

Wine-country hotspots: where to go this fall

western living

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hold a **wine**
tasting party
from glasses
to tapas

inside out

4 award-winning
homes that
blur the lines

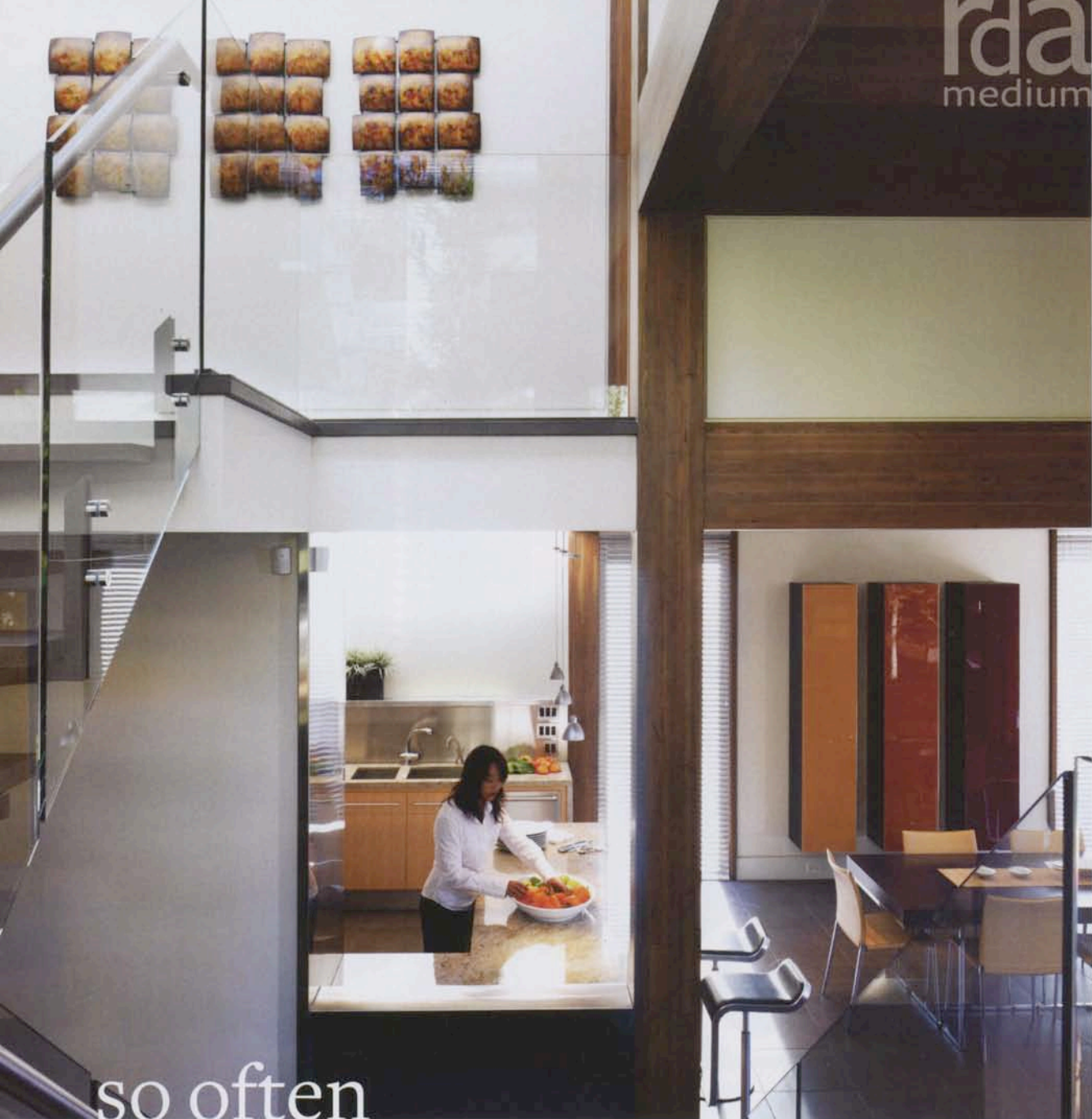


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so often

the mark of a great home lies not in grand or radical gestures but in the way it solves problems. This year's Medium winner, by West Vancouver-based Lamoureux Architect, is just such a home.

Situated on Whistler's Alta Lake, the house might never have been built had it not provided a solution to a challenge familiar to many resort properties: how to transport its owners and their extended family down a steep incline to the side of the lake, which is where they wanted to be. Moreover it does this "without getting all James Bond about it," as Brad Lamoureux says.

In practice that meant a reverse plan with living areas on the lower level next to the

water and bedrooms on the top storey nearer the street. Who knows how Ian Fleming might have solved the problem of bringing people in through the bedroom wing, but in a 2,500-square-foot house with neither budget nor space for flashy extras, Lamoureux directed his efforts to sprucing up an entry hallway that, come nighttime, will become the route to bed. A peaked, glazed roof gives the sense of walking through an atrium, and nine-foot-high wooden doors suggest that the spaces they conceal are grand indeed—rather than, as is actually the case, such utilitarian locales as the laundry room. Meanwhile, from beyond the end of the hallway, glimpses of the lake are provided through a window

Brad Lamoureux designed the home to flow seamlessly between indoor and outdoor space using cohesive materials and colours. Here, the porcelain tile floor extends onto the patio outside, while the Douglas fir posts are stained a rich brown to reflect the surrounding forest.



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“A brave blending of materials and sculptural architecture. A fantasy house to spend a weekend or a lifetime in.”
—RDA judge Paul Lavoie

the outside

In a neighbourhood that's more about excess than success, this winner proves some of the best designs are understated.

BY JIM SUTHERLAND
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN TESSLER



Clockwise from left: The modern glass and steel staircase is cantilevered, giving the appearance of floating in the room; the bedroom windows overlook an untouched forest preserve; folding glass doors open the living room up to the patio and lake beyond.



“This design is considerate of its site and context and does not play into the typical dark wood winterized box so typical of Whistler. A bold statement on how to live in the mountains.”
—RDA judge *Cedric Burgers*

that does double duty as part of the almost entirely glazed master bedroom, a veritable tree house in which the fir boughs outside are the only window treatments needed.

The descent to the main floor is accomplished via a bold suspended staircase, a rare extroverted element in a house that otherwise strives to serve its inhabitants rather than wow them. This is in keeping with another of the problems that Lamoureux set out to solve: finding a way to fit into the Whistler streetscape while avoiding its typical excess. The palette is as natural as in any other mountain home, with porcelain tile floors, a limestone fireplace and lots of dark-stained wood, but there are no logs or river

rocks, and never does one suspect that the builder slept next to his chainsaw.

Instead, the overriding sense is that the family has gotten what they wanted. The kitchen works well and looks quietly great, thanks in part to well-chosen granite that wraps round the cabinets and a modular stainless steel unit that gathers the appliances in one place. Furniture is lightweight and contemporary, and would look just as good on the other side of the glass walls that disappear when called upon (Bond would approve), opening the home to an outdoor patio that extends as close to the lake as is legally possible.

Problems solved. **wl**

Site Seen

When planning a recreational property, it's wise to think like an architect and make the site—and how you wish to use it—one of the top priorities. Here are some of the things that Brad Lamoureux considered with this home.

Challenge The steepness of the property and the need for auto access right to the front door.

Solution Lamoureux designed the house itself to act as a staircase, making levels a key feature.

Challenge The owners wanted to live near the water rather than look down at it.

Solution The layout is flipped, with the bedroom wing where you'd expect a foyer—but Lamoureux disguised the bedroom doors.