buffer from the neighbors. "The outdoor space feels like an expansion of our home, and with two fireplaces, it's a gathering place year-round," says Larry.

The Allens, whose primary residence is a formal house in Louisiana, counterbalanced some of the home's more modern elements with antiques. A huge armoire serves as a kitchen pantry, while a late 18th century French fireback that Lori discovered in England is incorporated into the marble backsplash behind the stove. Knotted hickory flooring and rustic wood beams and ceilings add a warm touch. "We were constantly trying to find a balance between the modern and the eclectic," says Berglund.

JAFFA HOME PHOTOS BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN



**EASY LIVING** The first level of Jaffa's great room includes kitchen, dining and living areas, while a floating staircase accesses two bedrooms and a playroom.

The LEED-certified home takes up three levels on the steep, pie-shaped site. To create a sense of continuity, Berglund designed a striking wraparound floating staircase. "It provides a powerful spatial connection between the three stories," he says.

The new aesthetic works perfectly for the Allens. "Today's contemporary design is comfortable and welcoming," says Lori, "and our home's open space makes it easy to entertain."

Ultimately, Berglund created a space that combines modern elements with the familiar. "To the Allens, it's a transformational place. They love that it's so different yet has enough of their cultural icons that it gives them a sense of home."

### IN TUNE WITH THE ENVIRONMENT IN PARK CITY

Scott Jaffa, a longtime architect in Park City, Utah, has seen his share of ski-house design in the last 20 years. Until recently, the local architectural style was traditional, "with lots of heavy timbers," he says. Strict homeowners' association design guidelines tended to favor the tried and true. But when it came to building his own house three years ago, Jaffa, the principal of the Jaffa Group (jaffagroup.com), had the opportunity to push the contemporary envelope. "I broke any rules that existed," he says.

The result was a 5,700-square-foot stunner right in town, with striking lines and a graceful integration of indoor-outdoor living. With high-efficiency features like rooftop solar panels, triple-glazed windows and rainwater capture, it's also one of only a handful of LEED gold-certified homes in Park City. "We went the extra mile to build a structure superior to anything else being built at the time," he says.

Jaffa drew on natural elements for inspiration. Several soaring,

## Home Away From Home

Owning a second home in the mountains has certain benefits, but renting at these premium lodgings makes for a carefree stay.

—Tim Neville

### The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Vail

Residences come with hickory hardwood floors, crackling fireplaces and master baths with soaking tubs and steam showers, but it's the immaculate service and attention to detail that will elevate your stay at this serene retreat where privacy is paramount. At your disposal are personal concierges, wellness concierges and ski valets. With a premium location in Vail's Lionshead area, the Eagle Bahn Gondola is within walking distance, though a driver will gladly shuttle you directly to the slopes. [thevailcollection.com](http://thevailcollection.com)

### One Ski Hill Place, A RockResort, Breckenridge

With a mix of studio and multiroom condos, the property sits at the base of Peak 8 with four lifts nearby. Inside, you'll find moss-rock fireplaces, The Living Room restaurant and a Rejuvenation Center where shea butter wraps will keep you feeling supple. There's also a two-lane bowling alley, two movie lounges, indoor pools and hot tubs. Relax by a slopeside fire pit or sink into a plush sofa in the lounge.

A quick ride on the BreckConnect Gondola delivers you to the historic downtown or to Peak 7. [oneskihill.com](http://oneskihill.com)

### Constellation Residences at Northstar

Perched midmountain at Northstar, Constellation takes ski-in/ski-out to a new level of convenience. And luxury. This exclusive property features premium finishes and furnishings throughout, from personal wine refrigerators to heated stone floors in the master baths. Furnished balconies afford mountain views. Guests enjoy access to the amenities of The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, including the outdoor pool, arcade and (for a small fee) the spa. Northstar's Village is just a short gondola ride away. [constellationatnorthstar.com](http://constellationatnorthstar.com)





**OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES** The back terrace of this Martis Camp residence next to Northstar includes areas for lounging and dining, plus a fire pit.

diagonal rooflines echo the rising elevation of surrounding mountain peaks. Exterior siding, interior finishes and furnishings in shades of gray and taupe reflect the color of aspen trees in winter. The natural materials used throughout—wire-brushed dark-oak flooring, Calcutta marble countertops and stone streaked with lichen—soften the harder edges. “It’s very organic,” says Jaffa.

