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*A HOMEOWNER AT MONTANA'S YELLOWSTONE CLUB TAKES ADVANTAGE OF A CHALLENGING SITE WITH COMMANDING VIEWS*

## FAR SIGHTED

A haven in the wilderness, this home sits high on a wooded hillside—visible but not prominent. The steep lot presented significant design challenges and the structure's linear shape was determined by the narrowness of the building site. A load-bearing stone wall to "hang the house on" was the architect's solution to one of the challenges. Another was a unique system of perforated drain tiles and washed rocks to divert water flowing down the mountainside during spring runoff.



## JOHN THOMPSON KNEW WHAT HE WANTED.

As a former principle shareholder of the action-sports-wear company Quiksilver, he'd spent a good deal of time skiing in Park City, Utah, and also doing some serious surfing in Australia, where he fell in love with the clean lines, natural materials and many windows of the contemporary coastal architecture. So it's only natural that when Thompson and his fiancé, Cody Goettle, moved to Montana's Yellowstone Club (where he also sells luxury real estate), they wanted a home that would take advantage of wild, open spaces and a 180-degree panorama. "I wanted my home to sit quietly on the land, yet capture all of those amazing views," Thompson says.

The first task was finding a lot that would fit Thompson's exacting specifications—west-facing, high up on the slope and, most importantly, offering jaw-dropping views from all of the rooms. "When I found the lot, I was not certain whether it would accept the type of home I was imagining," Thompson admits, but he and architect Reid Smith hiked and surveyed the property until they were confident the design would work. "It is a steep, wooded and narrow site that was asking for something very specific," Smith says. "We needed to keep this building both linear and shallow."

The stone, steel and timber open-plan home nests naturally into the hillside. The architect and Teton Heritage Builders, Inc., created a clean-lined mountain modern design using materials that express a rugged sense of place. Frontier sandstone (local to Montana) was laid in a striated pattern, and warm woods—alder, poplar and oak—appear throughout the home. The design team chose granite, concrete and book-matched marble for the hard surfaces, along with cold-rolled plate steel—finished with a blackened patina. "The steel was

a structural necessity due to the number of glass walls," Smith says. He notes that raw steel has more of an industrial look, while a patinated surface lends an added edge of refinement.

Enormous windows provide spectacular mountain views and a feeling of boundless spaciousness during the day, but as Smith notes, "The glass turns black at night, especially in winter when the sun sets as early as 5 p.m." So, he created what he calls "internal views," including a 10-foot linear fireplace in the living room and a smooth, two-toned island in the kitchen.

One of the most visually stunning architectural features is also completely practical: a rectilinear, 8-foot-wide, load-bearing prow that essentially bisects the house. "Most of the house is hung off of it," says Peter Lee of Teton Heritage Builders. "Wherever that stone is penetrated (by, for example, a doorway or a fireplace), that aperture is framed in plate steel," he says, "which also frames the views and creates an impressive entrance into the home."

Rebecca Buchan, owner of Denton House Design Studio, worked closely with the architect, builder and homeowner to create a low-maintenance, livable, easy-to-clean house where the homeowners could entertain 30 people in the great room, living room and dining room yet also host intimate dinner parties that wouldn't feel overwhelmed by the large open space. Rooms and furnishings had to be versatile.

Buchan chose a neutral palette that welcomes colors of the landscape into the rooms. "We wanted a palette that didn't feel bland but accentuated the outdoors," she says. Since the house is up on a knoll, surrounded by foliage and evergreens, the design team worked with natural light and nature's hues—lush summer green, bright autumn yellow and gold and winter white—to blur the line between the home and its glorious surroundings.

After all, keeping an eye on the spectacular views has become Thompson's favorite part of living in the home. "I never tire of them," he says. "I can walk into a room and be totally captivated by the Yellowstone Club, Spanish Peaks, Yellowstone National Park and some of the far distant mountain ranges." ○

OPPOSITE: Floor-to-ceiling dual-pane windows frame mountain views and provide passive solar heating in the winter when the sun is low on the horizon. Ceiling timbers—used in the living room and the outdoor living space—direct the eye outward. The designer chose a neutral color palette to allow the great outdoors to be the room's focus. Custom-made comfortable but minimal furniture does not detract from the view.







TOP: Concrete countertops (created by a local artisan) in the kitchen feature an integrated sink. Plate steel—with a sophisticated black patina—frames the windows and defines apertures cut into the load-bearing stone wall. BOTTOM: Easily accessed from the interior living area, an expansive deck provides additional dining and entertaining space. Uninterrupted views are mainly westerly but also include Spanish Peaks to the north and Yellowstone Park to the south. Marbella Outdoor Furniture is from Restoration Hardware. OPPOSITE: An oversized door gives the exterior entry a bold and masculine look.

## THE ELEMENTS OF A MOUNTAIN MODERN HOUSE

Mountain modern means different things to different designers. Rebecca Buchan, owner of Salt Lake City's Denton House Design Studio, shares her expert insights on what makes the style so refreshing and right, year-round.

### CLEAN MODERN LINES

Modern design does not have to feel cold and sterile. "By reinterpreting classic materials in a clean and simple way, you can create a modern home that is warm, functional and livable."

### COMFORTABLE AND WELCOMING

"During the winter months, when the snow is six feet high on either side of your driveway, you'll want your home to be warm and welcoming for family and guests." Buchan creates this effect using colors and materials—especially soft area rugs and cozy throws—that provide warmth without detracting from the overall look.

### DURABLE MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

These are so important for a mountain environment and an active lifestyle—especially when children and pets are part of the family. Buchan suggests sturdy, unfussy fabrics like microfiber, wool, mohair, denim and even leather, which can develop a nice patina over time.





“I CAN WALK INTO A ROOM AND BE TOTALLY CAPTIVATED BY THE YELLOWSTONE CLUB, SPANISH PEAKS, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK AND SOME OF THE FAR DISTANT MOUNTAIN RANGES.” *homeowner John Thompson*



OPPOSITE: The master suite is the only bedroom on the main level; its outdoor space looks over undulating hillsides and high mountains. At the push of a button, a large-screen television glides out of the footboard of the custom bed. A natural hair-on-hide rug defines a reading-and-relaxing space next to the fireplace. The Castiglioni-inspired floor lamp gracefully arches above. THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: Sleek white marble countertops enliven one of the home's master bathrooms. Robern's M-series cabinets impart a soft, under-mirror illumination. Wall coverings in the master bedroom are by French firm Elitis.

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