



THE NEW HOME: ORGANIC, ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND FUNCTIONAL



Situating the home on a 5-acre parcel between dense Sierra forest and the open grassland of Russell Valley allows the house to take advantage of the privacy and protection provided by the forest, yet break out into the open valley to grab sun and views (inset) The Russell Valley Project is a design/build collaboration between Ryan Borman as lead designer and friend and builder Jude Gavigan of In House Builders

Within 15 minutes of leaving downtown Truckee I'm driving on a dirt road and looking up at a spectacular combination of corrugated midnight bronze metal, glass and reclaimed redwood and can't help thinking this is forward-thinking: industrial meets mountain architecture.

Welcome to the most recent design/build project by Jude Gavigan, Ryan Borman and In House Builders. The lines are clean, the materials are bold and the result is astonishingly inviting.



Individual spaces cascade down and around the site, seeming to tumble out of the forest and onto the valley floor

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Influenced by the mining history of the California mountains, Ryan used simple volumes in a more complex arrangement to achieve dynamic flowing spaces that open up toward the view of the valley (right) In House Builders signature design and construction model creates structurally and design efficient homes that have good strong bones, using the structure itself as the core of the design and aesthetic of the home. This not only keeps construction costs down, but lets the structure speak for itself, leaving no need for additional ornament or decoration

Step inside. The high ceiling instantly creates open space and the windows bring the valley and distant peaks into focus. Only sliding glass stands between the main living areas, where you imagine homeowners spend the majority of their time, and the captivating views.

"It's important for us to incorporate homes into their surroundings," explains Gavigan. "This house fits into the hillside," he says, while pointing out the cascading "boxed out" garages, main and lower floors.



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The ultra efficient building envelope allows the winter sun to penetrate deep into the interior, warming the concrete floors and augmenting the active radiant heat, while the large porch overhang keeps summer sun far away from the south windows



In conjunction with very efficient windows and finished concrete floors with radiant heat, the home has all the necessary elements for passive heating and cooling

Set on five acres, this Russell Valley dream home is just shy of 2,500 square feet. It's less and, simultaneously, more: less clutter, less extravagance and ultimately, less expensive. It's more progressive, more in harmony with the natural world and more energy efficient than a typical Tahoe home. It exemplifies sustainable design and the budding trend led by In House Builders to build smaller, smarter, functional spaces.

"We pride ourselves on the simplicity of our design, allowing bold and raw structural elements to stand out. We are constantly looking for the opportunity to utilize solar gain and incorporate reclaimed wood, metal and other material," explains Gavigan. From the beginning of each project, In House Builders combines designer's expertise with the builder's structural and systems knowledge.

Gavigan works closely with his team and clients to utilize as many energy-efficient systems and products as possible. In this home,

the structurally insulated panels, commonly referred to as SIPs, come from Reno.

As a leader in using SIPs for home construction in Tahoe, In House Builders provide a warmer, stronger home for a lower cost than traditional stick framing when accounting for savings in labor cost.

The house takes advantage of passive solar. It is oriented to take full advantage of the sunlight for heat and the overhang provides shade for cooling in the summer months. The home is also solar ready. In the next year the owners will install a grid inter-tie photovoltaic system that generates electricity for the home and routes excess power to the utility grid.

All the wood, including the cabinets and exposed interior beams, is from the state of California. Pine trees from the lot have been made into interior steps and chipped for landscaping. Every piece of salvaged redwood, reclaimed from the Georgia-Pacific Mill

in northern California, has its own unique character.

Low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints and adhesives were used throughout the home. Gavigan chose affordable, low emissions plywood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and engineered lumbers. The hydronic heating system along with the air recuperating system provides higher indoor air quality.

Leveraging his early green building experience while a student in Humboldt with extensive work in Portland and building high-end sustainable residences in Santa Barbara, Gavigan weaves an industrial look and contemporary feel into his projects. You'll see corrugated metal siding and sheet metal alongside lumber and textured concrete. The result is avant-garde and practical.

These homes will be passed from one generation or family to the next with minimal wear and tear. And the bonus is that the

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The home was built using Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) creating a structure that uses half the lumber of a conventionally framed home and yet has twice the insulation value

intrinsic desire for balance and living in a green home is not reserved for the very wealthy. It is possible to build a new home in Tahoe-Truckee sustainably in the range of \$250 to \$400 per square foot, depending on location. *AH*

Courtesy of In House Builders, 530.567.5150 or www.inhousebuilders.net.

Article by Nicole Cheslock, NC Communications, nicole@nicolecheslock.com.

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Nestled into the hillside, the Russell Valley dream home boasts:

- Structurally insulated panels, passive solar and hydronic heating
- Reclaimed wood from the house's footprint and the Georgia-Pacific Mill
- Long-lasting metals and locally sourced recycled materials

Environmentally sound, cost-effective characteristics are leading the way in remodels and new home design, and the benefits are vast:

- Improved indoor air and water quality
- Conservation of natural resources, protected biodiversity and ecosystems
- Authentic comfort and health, an improved quality of life



the green list

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In House Builders

PO Box 3802, Truckee
530.567.5150, inhousebuilders.net
We focus on energy-efficient structures and green building practices. We are also Build It Green certified and a SiGBA member and supporter.

John McCabe Construction

PO Box 3299, Truckee
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Our company is certified green by the Build It Green organization. We are striving to color the world using new standards and practices to provide a healthy environment for all.

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