

# THE QUARRY HOUSE

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Photography by David Marlow

Mountain home trends have taken some sweeping turns over the last several years. Contemporary design has rushed to the forefront for today's mountain home buyer who is demanding clean lines, generous windows, smart home technology—all wrapped up in a comfortable environment. Contemporary is back, and it's cooler than ever!



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Today's modern buyer is not necessarily looking for "modern" design. The true definition of "modern" design, which is a defined style, refers to the design style created in the 1920s to 1950s and is unchanging. Today's "contemporary" design is dynamic; today's buyer is looking for extended outdoor living space, simple color palette, and a much cleaner look than has been popular in the past. Contemporary now shows a decrease in the number of materials and colors, the focus is placed on that which remains—exquisite design.

A popular misconception is that contemporary design is cold and stark—not true! Clean lines, yes, but not cold and unwelcoming.

The local award-winning Vail architect, Jack Snow of RKD Architects Inc., has designed an architectural masterpiece of innovation, beauty and originality in a mountain home that will draw you in, focus your attention out and captivate your imagination for a lifetime.

Snow has an eye and a talent for contemporary but doesn't like to follow the crowd. "I hate following trends when contemporary trends become repetitive. I want to be caught off-guard by what I'm seeing—and surprised a little," he says. And surprised you will be with this home that will take your breath away.

Seeking a home in the mountains is to desire a certain lifestyle; it begs an appreciation of the beauty that the terrain gives forth. That's the foundation from which a mountain home begins. This mountain home, called the Quarry Home, seems the epitome of what mountain-living can mean. The Quarry Home is a named endearment because the house was located just above a small abandoned quarry, and because, as Snow states, "It seemed that we used an entire quarry-worth of stone in this project."



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Resting on a site of 20, gently sloping acres, it took two years of design planning and three years of construction before this stunning, 10,000-square-foot residence, welcomed its owners home.

It began with a very active family, with a grand love for the outdoors, desiring a home that intentionally reflects that lifestyle.

"We wanted a sense of modern architecture—a blend of mountain-modern in large scale; not mountain "lodge" but still with big beams; and made from materials that lend to the natural," says the homeowner. And Mother Nature was to be center-stage.

This home is divided into three separate pods and is connected by bridges. The center pod consists of the living, dining and kitchen areas, sitting room, bathroom and office. The western pod is the family bedroom area with the master and three additional bedrooms, each with its own private bathroom. The eastern pod is the guest area with two guest rooms, two baths, living area and a large private deck.

"This was a great way to lay our house out," the owner reflects. "The bridges separate the bedroom areas for privacy. The scale works well, and there's a wonderful flow of the house."

While the center and western pod are single-story, the guest pod is situated over the six-car garage, fitness room and mud room. There is plenty of space for all the toys—toys for the kids and bigger toys for the adults.



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Each individual pod has a consistency to the central design but is not rigidly repetitive as each has its own feel.

The exterior of the home, settled into the sage-covered mountains, presents a beautiful picture of what is to come. Cut limestone and blackened steel blend flawlessly with the landscape and are perfectly at home in this untamed setting. Earth tones were used so as not to distract from the sculpture of the house. The interlocking flat roof forms an appealing contrast to the rolling hills that rise around the roofline.

As guests walk over the low-slung bridge to the main entry, the entire focus is on the valley below, on the opposite side of the house. The entry bridge and hall are suspended over the landscape approximately three feet, but the view goes on forever.

Once inside the house it is apparent that this is a home built to capture every spectacular panorama that nature offers.

The north side of the home features a ceiling that gently rises upward as well as outward leaning walls of glass designed to draw the eye to the views. Similar design elements are conveyed throughout the three pods.

The interior color palette is limited to highlight the beauty and strength of the sculpture of the house as well as the outdoor focus.

"We wanted a warm feeling; the materials needed to lend to the natural," the owner says. "We're on a hill and our major consideration was to get the

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right views. Jack captured that great environment and landscape we live in."

To emphasize the organic nature of this home the extensive use of glass not only draws the outdoors in; many views are creatively planned so the eye travels through the house to the scene on the other side, ingeniously staging a feeling of living in the outdoors—coupled with nature.

Another impressive element of nature that began in the wilds has been incorporated indoors—a custom wood piece by Aborica. A massive sequoia tree now serves as an inspired room

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divider in the great room. The kitchen-side of the venerable tree has a curved steel plate imbedded and serves as seating for the round kitchen table. The dining room side uses the opposite side of the sequoia wood to secure a long steel bench with the tree as a backrest for one side of the dining table. The large-scale black steel lights over the dining table are custom designed and perfectly mirror the scale of the divider.

The kitchen has custom concrete countertops that houses a gigantic sink that could bath the family dog—a large family dog. Four faucets service the sink and the overhead tube lighting, called Endless Straight.

A welcoming wood-burning fireplace is enjoyed from all corners of the great room and exhibits the added natural audio atmosphere of the crackle of bursting wood along with the woody scent that only a roaring fire can emit. Two additional fireplaces warm the master suite and the TV room.

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Both walnut and stained concrete flooring preside, and all the ceilings are fir. Throughout the home, split ceiling beams are displayed in close pairs, so the overhead lighting can be hidden between the beams. The beams follow the roofline through the interior to the exterior of the home and, because the extensive glass allows the eye to capture this entire line, there is an organic purity that is ever-present. Soft up-lighting adds to the drama of the features of the ceiling and roof, both indoors and out.

Walnut paneling is used in the kitchen, the closet system in the master bedroom, the secondary cabinets



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throughout the house as well as in the office—harmonizing with the ceiling and providing warm contrasts to the cement and steel.

Also adding to the organic nature of the home are the many subtle curved lines. And, despite the towering ceilings in the great room and other areas, there is a perfect balance of scale that adds to the welcoming ambiance.

Because outdoor living is so important the patio and deck space is abundant, and complete with a sunken firepit and two hot tubs.

Another demand of today's exclusive mountain home buyer is the convenience of a technologically controlled home; the Quarry House is no exception. It is important to homeowners to have an easy control system within the house, but also to have the system controllable remotely. There is driveway melt so the drive up to one's mountain home in the snowy winter is a relaxed, not harrowing, one. The lights can be turned on and off, as can the audio/visual elements and ceiling fans; electrically retractable hidden shades and draperies are especially important with expansive windows; the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems as well as the security system are also controlled remotely and make coming home a comfortable one.

"When you have spent the past 25 years crafting truly unique creations that blend environmentally friendly concepts with cutting-edge design work that is entirely compatible with the High-Country experience, it's hard to ask for more," says Snow. "But when you have great clients who are involved in the process, enthused about the procedure, and are terrifically fun—that makes the exciting development of an exceptional home very difficult to leave," says Snow. "I particularly enjoyed this project—the process, not just the finished product, because my clients made the entire collaborative effort so fun. Leaving good clients, I think, is like a sports teams separating at the end of the season, even a winning season—it's a bittersweet experience."

This stunning home is a showcase of innovative, visual splendor, but it is also a home to be loved, enjoyed and truly lived in. While the design and building process has come to a successful conclusion, what remains is an extraordinary, masterfully designed contemporary house that will stand the test of time; and a home that will inspire and nurture families for generations to come.

"Vail Resorts closes deal to purchase Crested Butte Mountain Resort" Vail Daily, Sept 27, 2018

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