



A sloping site adjacent to Whitefish Mountain Resort dictated a multi-level approach to the design of this Montana home, with walls of windows maximizing pristine forest and mountain views and numerous decks and patios dedicated to easy outdoor living. Coastal cedar shiplap siding and metallic two-tone plaster with the look of steel give a warm yet sleek contemporary finish.

MODERN NEST

A SLOPESIDE HOME IN WHITEFISH, MONTANA, BRANCHES OUT TO THE SURROUNDING FOREST WITH THE PLAYFUL SPIRIT OF A TREEHOUSE, IN SERIOUS—AND STUNNING—CONTEMPORARY STYLE



THIS PAGE: "It's all about the views," interior designer Hunter Dominick says. The living room emphasizes the home's feeling of openness with a glass wall that folds away. The cold-rolled steel fireplace surround matches the metallic plaster used on the exterior, and the Italian leather sectional, paired Eames chairs and bold geometric rug create a comfortable contemporary mood. FACING PAGE: In the entryway, randomly placed steel coat pegs become wall art. They're even strong enough for climbing on.

ARCHITECTURE BY **STILLWATER ARCHITECTURE AND INVISION ARCHITECTURE**
 INTERIOR DESIGN BY **HUNTER & CO. INTERIOR DESIGN**
 CONSTRUCTION BY **BEAR MOUNTAIN BUILDERS**

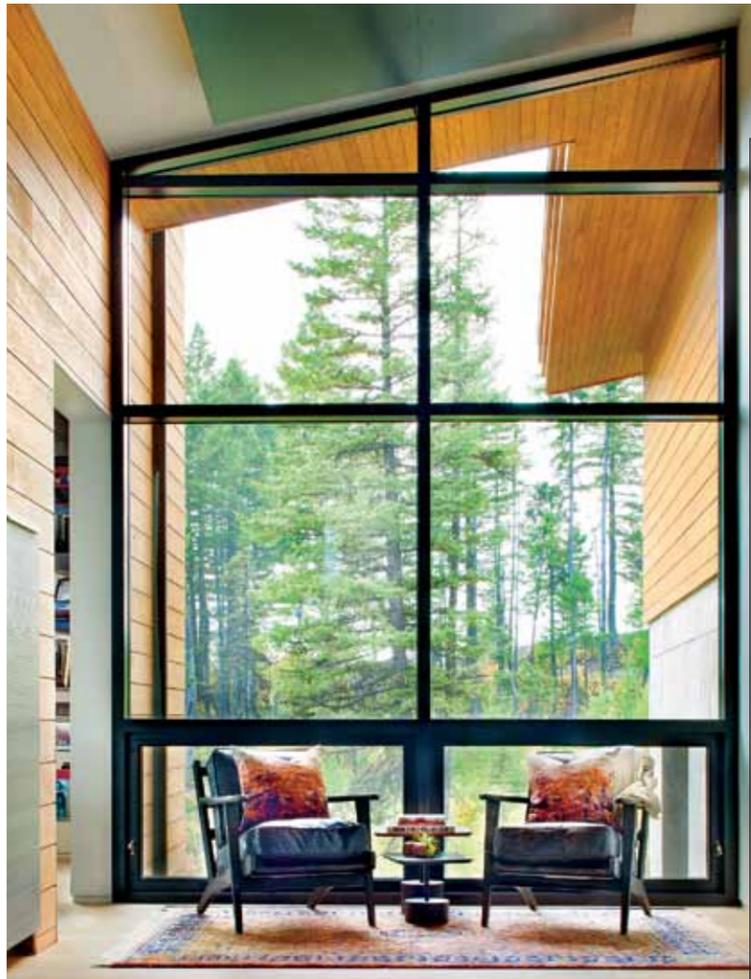


Remember the thrill of your childhood treehouse?

The owners of this Whitefish, Montana, home didn't see any need to give up that heady, perched-among-the-branches feeling just because they're adults. The house they imagined captures the best of both ages: the charm of a hidden clubhouse combined with chic, modern living spaces and grown-up luxury.

