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FOR TODAY'S FINE HOMES





From Rock and Roll to Alpine Elegance

RETREAT AT MOUNTAIN VILLAGE, DESIGNED BY ARCHITECTURAL FIRM MECKS + PARTNERS,
BECOMES THE SETTING FOR AN MTV REALITY SHOW.

BY MICHAEL PARKER

What would you say if MTV called one day and asked to use your house as the setting for a reality show where 28 young people compete in all sorts of difficult, and sometimes disgusting, physical challenges for money? Would you let the crews come in and completely take over? Don Meeks, owner of Meeks + Partners, an international architecture and planning firm, was faced with such a request. And he said yes.

The house in question is more of a resort than a single residence. Located deep in the scenic mountains of Telluride, Colo., the Retreat at Mountain Village features four two-unit attached residences, measuring approximately 6,000 square feet each. Standing four stories and featuring six levels of Alpine-style elegance, the home's standout design, luxurious location, ample space, panoramic views and unique ski-in/ski-out entryways drew the attention of MTV producers. The fact that the home

ABOVE: Surrounded by the breath-taking landscape of Telluride, Colo., the Retreat at Mountain Village captured the eyes of MTV producers.

was built just a five-minute walk from the famed 42,000 square-foot Wyndham Peaks Resort and Golden Door Spa was also an enticing feature.

"Most of the show's crew stayed [at the Wyndham Peaks]," Meeks says. "They also liked the fact that our unit had great views and architecture to juice up their production."

Production began in the summer of 2003 for "Real World/Road Rules Challenge: The Gauntlet." The show pits contestants from "The Real World" and "Road Rules" — two of MTV's most popular and long running reality programs — against each other in 14 physical and mental challenges. Similar to programs like "Survivor," a major cash prize is up for grabs with teams vying for up to \$300,000. If a team member

loses in the "Gauntlet" challenge they are eliminated.

The stage is set

Though the competition is often ugly, the setting where it takes place could not be more alluring. The home features a total of five bedrooms and five and one-half baths, along with amenities such as nine-foot arched front doors made from Austrian Spruce and slate floors complete with in-floor radiant heat.

The main entry level features a two-story living area that opens to the kitchen and dining room, with a grand staircase descending into the master suite on the second level. Complementing the master suite is a game room with additional bedrooms, a media/billiards room and the ski-in/ski-out room below it. The fourth

BELOW: A great deal of maneuvering had to be done to the interior of the home to accommodate MTV cameras and personnel during the taping of the "Gauntlet."





level stands over wrought-iron railings and an elevator, and also features a loft and bunkroom.

The one thing the home did not have, however, was furniture.

"[MTV] liked the fact that the house wasn't furnished, which enabled them to come in and completely paint and furnish the house based on the show's theme, which was Americana — red, white and blue," Meeks says. "They also added extensive interior and exterior lighting for the cameras."

One challenge the builders faced in the original construction of this unit was its extreme topography. A sheer 30-foot drop

down to the ski slopes forced the builders at Getts-Built Custom Homes to modify the home into the hillside for easy ski-in/ski-out access on the main level.

A new level of notoriety

Meeks + Partners has seen fame in the past, according to Meeks, but not to the extent of having one of its projects as the setting for a cable television show.

"We've won many awards, and also been featured on HGTV," he says, but this use of the company's designs produced unparalleled exposure.



Michael Parker is a contributor to Options for Today's Fine Homes magazine.

ABOVE: Meeks + Partners was more than happy to have one of the company's homes as the setting for a popular television show.