



Whistler, BC

CANADA

Clean as in Whistler

Whistler is rich in cedar and granite. So its traditional mountain homes use a lot of both. While the wood in older homes may have a raw finish, you won't see many log cabins in the mountains of British Columbia. The trees here are simply too massive. The granite boulders are enormous, too. People incorporate them into the structure of the house. Natural stones, in fact, are a classic element of both traditional and modern homes in the Canadian resort town.

"We try to use a lot of natural

materials when we are working in Whistler," says Chad Falkenberg, one half of Falken Reynolds, a Vancouver-based interior design studio. "It feels more authentic, closer to the earth and to the outside, which is why people go up there, to get away from the city."

Some of his projects involve sand-blasted Douglas fir to achieve very clean lines but give the wood extra texture. "The idea with all of this is that it patinas well," says Falkenberg. "If the wood gets hit by a tree or by skis, it's OK."

The studio's work in Whistler is particularly minimalistic and sophisticated yet still achieves the cozy feel of a mountain retreat. Hard textures

are mixed with softer, textile surfaces. "In the bedroom of the Aspen Drive house, we used wood furniture, but we also used wool carpet, so the whole floor feels like a sweater," Falkenberg tells about a recent project. "When you get out of bed, you shouldn't have to put socks on."

The designer, who draws inspiration from years of working and traveling in Scandinavia and Southern Europe, often relies on the visual warmth of the materials. "One of the easiest tricks is to mix grays and warm colors," to achieve the clean-lined yet warm look and feel of some of the Whistler homes he has designed. Combine a warm natural wood with a gray countertop or fabric, for



The wood of the barstools looks even warmer next to the cool gray countertop.



Interior designer Chad Falkenberg's favorite textures are anything that feels like a sweater.

example. “The two things are almost juxtaposing each other,” Falkenberg says. “It’s almost like a wood next to the cool gray looks even warmer.”

To accessorize your Whistler-inspired winter interior, go for copper and terra-cotta pots. The designer’s favorite textures are anything that feels like a sweater — the loop of a rug, wool blankets, pillows covered in chunky knits. A rougher texture, even on a hard surface like a coffee cup, also feels warmer. Leather is another great material that feels warm to the touch. It has a history to it. “Anything that evokes the natural world,” says Falkenberg.

He likes to keep things casual in a mountain retreat, as he expresses by



using a wire taxidermy sculpture or resin moose heads on the wall. “I love anything that reminds me, OK I’m in a cabin, and I’m not supposed to take everything so serious.” ◀