



HIGH DESIGN

Eight modern mountain homes that redefine ski home chic.

by JORGE S. ARANGO

Photo: Matthew Millman.

From Swiss chalets to Aspen ski lodges, mountain homes have long employed readily available materials and simple building techniques. The subtext of log homes—mentioned as early as the 1st century B.C. by architect Vitruvius Pollio—resonates with uplifting messages about the integrity, ingenuity, and resourcefulness of the human spirit. Somewhere along the way, those notions melded with Navajo blankets, trophy heads, and antler furniture, but today's mountain homes banish quaint clichés and faux rusticity in favor of high-concept architecture and interiors. Some poke clever fun at the style's more predictable elements. Some are unapologetically glamorous. And all of them clean up the frequently clunky weightiness of fieldstone-and-timber construction. ▷



I. JACKSON, WYOMING

Elevation: 6,273 feet **Square feet:** About 9,000 + a 1,000-square-foot painting studio; on 38 acres **Completed:** 2012 **Interiors:** Timothy Macdonald Inc., timmac.com **Architecture:** Carney Logan Burke Architects, clbarchitects.com

In a region known for its traditional log cabins, this contemporary home (previous pages and shown here) stands out while also blending in. Montana limestone that appears dry-stacked is a nod to tradition, but rendered in a nontraditional way. Blackened steel was used as an accent material to contrast with all the warm woods—Western red cedar, cherry, and vertical-grained fir. Instead of a typical wood-rod staircase, designers used wire mesh. “*We deliberately repressed all that sticky stuff of national park architecture,*” says project design architect Eric Logan of this butte residence in the Grand Tetons. Designer Timothy Macdonald mixed contemporary furniture and rugs that were significant to the owners along with custom pieces, all in serene tones that let the views take center stage. Abstract expressionist pieces by Sean Scully, Richard Diebenkorn, and other contemporary artists complete the look. ▷



Photos: (This page and both opposite top) Matthew Millman; (both opposite bottom) Paul Warchol.



2. ASPEN, COLORADO

Elevation: 7,900 feet **Square feet:** 15,000 **Completed:** 2009 **Interiors:** AM Atelier, amatelier.com **Architecture:** Finholm Architects, finholmarchitects.com

How do you make a 20-year-old traditional log home on Aspen's famous Red Mountain relevant for today? Los Angeles-based husband-and-wife designers Michael and Alexandra Misczynski started by stripping all the wood down to a natural, less yellowed tone so that even the heavy, whole tree trunks supporting the roof took on a lighter, brighter effect. The Misczynskis based rugs on Navajo patterns, but rendered them less graphically, in grays and beiges. *"The bones of the architecture are a bit masculine. It has a strong presence," says Michael. "So when it came to furnishings, we pushed it even further by adding steel."* The décor features modern French pieces by Jean Prouvé, Charlotte Perriand, and Pierre Jeanneret, which are neither feminine nor delicate in line with the architecture. Cashmere, silks, wool bouclé, and linens provide a soft contrast. ▷

Photos: Francois Halard.



3. RUBY VALLEY, MONTANA

Elevation: 5,115 feet Square feet: 2,000 Completed: 2014 Interiors: Susie Hoffmann, Envi Design, envidesign.com Architect: Michael Vanderbyl, vanderbyl.com

Anne and Alex Bernhardt, owners of modern brands Bernhardt Furniture and Bernhardt Design (bernhardt.com, bernhardtdesign.com), desired a contemporary aesthetic for their Montana vacation home, but they also liked the region's traditional architecture. Architect Michael Vanderbyl first created a residence that incorporated elements like heavy timber trusswork and a river stone fireplace similar to the one found at the nearby Ruby Springs Lodge, where they used to stay. Then, says designer Susie Hoffmann, *"we balanced the massive architecture by using really clean lines in all the other elements. We stained the wood to look less rustic, more grayed-out, and designed cabinetry with edge pulls rather than handles."* She employed equally minimalist quartz counters in the kitchen and low-key honed gray marble in the baths. Of course, the furniture is almost exclusively Bernhardt and Bernhardt Design, with some custom pieces mixed in, including an updated interpretation of a classic antler chandelier: Ira Cuelho's mirrored clusters of bleached horns held together with iron. ▶



Photos: Audrey Hall.



4. BIG SKY, MONTANA

Elevation: 7,510 feet **Square feet:** 8,000 **Completed:** 2009 **Interiors:** d'Apostrophe Design, dapostrophe.com **Architecture:** Carl Erickson, Zabala Erickson, LLC, zellec.us

Surrounded by cattle ranches, rugged ski terrain, and lodgepole pine forests, Big Sky is hardly the kind of atmosphere that begs for Scandinavian minimalism. *“The developers were originally going to put in a lot of Western-themed details, but we stripped those down and instead did something with a bit of wit,”* says Belgian-born, New York-based designer Francis D’Haene of this Montana ski residence. There’s simple modernist purity in the Pietra Cardosa kitchen counters and contemporary lighting by Fontana Arte, David Weeks, and Michael Anastassiades, but elsewhere, the décor riffs on the same Western-themed kitsch that the architecture plays down. For instance, a buffalo head over the fireplace by Korean artist Yong Ho Ji is familiar, but it’s made of recycled tire rubber. Next to it is a painting of a modern paratrooper descending into a crowd of Native Americans in ceremonial regalia. There’s leather too, but not on bulky nail-head-trimmed club chairs; instead, it swathes Living Divani sofas and chairs by Brazilian design legend Sergio Rodrigues.



