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ARCHITECTURE **CCY ARCHITECTS**  
CONSTRUCTION **KEY ELEMENTS CONSTRUCTION**

A garage, main house and sauna are connected under one roofline; the sauna, at the far right, is reached by walking up a covered path created from boulders salvaged from the site.

A Scandi-modern Aspen home is inspired by a family cabin in Norway

# NORWEGIAN WOOD



Ready to build a family getaway, a Chicago couple found inspiration in a remote cabin in Norway's lush Morgedal region. The husband's grandfather had hiked there as a young man in the late 1800s, and the husband remembers first visiting the family cabin in the 1960s, spending many childhood holidays there—hiking, skiing, and sharing in cabin chores like chopping wood.

The couple imagined a launching pad in the Rocky Mountains for friends and family that connected to the outdoors like the Norway cabin, with elements of its rustic charm, yet overall designed to feel modern, progressive and with conveniences not found in the original. "We wanted to re-create the feel of the cabin but with running water and electricity," the husband says. And a wood-burning fireplace was important "because it is authentic and brings an atmosphere a gas fireplace cannot replicate," he adds.

They found the perfect 11.76-acre property in Old Snowmass, a sloping site with a bench at the top to take in straight-on views of Snowmass ski slopes—and unusual in that it supports two ecosystems: to the north, mature pine trees and aspen groves; to the south, sagebrush and scrub oak. Todd Kennedy and Gage Reese from CCY Architects walked the site, thinking the bench would be the home's location. But heading back downhill, they stopped midway. "It was a protected view, situated between the mature spruce trees, not a neighbor in sight," says Kennedy. "The homeowners embraced this idea," adds Reese. "They wanted to bring nature right up to the windows."

Three buildings—a garage, main house and sauna—connect under one roofline that mimics the slope, and a single door invites in friends and family. "The homeowners didn't want to enter through the garage while guests enter through a front door—everyone uses the same door," says Kennedy. A covered breezeway opens to nature between home and garage, while a rugged stone path, with boulders recovered from excavation, leads to the sauna.

Up the hill, a separate "man cave" serves as the husband's office, outfitted with desk and computer—as well as tool shed and wood-chopping center. Chopping wood is something that gives the husband pleasure and connects him to his roots—and the couple enjoys stacking wood together; the stacks are practical as well as beautiful.

"What we designed deferred to the site," says Kennedy. "How the house stretches between the trees feels as if it's been there as long as the trees have."

Designed with clean lines—concrete floors, white oak, gapped vertical wood siding, and *shou sugi ban* above the fireplace—the home radiates tranquility. The Mountain Ash granite fireplace >>

A grouping in front of the fireplace was designed for reading, conversation, enjoying the fire and admiring the views outside. The fireplace hearth is long enough to accommodate the tall husband, who likes to stretch out there.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The homeowners take in a “wow” view of Snowmass from the kitchen window. White oak chosen for its character and richness is used throughout the home. A custom-made “candlelier” by CCY Architects hangs above the dining room table, serving as a light source and functional art. At the home’s entry, vertical siding that appears to be reclaimed is actually manufactured wood by HEWN.



### WOOD PRIMER

To give this Scandi-modern home sleek, clean lines and a handsome Nordic palette, Todd Kennedy from CCY Architects explains the types of wood finishes used throughout the home:

**WHITE OAK** Chosen for its character and richness, this blonde wood is used for most finished surfaces within the house. The home uses two grades of interior white oak with character grade and clear white oak, both plain sawn to preserve the natural texture of the wood grain. We used the minor differences in two grades of wood, how it was finished and the way it was laid up, to create subtle amounts of contrast, which helped create a level of sophistication within the interiors. **MANUFACTURED WOOD** What appears to be reclaimed wood is manufactured by HEWN in Oregon. A prefinished product produced with their finishes, burned or chemical stains, it is less expensive and results in less waste than reclaimed boards. It is used vertically as siding around the gear room at the home’s entrance.

**SHOU SUGI BAN** Originating in 18th-century Japan, *shou sugi ban* is a method of preserving wood by charring it with fire. We wanted a dark wood finish for the recessed areas on the exterior of the house as well as an accent above the fireplace. Woods that are stained or painted black in our experience do not age well and require a lot of maintenance. The preservative qualities of the *shou sugi ban* gave us the dark finish we were looking for without passing on the maintenance issues to the homeowners. **CEDAR** Cedar has always been a popular choice for saunas—from an experiential point of view, the visual warmth and aromatic qualities of the cedar are an expected part of a sauna experience. There also is a practical reason why saunas use cedar: It’s a soft, lightweight wood, which means it warms to the touch quickly without getting too hot. It’s also very stable, preventing it from cracking, twisting and cupping under the extreme temperature and humidity conditions of a sauna. >>



# “WHAT WE DESIGNED DEFERRED TO THE SITE.”

—ARCHITECT TODD KENNEDY



is the lone stone element, its hearth wide enough to accommodate the tall husband, who likes to stretch out in front of the fire.

“The one thing I said was non-negotiable was a large kitchen window over the sink,” the wife says. She got her wish—a window where the couple enjoys taking in the “wow” view of Snowmass slopes.

Because the couple sometimes stays alone while other times the home is filled with family and friends, a two-story guest wing that sleeps 14 connects to the main house by a bridge that’s easily closed off when not in use.

Throughout, thoughtfully chosen items from the husband’s Norwegian childhood—his first pair of skis and tiny backpack; botanical prints he pressed from Norwegian wildflowers—provide the perfect décor. Cashmere-soft Spælsau sheepskins act as throws.

Skiing is a family tradition, harkening back to the husband’s roots in Morgedal, home to Sondre Nordheim, the father of modern skiing and creator of the first telemark skis. Next to the fireplace, two long wooden skis, a family treasure, were crafted by legendary ski maker Aasmund Kleiv, also from Morgedal.

Similarly focused on custom-crafting the best, the couple’s collaboration with CCY Architects “was an amazing process,” says the husband. “We told them what we wanted, but we didn’t know what it would look like.” “The home Gage and Todd designed exceeded our expectations,” the wife adds. ○

**OPPOSITE:** Built-in furniture contributes to the home’s sleek look; in the master bedroom, the headboard provides storage for books and reading glasses. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** In the guest bathroom, everyone receives their own drawer. A poured concrete stairway flows down to the lower level. Built-in storage throughout the home keeps it organized even when the home is full of “Norwegians at Christmas,” according to the husband.

»For a guide to this home’s products and pros, visit [mountainliving.com/NorwegianWood](http://mountainliving.com/NorwegianWood)

