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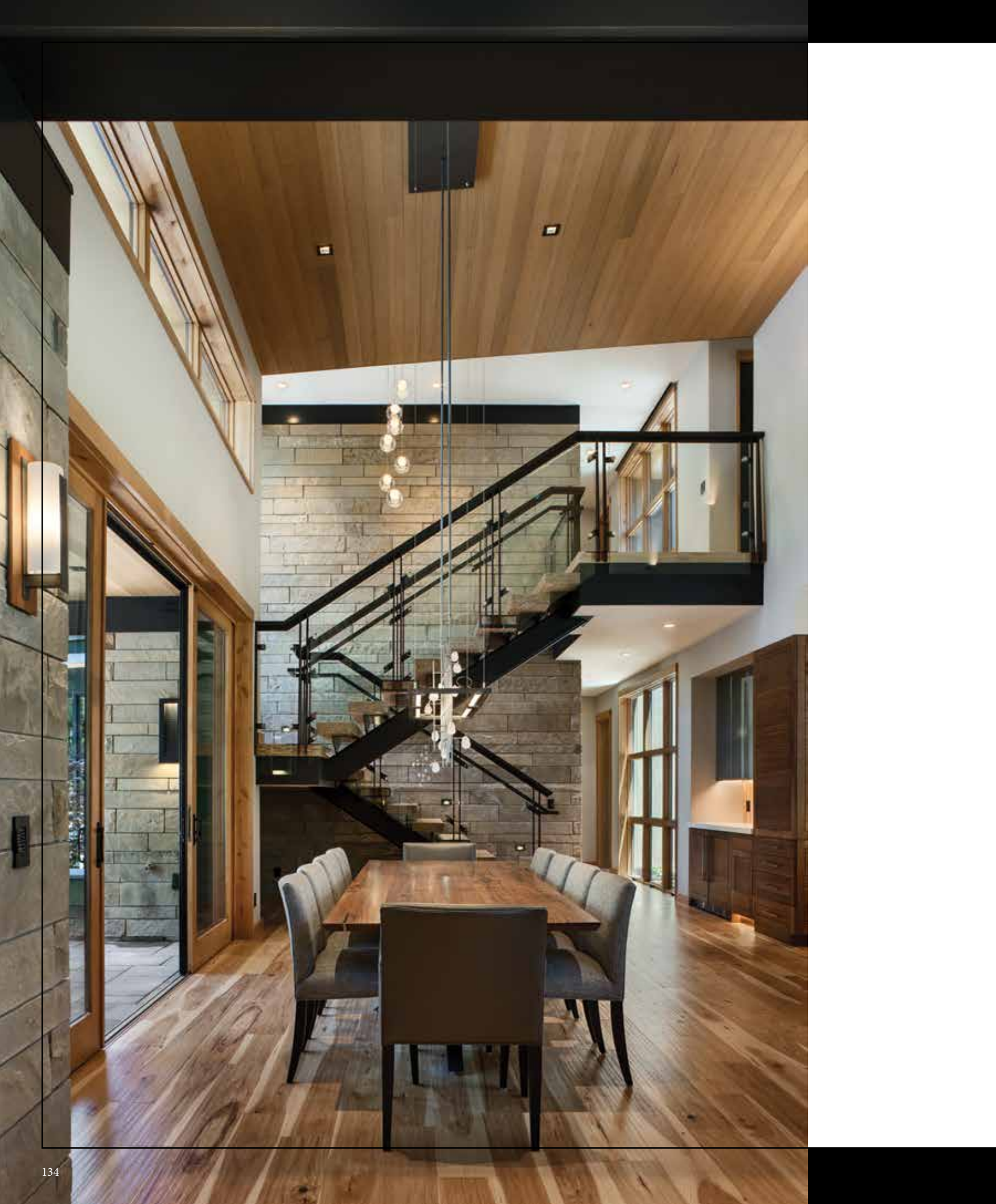
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Perfection BY PODS

**Modern and traditional styles
blend in this thoughtfully
designed mountain home**

THE

Grass family simply outgrew their first Martis Camp home. With prowess gleaned from the experience, the Bay Area couple embarked on their next project

with valuable building savvy and a honed vision of their ideal mountain digs.

“It was a great house, but our needs just changed,” says Josh Grass, explaining why he and his wife, Anne, decided to build a different home within Martis Camp.

“I started to need a dedicated office, which [the first home] lacked, and more garage space. We also liked the more private, larger and expensive lot that we have now, but we did not feel comfortable with that purchase when Martis Camp was less established and when a second home in Truckee was feeling like more of an experiment for us.”

Upon settling into their new home after its June 2017 completion, the Grasses are delighted with their decision to build anew.