5. ASPEN, COLORADO

Elevation: 7,900 feet **Square feet:** 3,500 **Completed:** 2011 **Interiors and Architecture:** Oppenheim Architecture + Design, oppenoffice.com

After buying a 43-year-old home in Aspen, architect Chad Oppenheim and his wife sought to essentially make it disappear. “We wanted it to dissolve into place so that you could sense it more viscerally. We made everything very sincere and essential,” explains the architect, perhaps best known for his bright white, ultramodern residences in Miami, such as the high-rise Ten Museum Park and the bayfront home famously featured on *Hogan Knows Best*. *“We used materials—local granite, 300-year-old barn wood—and the vernacular that’s been there for 500 years. But we boiled everything down. It’s all about feeling, not style.”* To enhance that feeling, the couple filled the home with an eclectic array of organic furnishings (petrified wood stools, Belgian linen-slipcovered sofas, a found stone slab atop trestle legs for a coffee table, a painting of moss) along with curated antiques and design pieces such as a Maarten Baas Smoke fauteuil and 19th-century French steel chairs. ▶



Photos: (Both opposite top) Laziz Hamini; (opposite bottom) Robert Reck.



6. BIG SKY, MONTANA

Elevation: 7,510 feet **Square feet:** 5,000 **Completed:** 2013 **Interiors:** Lisa Kanning Interior Design, lkid.com **Architecture:** Locati Architects, locatiarchitects.com **Construction:** Highline Partners, highline-partners.com

“People are looking for something edgier,” says Todd Thesing of the trend toward more modern mountain homes. He should know: Of the many homes he and co-principal Rob McRae of Highline Partners build in Montana, 75 percent skew more contemporary, calling for additional steel-and-glass and cleaner applications of traditional materials. Here, the architects at Locati built a fairly traditional structure, but opened it up more with large expanses of glass. Inside, says interior designer Lisa Kanning, *“it was all about layering in textures, which lets you get away with cleaner lines without compromising the warmth you want in a modern home. You don’t have to throw in a lot of bold pattern and color.”* So muted neutrals dominate the palette of furnishings with neatly tailored modern silhouettes. Kanning also used gray on furniture as well as on Venetian plaster walls to accompany gray-washed floors, which, she says, “across the board helps modernize.” ▸

Photos: Cibeon Photography



7. ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND

Elevation: 5,310 feet **Square feet:** 7,535 **Completed:** 2008 **Interiors:** Magali de Tscharner, +41.22.346.2455 **Architecture:** Peter Perren, ad-zermatt.ch

“In the last five years,” says Mitch Willey, founder and president of the international vacation home rental company Time & Place (timeandplace.com), “houses that are not so predictable, that have a contemporary, lighter touch, are attracting a generally younger, hipper customer who prefers a style that allows for views to be the focal point.” Few vistas rival Matterhorn peak in the Pennine Alps, ubiquitously visible in the seven-bedroom Chalet Les Anges, one of four residences in the area Willey’s company rents. *An interior envelope of reclaimed wood serves as a modern homage to chalet architecture.* There are also contemporary takes on cowhide rugs and, in the dining room, leather furniture is stylishly svelte, not overstuffed. Topping it off, a wellness area wrapped in cool white rock walls and stone tile includes a hammam, sauna, and massage room. ▷



Photos: Barry Murphy Photography.



8. VERBIER, SWITZERLAND

Elevation: 4,900 feet **Square feet:** 10,800 **Completed:** 2012 **Interiors:** Fiona Barratt Interiors, fionabarrattinteriors.com **Architecture:** Patrice Coupy, archimc.com

For this former hotel turned private home, owner David Pearson commissioned London-based designer Fiona Barratt to make it feel as though a British townhouse had been transported to the Alps. *“I built in character with textures—aged pine barn wood stained a sophisticated gray, fur throws, natural fabrics rather than leather, a monochromatic neutral palette,”* describes Barratt, who also designed Richard Branson’s nearby ski home. “In Verbier, people want to stay in places that have a cool, very modern, luxurious feel.” Now called Chalet No. 14 and available as a rental with room to sleep 26 (verbierexclusive.com), the home carries a glamour that is atypical for more traditional mountain homes, complete with a home theater and subterranean pool and spa. ♦

Photos: (This page) courtesy Verbier; (opposite) Thierry Cardineau.