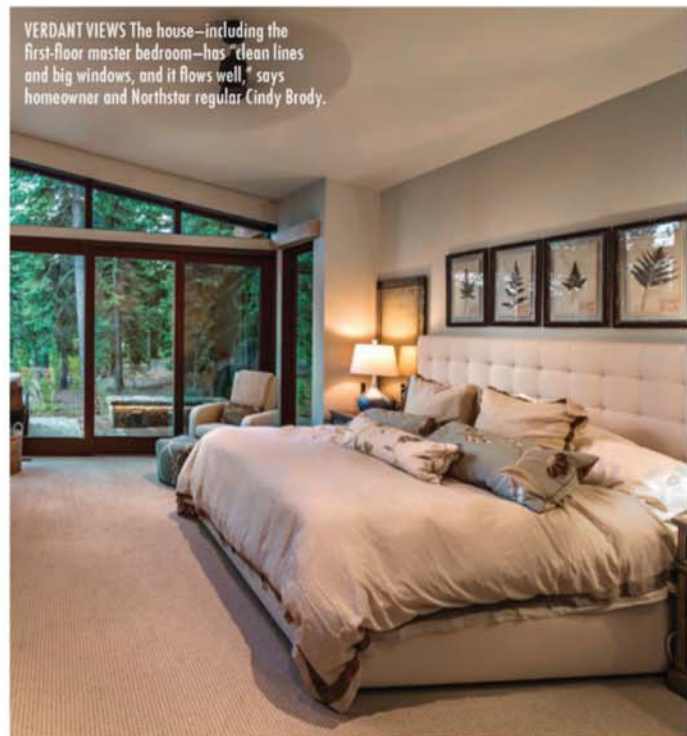
In mapping out the floor plan, the architect adhered to this central tenet: Design a house for how you live rather than how you think you live. “We use every single room exactly how we envisioned it,” says Jaffa, who lives in the home with his partner and their 6-year-old twin girls.

Lending privacy to the long, narrow lot, a pair of garages flanks the house’s entryway. “When you get out of the car, you see the house, not the neighbors,” says Jaffa. In the rear, a stone wall helps screen off the back patio. Inside, however, the outside flows in, thanks in part to large retractable glass doors that lead from the great room to the expansive backyard.

Since the house’s completion, it has served as an inspiration toward a cleaner, more modern aesthetic in Park City.

#### EXPANDING HORIZONS AT NORTHSTAR

Los Angeles residents Cindy and Mike Brody and their four daughters—ranging in age from 15 to 22—were swayed to build a second home in North Lake Tahoe, Calif., when they read about Martis Camp, the private luxury community adjacent to Northstar California Resort. The appeal lay in building a home



**VERDANT VIEWS** The house—including the first-floor master bedroom—has “clean lines and big windows, and it flows well,” says homeowner and Northstar regular Cindy Brody.



**HEIGHT OF STYLE** A double-sided fireplace in the great room separates the living and dining areas, and above, a floating hallway connects two bunk rooms and a pair of guest master suites in this Martis Camp stunner.

“WE’VE BEEN HAVING A LOT OF FUN PUSHING THE LIMITS OF WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT OF AS CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE IN A MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT.”

—Scott Gillespie, Sandbox Studio

in a setting with parks, trails, a golf course and an owners’ on-mountain ski lodge, all with Lake Tahoe nearby.

That decision also ended up influencing the architecture of their new 4,500-square-foot retreat, as Martis Camp has perhaps the largest concentration of modern homes of any mountain resort area in the country. “We’ve been having a lot of fun pushing the limits of what people thought of as contemporary architecture in a mountain environment,” says Gillespie, whose Sandbox Studio ([thesandboxstudio.com](http://thesandboxstudio.com)) has designed more than 60 homes in Martis Camp.

The Brodys were navigating previously uncharted territory. “We’re kind of conservative people,” says Cindy. “We were going to build a typical log cabin-y home.” But they were inspired by the designs they saw in the Martis Camp neighborhood. “We ended up doing a more modern house than we ever thought we would,” she adds.

They had one caveat: “I didn’t want tons of concrete everywhere,” says Cindy. On their wish list: large, unpaned

windows; a high-ceilinged great room to capture views; a double-sided fireplace; and lots of stone, inside and outside.

The Brodys naturally gravitated toward mountain modern’s seamless integration of inside and outside. “I told Scott we wanted it to feel like we were living outdoors when we were indoors,” says Cindy.

The Sandbox team delivered by designing expansive glass that wraps two sides of the double-story great room. The living area spills onto a backyard terrace that runs the length of the house. Modern design’s potentially stark persona is tempered by warm woods. “We took a contemporary form and mixed in mountain materials, like stones and Western red cedar, using colors found in nature around the Tahoe region,” says Gillespie.

Through efficient use of space and an open, flowing floor plan, the house accommodates plenty of guests. The Brodys recently hosted a family gathering of 14. “We never felt like we were cramped,” says Cindy. “Everybody was hanging everywhere. It made me really happy.” ■

PHOTOS BY VANICE FOX