The couple began by assembling a team. After interviewing multiple firms, they hired Truckee-based builder Greenwood Mountain Homes, Truckee’s Kelly & Stone Architects (KSA) and, in an unconventional move, an interior designer with another architecture firm—Annie MacFadyen of Truckee’s Ryan Group Architects.

Written by Sylas Wright
Photographed by Roger Wade



OPPOSITE PAGE: Beyond the dining area in the great room, a custom staircase designed by KSA serves as the focal point of the interior **THIS PAGE:** The home was designed with a pod concept in mind to separate the main spaces from the more private quarters and utility areas. The pods are linked by glass-lined bridge connectors

“It was a bit of an odd situation working with designers from different architecture firms, but the project went very, very well with Annie and KSA together,” says Glennwood president Chris Abel, who served as the project manager. “We were able to put a team together that produced that house, which I think came out absolutely fantastic.”

Among the initial goals, the owners wanted the home tucked away from the road, nestled on the back end of the forested, 2.5-acre lot. The living spaces would face south, where a clearing in the trees opened views to Northstar’s Lookout Mountain.

KSA’s Ryan Marsden and Keith Kelly took the lead on the design. Working closely with the owners, they came up with a “pod concept” to separate the more private quarters and utility areas from the main spaces, one of which is an oversized three-car garage designed to house an assortment of outdoor toys—off-road vehicles, mountain bikes, kayaks, paddleboards and other various gear. Additional pods include the public space (great room, kitchen, dining) in the center of the home, the master suite, which is set at an angle to provide additional privacy, and a junior master bedroom. All the pods are linked by glass-lined bridge connectors.

“Ryan is kind of a master,” says Grass. “It’s very interesting working with him in the conceptual design phase, when you’re on Skype with him sharing a screen, and he just starts flipping things all over the place. You’re like, ‘Wait a minute, how did he do that?’ So that was pretty cool. Ryan and Keith had a really good feel for the aesthetic we had in mind. We really enjoyed the architectural design process.”

Some couples are perfectly aligned in their aesthetic preferences. The Grasses are not among them, with Anne leaning toward contemporary materials and Josh a more traditional mountain look.

And yet, with the assistance of the designers, they managed to meld their differences into a successful fusion of styles, which is evident throughout the exterior and interior finishes.

“They had differing opinions at many crossroads,” says MacFadyen, “and I would catch what I felt were the important things to make the call and move forward with a little bit of what Anne wanted and a little bit of what Josh wanted. This is common, and it’s fun.”

The blending of styles is immediately apparent as one pulls

into the front auto court, which loops around a landscaped, boulder-rimmed raised planter built around a large Jeffrey pine—a touch that softens the feel of the approach, Marsden explains.

The home’s exterior is clad in a clean and contemporary clear cedar siding, which received a gray stain to give it a more traditional vernacular. Pre-weathered corrugated metal accents the wood siding, which is set off by bold lines of jet-black steel—“like putting on a black belt and black shoes to complement a sharp gray suit,” Marsden quips. Grayish sandstone sawn by Reno’s Eric Schwedt Stone & Masonry adds another material to the mix.

An oversized door of stainless steel and black-stained alder ushers guests into the soaring great room, which slopes gently from 17 feet overhead to 19 feet over the mostly glass wall opposite the entry.

A large black I-beam runs the length of the room. The beam was designed not only to split the great-room spaces visually, but also to bring the exterior materials inside and provide crucial structural support for a portion of the upper floor and roof.

“That is a dramatic element, and we are happy with how it



THIS PAGE: A large black I-beam runs the length of the great room, splitting the living room from the kitchen and dining areas while providing crucial structural support for a portion of the upper floor and roof. A giant Nathan Anthony sectional couch helps define the space **OPPOSITE PAGE:** An asymmetrical fireplace designed by KSA towers over the great room



turned out,” says Grass. “It was a big choice whether to put in a post or a beam. Something has to hold up that corner of the second floor, and you have two choices, unless you want to go with an insanely expensive cantilever sort of option. So we chose the beam, because a post in the middle of that room would feel intrusive to the flow.”

On the living room side of the I-beam, a black metal-paneled fireplace towers over a giant Nathan Anthony sectional couch. The exterior materials repeat here, with the fireplace flanked on one side by the gray-stained cedar and on the other by the gray sandstone that is interspersed throughout the home.

to keep some of the warmer wood elements,” says Grass, who argued against his wife’s preference for concrete floors. “I think we found a happy medium where it doesn’t feel like a beach house, but it has some really clean, cool lines to it. We figured out how to find the right balance there.”

While the fireplace takes center stage in the living room, a custom floating staircase on the far side of the great room is the focal point of the interior. The stairs, designed by the KSA team, express each of the main materials used in the home—wood in the form of hefty PSL block treads, steel in the stringers and grip rails, and glass railings. The staircase is set off by an adjoining wall of the sawn sandstone.

