

**Architect:** Nicholas Sonder Architect

**Builder:** Marshall Williams of Crestwood Construction

**Interior:** Staging by Catherine Macfee Interior Design and Rubicon Collection

**Landscape:** Perennial Landscape & Nursery; Nicholas Sonder Architect

**Year completed:** 2009

**Square feet:** 3,227



Story by Alison Bender | Photos by Vance Fox



## Sustainable Spec

**A LEED Silver home proves that building green can be beautiful.**

(above left) The home's roof pitches conceal its solar panels. (above right) The handsome kitchen with slate and stained concrete countertops reflects the project's emphasis on high-quality materials.

**T**ruckee-based contractor Marshall Williams picked a particular half-acre lot in Martis Camp "because it had this ultimate southern exposure," he says. "This parcel was really poised for solar."

Williams's goal was to build a LEED-certified (see page 122) spec house, which was to be the first "cabin" in the new Martis development. (Cabin sites are a half acre and have a maximum square footage of 3,250, as opposed to the larger estate lots.)

He contacted Truckee architect Nicholas Sonder, with whom Williams had worked in the past, about creating a home that would be eco-friendly, yet also beautiful.

“What makes a home green isn’t all the little components, but how you approach the whole project from the beginning,” says Sonder. To that end, the architect’s first step was to configure the floor plan, siting the home to take full advantage of the sun while preserving every tree on the lot. He factored in an expandable photovoltaic solar system that would provide 24 percent of the home’s energy consumption and four exhaust fans for continuous air exchange. Low-emission glass was used in all the windows and zero-VOC paints on all the walls.

Once the design was approved, the construction itself took only ten months, finishing up this past July and obtaining LEED Silver certification.

Williams, who has since embarked upon two more LEED builds in Martis Camp, was adamant about the use of all high-quality materials and selected walnut flooring and alder trim. The kitchen boasts slate countertops, teak and clear alder cabinets, and a concrete island with four specially shaped posts and steel inlay drain that took 55 hours to craft.

On the exterior, extensive overhangs keep the home grounded in the landscape; an abundance of windows expands the volume of the interior while maintaining a connection with the outdoors.

“The approach was to build something that reflected the Old Tahoe style, but in a more contemporary scene,” says Sonder. “We wanted something that was not as massive, with cleaner lines and the most minimal impact possible.”

Mission accomplished. **TQ**

Thank you!  
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