The active family of hikers, skiers and mountain bikers knew the setting well. For five years, they had lived next door to the steep building site adjacent to the slopes of Whitefish Mountain Resort, and they couldn't help but imagine the kind of home they might create there given the chance. When the lot became available, they jumped at the opportunity to purchase it. They contacted Iowa-based Invision Architecture to devise the initial plan, which was then adapted by Stillwater Architecture in Whitefish.

From the beginning, the family knew they wanted a ski-in/ski-out home that showcased the spectacular views of the forest and Great Northern Mountain. "The location of the lot doesn't have us looking down on numerous houses," the owner says. "It's kind of tucked away, so it feels like we're in a treehouse." >>



LEARNING TO LOVE LEVELS

The design team behind this magnificent multi-level home considered its sloping site an opportunity for innovation. Here are some of their imaginative ideas for living on many levels.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Logic is built into this home: Each level serves a different purpose and offers natural lighting, mountain views and outdoor access. Children's rooms and a music room are on top, with living, dining, master bedroom and kitchen zones in the middle. Informal spaces like the ski room and home theater are on the lower level, which offers direct access to the slopes.

SPECTACULAR STAIRS

A change in levels provides the opportunity for design drama. This home's three-story open staircase was meticulously engineered to "float," with wood-covered steel treads, a glass plank walkway, custom railings and long pendant lights making an artful ascent.

OVER AND UNDER

The home's extensive suspended decking on the main level created the opportunity for a spacious covered patio underneath, offering a cozy fireside shelter from the Montana weather.



FACING PAGE, FROM TOP: Walls of windows blur the distinction between indoor and outdoor spaces. The home's low-key entrance offers a mere hint of what's waiting inside. THIS PAGE: Warm-toned coastal cedar siding wraps inside the house to frame the view toward the kitchen and dining areas. Matte silver-gray Poggenpohl kitchen cabinets contrast with a blue-gray, high-gloss painted backsplash, and a meandering bookshelf makes the relaxed dining room "a space you want to hang out in," Dominick says.

“I WANT GUESTS TO NOTICE THAT OUR HOUSE IS MODERN, BUT ALSO NOTICE HOW COMFORTABLE IT IS. I WANT TO CHALLENGE THAT PERCEPTION OF MODERN HOMES BEING STARK AND ‘COLD.’”

the homeowner



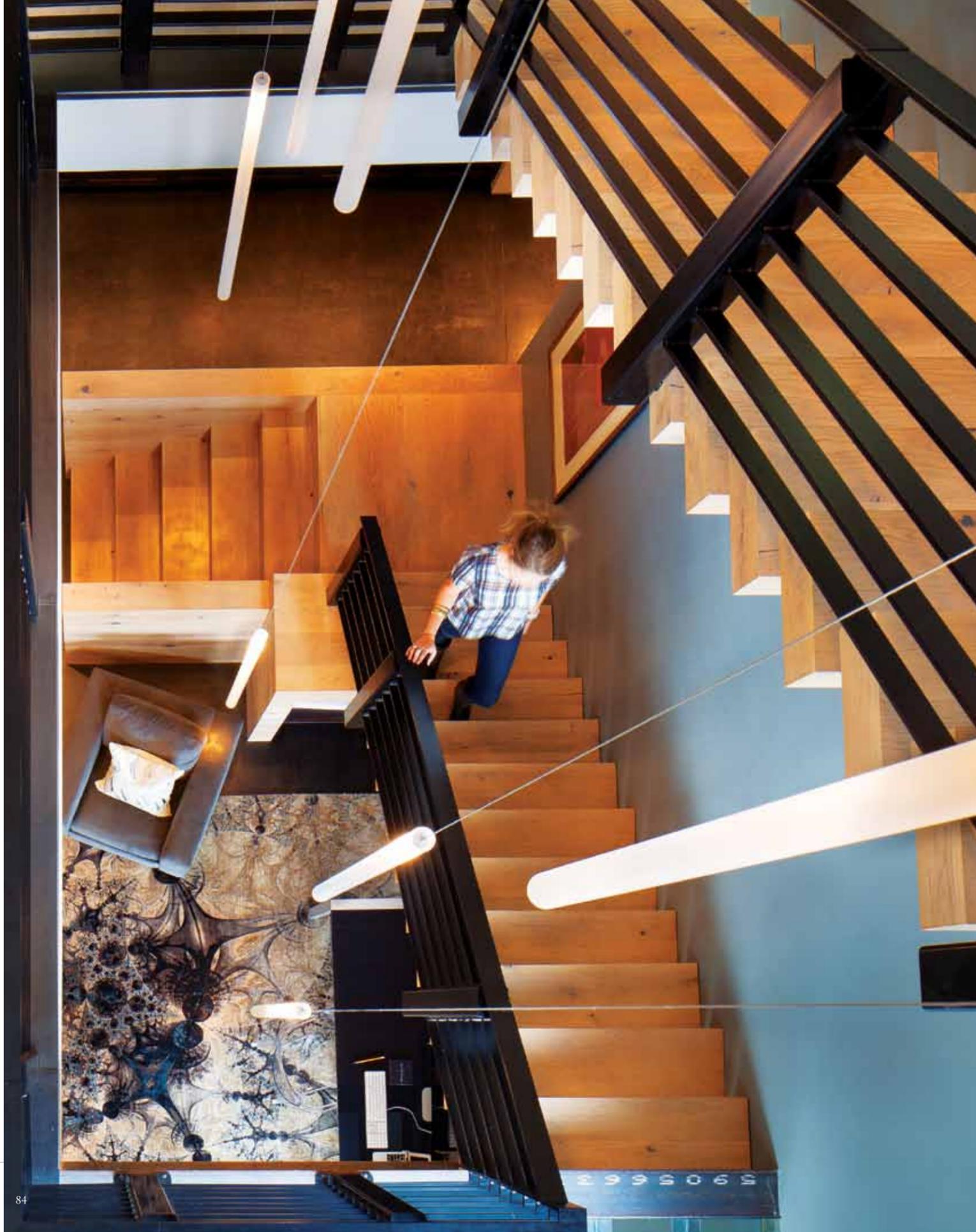
The home's street profile is a tempting mystery—a front door flanked by a simple trio of garage doors—giving few clues that behind its doors is a light-filled aerie suspended in the tamarack forest.

