

MOUNTAIN HOME



An Interview with Marc Hogan and Chris Renner by Daniel Webster Johnson

As your Realtor®, I believe an essential service I provide is to help you stay ahead of the curve. Whether it's analyzing demographics, attending conferences or meeting with industry specialists, I am always collecting information that enables you to make better decisions. New homes have changed dramatically over the past few years, so I turned to two industry gurus to gain insight into some of the latest mountain home design trends.

Marc Hogan of bhh Partners, and Chris Renner of Pinnacle Mountain Homes, are both at the top of their respective industry. In fact, Builder Magazine identified Pinnacle as "2012 - America's Best Builder." In addition, both are located in Breckenridge and have partnered on approximately a dozen projects in different resorts in the last three years, so I knew you would appreciate their input. Here's a summary, in their words, of our conversation.

QUALITY NOT QUANTITY

Our clients desire to build smaller, high-quality, highly-efficient homes. The days of sprawling homes with huge, expansive great rooms and oversized bedroom suites are over. Our clients want open plans that flow well and live large with smaller square footage. One way to ensure that homes can be smaller is to lay out the furniture and plan out the spaces efficiently to avoid any and all wasted space. Central stairs are provided to avoid hallways and every square foot is scrutinized to see if it is really necessary in the home.

PRIVATE EDGES TO COMMON SPACES

A trend that we have been incorporating into our designs is to provide small, private areas off of other spaces. This technique saves square footage. Examples include window seats at stair landings, study alcoves off of family rooms, built-in bunk beds to the side of rec-rooms, and storage areas adjacent and underneath stairways to include built-in benches and cubbies. We work to micro-plan spaces thoroughly to avoid any wasted space. An example that we have incorporated in a number of designs is the private study alcove. This provides the owner with a small space to still get away to and concentrate, but not an oversized study with tons of books and built-ins. We often provide this alcove adjacent to the master suite to let it double as a transitional space between the primary living area and the master bedroom.

ONE LEVEL LIVING

Most clients desire the great room and master bedroom on one level, ideally with only a few steps up or down to the garage space. We always try to arrange the great room efficiently to ensure that the kitchen functions as the heart of the home. The secondary spaces such as guest rooms, family rooms, media rooms, etc., typically are located in cost-effective areas dictated by the topography of the site, either up or down, or possibly even above garages in bonus areas that are easy and inexpensive to build.

DESIGN TRENDS

OUTDOOR ROOMS

We like to be able to open up the great rooms to spaces that can communicate with the exterior, to capture the view and the sun correctly to incorporate outdoor living areas. The solar aspect of each home is studied thoroughly to make sure that the home daylights properly and creates an open, airy and inviting environment. Our 3-D computer programs allow the sun path and solar angles to be identified for any time of day on any day of the year.

CREATIVE USE OF MATERIALS

Our current designs incorporate materials that require less maintenance. Exteriors including stone panels, metal panels, pre finished siding materials and metal roofing all are good choices to reduce maintenance over time. We study the interior detailing to try to provide local source materials and often times incorporate beetle kill pine wherever possible. Creative use of tile, recycled materials and other non-traditional surfaces is an exciting way to make each interior unique.

ENERGY EFFICIENT DESIGN & SYSTEMS

State-of-the-art mechanical and electrical systems are integrated into each design to make the home energy efficient. The mechanical and plumbing systems should be centrally located to reduce plumbing and mechanical costs. Innovative insulation systems, together with highly efficient heating systems and the outside air ventilation systems with heat exchangers, insure lower energy bills. Every project we look at provides designs appropriate for installation or rough-in of solar thermal and solar photovoltaic systems.

KITCHENS THAT WORK

We spend a lot of time with our clients on the kitchen design to really make the kitchen the center of the great room. We like to

provide primary and secondary food preparation zones in the kitchen to incorporate the latest technology related to cabinetry and countertop design. We analyze our kitchen design checklist on each project to insure that we incorporate the ten items that make a great kitchen. More on kitchens in the future.



STYLE OF PROJECTS

Our clients are more open to creative designs that respond to the natural environment of their property. Many clients still want to incorporate timbers or logs into their homes, but we find that they are open to using the traditional mountain materials in new exciting ways. This approach allows the home to be unique and dynamic in response to our clients' needs and goals. As I meet with home buyers every day, I hear these requests and realize that sometimes the best way to get what you want is to design it from the ground up. New construction provides the opportunity to optimize your investment, spending money on exactly what you want without paying for unnecessary extra space, unimportant features, or a style that's dated.

When you can't find exactly what you want in an existing home on the market, then it may be time to start looking for a lot on which to build the perfect dream home.

CONTACT DETAILS.

Marc Hogan, founding partner at bhh partners.
Cell (970) 389-1536, www.bhhpartners.com.

Chris Renner, founder/owner of Pinnacle Mountain Homes.
Cell (970) 453-0708, www.pinnaclemtnhomes.com.

Daniel Webster Johnson, Broker Associate at
Resort Brokers Real Estate, Breckenridge CO.
Cell (970) 393-3300, www.yourmountainbroker.com.