The upstairs houses two south-facing bedrooms with stellar views to Northstar, including a bunk room accessed by one of the home’s glass-lined bridges, as well as a multi-function art/media/play room. Another glass connector leads from the garage to the public space, off of which are a laundry room and separate mudroom with lockers and a bench. The front auto court, great room and the glass bridge leading to the master suite are all in clear view as one walks down the windowed corridor from the garage.

“I think the bridge connector language was really successful,” Marsden says. “As you circulate from one spot of the house to another, you pass these transparent bridge elements everywhere you

go. Not only does that bring light into those hallways and transparency, but it creates visual cues that one is transitioning from public to private spaces, and vice versa.”

The owners and their team agree that the master suite is among the prize areas of the home.

Linked by a glass bridge from the great room, the master pod is shifted westward, away from the extensive outdoor living spaces in back of the home and toward a densely forested portion of the lot. A door along the passage leads to a covered outdoor nook and hot tub on the back patio. A powder room is located just inside the door. The end of the hall swings left into the master bedroom or right into an office, which includes a Murphy bed that folds out of the wall and its own door out to the front auto court.



Left of the beam from the main entry, the dining space is defined by a custom walnut table and pendant light running parallel to a glass Andersen slider door. A covered outdoor fire pit and seating area beckons from just beyond the glass. Past the dining room, the kitchen breaks up the vaulted space under a lower section of ceiling.

Modern and traditional materials blend throughout this grand public space. Metal and rock mix with bright white Caesarstone kitchen countertops and walls, which reside harmoniously amid richly grained hickory wood floors by Truckee’s Bassett Flooring, dark walnut cabinetry from S&S Millworks and lighter hemlock ceilings from Caseywood Corporation. It’s another testament to the owners’ merging of tastes.

“I didn’t want it to feel like a beach house in Malibu; I wanted



OPPOSITE PAGE: The kitchen blends contemporary and traditional materials, and features a Weiland pass-through window to aid the outdoor cooking and dining experience **THIS PAGE:** A covered patio off the great room and master suite steps down to a circular stone terrace and fire pit bordered by landscaping from Truckee's Rock & Rose, Inc.

“One of Josh’s goals with the master suite was having his office close by, so we made that part of the master pod on the north side to help buffer the master from the auto court and give it some privacy,” says Marsden. “But what’s also nice is he has a door out to the auto court. That way, if he needed to get to the garage quickly or had people coming over for a meeting, he has easy access.”

The master bedroom does not eat up a ton of square footage. It is lofty, however. And while a strip of windows high on the south wall lets in natural light during the day (similar to the high living room windows), the upper portion of the room would remain dark at night if not for MacFadyen.

To counteract the dark void, MacFadyen suggested placing lights facing upward above the master bed (as well as in the living room) that splash light onto the ceiling.

“That was something where the owner wasn’t convinced. I encouraged them to trust me,” MacFadyen says. “We were all glad

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we did it, because it really lightens up that ceiling.”

While the entire design and build was a success, the owners and their team perhaps rave most about the outdoor living areas off the back of the home.


“We really liked the back of that lot and we saw a huge potential for a covered outdoor sitting area, which we kind of missed on our first house,” says Grass. “We felt like we needed a big outdoor area that was covered, because in the summer the sun is so intense at 6,000 feet, and then if it’s snowing out, you’re always having to clean it off. So we really enjoy that part of the house.”

Off the living room, a wall of Weiland lift-and-slide doors open to a sprawling stone patio.

To the right is the covered hot tub nook, and beyond that a separate covered seating area off the master bedroom. To the left, a massive flat roof shelters the main outdoor living quarters, which includes a barbecue, counter and nearby dining table, as well as additional seating in front of a substantial ledgestone fireplace surround. Ceiling heaters help ensure comfort year-round. The space also features a large Weiland pass-through window from the

kitchen, adding convenience to the outdoor cooking and dining experience.

The patio steps down to a circular stone terrace and fire pit bordered by landscaping from Truckee’s Rock & Rose, Inc. Beyond the fire pit, the lot spills out to a clearing that merges with a maze of manzanitas, pines and firs—the views to Northstar ever present through the treetops.

“Everyone did a nice job on the house,” says Grass. “It’s a lot about how the details are managed to pull it off. There’s nothing worse than having a great vision and design only to have the execution fall short.” 

AWARD: *Mountain Contemporary*

Building Design: Kelly & Stone Architects

Builder: Glennwood Mountain Homes

Interior Design: Annie MacFadyen of Ryan Group Architects

Square Feet: 4,689

Year Complete: 2017



The home boasts expansive outdoor living spaces, including a patio area sheltered by a large flat roof