The home's design parlays the precipitous drop-off into an opportunity for a cleverly arranged series of living spaces that appear to cascade down the hillside. “We said we wanted modern: windows, steel and glass,” the homeowner recalls. And that's exactly what they got. The team at Stillwater, along with contractor Kelcey Bingham of Bear Mountain Builders and interior designers Hunter Dominick and Sara A. Kirshner, created a fresh, contemporary

home with an emphasis on warmth and approachability. Open spaces, natural materials and a soft color palette accentuate the home's clean lines and harmonize with the mountain scenery.

Large suspended decks offer an elevated outdoor experience. Dominick refers to them as “exterior living rooms” and furnished them with stylish and comfortable Leolux sectional seating. A folding glass NanaWall between the living room and deck opens in summer to allow easy access between inside and out. A lower patio area just outside >>

FACING PAGE: Deck and patio furniture was chosen for sophisticated contemporary style and comfort. The extra-long deck adjacent to the living room is a favorite spot for morning coffee and get-togethers with friends. ABOVE: The structure steps down the sloping site, taking advantage of each opportunity to reach out to nature with decks and patios. Perched among the tamarack trees, with views for miles into the Montana wilderness, the home is perfectly suited to open-air living.



FACING PAGE: Appearing to float as if by magic, the three-story staircase with glass walkways is a feat of engineering. LEFT: The master bathroom walls are painted in varying shades of gray to play with depth perception. Solid wood cabinets were crafted by a local cabinetmaker. BELOW: The light-drenched master bedroom features two walls of windows and low-profile furniture that doesn't obstruct the views.

the ski room is sheltered by the living room above, and is equipped with more seating, a see-through fireplace, sound system, television and spa for cozy all-season entertaining.

It's a house that invites the great outdoors to come on in. Natural light pours through giant floor-to-ceiling steel-framed windows, and exterior materials—shiplap coastal cedar siding and plaster cleverly mimicking steel—are echoed indoors. The designers intentionally blurred the boundaries to heighten the interplay between the structure and its surroundings.

Strategically placed lights soften the home's sleek contemporary lines. "We always try to incorporate something that's going to glow," Dominick says, "and as a result, this house is pretty amazing at night." After all, treehouses are designed for enchantment. ○

more  For a guide to this home's products and pros, visit mountainliving.com/modernnest.

