THE VILLAGE LODGE
AT SUGAR BOWL SKI RESORT

KERRY DEVINE
INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
“THE WILD, WITH ITS BROODING SILENCE AND MYSTERY, ITS SADNESS AND
LAUGHTER; THE MOUNTAINS SNOW-CAPPED WITH AGE-LONG DEPOSIT; THE LAND
UNEQUALLED IN SCENIC SPLENDOR AND GORGEOUS SCENERY: THIS WILL BE THE
SUPREME TREAT TO THOSE WHO VISIT THE SIERRA SNOWFIELDS THIS WINTER.”

- San Francisco: Southern Pacific Company, 1910
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ABSTRACT
THE INTERIOR RENOVATION OF THE VILLAGE LODGE AT SUGAR BOWL SKI RESORT REVITALIZES AND RESPECTFULLY MODERNIZES THE BOUTIQUE HOTEL. IT HIGHLIGHTS SURROUNDING NATURE, INTEGRATES SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, AND ADAPTS TO CURRENT USAGE WHILE PRESERVING THE ARCHITECTURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE RESORT.
Over the years, industry has changed and increased human access to the mountains with wagons, trains, cars, and then plowed freeways. We used wood, metal, steel and steam to reach the white snow, rolling hills, streams and valley lakes.

Along this journey we sidetracked, derailed, forged new paths, reached new heights and surely left tracks behind. Modernity and movement got us to where we wanted to be; nature’s mystery and serenity made us want to stay.

**The people who visit Sugar Bowl cherish this journey.** The historical significance is remembered during the gondola ride over a snowy valley into the lodge, but a new adventure begins upon entering the sophisticated, rustic interiors. The aesthetic combines industrial and modern in a slightly punkish way. It’s old fashioned, but speaks to the future. This reminds the young, risk-taking guests who are now side-tracked and snowbound to continue forging new paths.
Where we come from, where we go, what we touch along the way.
LOCATION & ACCESS. Located at Tahoe’s Donner Summit in Norden, CA, Sugar Bowl is on the western front of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. Three hours from San Francisco and forty-five minutes from Reno, the resort is a popular day-trip and vacation spot for skiers and snowboarders.

Guests access the resort through two portals: (1) slope side parking at the Mt. Judah Day Lodge or (2) a quick ride on the historic gondola to the snow-bound Village. If using the latter option, a covered walkway then leads visitors to the main lobby of The Village Lodge at Sugar Bowl. During winter months, the lodge is snowbound, accessed only by gondola, snowcat and skis.

The site topography lends Sugar Bowl its name. Base elevation at The Village Lodge is 6883 ft; surrounding mountains reach 8383 ft. Donner Summit is the site of the first transcontinental railroad and highway (the Lincoln Highway). The journey through the mountain pass is treacherous, but an avenue to adventure. The development of efficient transportation has helped mold Sugar Bowl's history and success.
CLIMATE. The climate at Sugar Bowl is what one might expect in the Sierra Mountains; while winter temperatures drop to nearly zero degrees Fahrenheit, they reach the low eighties in July and August. Wind and heavy snow are influential environmental factors to consider in architecture and design. Sugar Bowl’s 500 inches of annual snowfall require construction that holds three times the weight of homes in nearby Truckee (Tahoe Quarterly).

FOUNDED. Skiers discovered the area of Sugar Bowl in 1867 when the Southern Pacific Railroad designed a new stop called Tinker’s Station near Donner Summit Pass. A group from the Bay Area began exploring tracks on what are now the Lincoln and Disney peaks. Soon a ski community was organized with rope tows and a ski school. Walt Disney and Bay Area families fronted financial support and California’s first aerial chair lift and The Village Lodge were built in 1939.

CULTURE. Day skiing was an unknown concept at this time, so The Village Lodge acted as a residence for devoted skiers and families. There were rooms available and storage units provided for the duration of a season. As families decided to join the community, they purchased deeded plots of land from the mountain and built private homes in the village of Sugar Bowl. The cultivation of this village and community is what keeps Sugar Bowl’s business running today; homeowners are also shareholders of the resort. The ski area has been about family, friends and skiing from the very beginning.

photos: Wurster original architecture
DESIGN. The Village Lodge was built in 1939 by William Wurster and is soaked in architectural history. His natural modernist style is apparent in the building’s comfortable design. The lodge can be described as a reduction of a traditional Bavarian ski-lodge with similar roof structure and board and batten siding, but without excessive cutouts or detailing. It is understated and classically elegant with European charm.

Wurster’s work embodied the Bay Region Style in its use of simple forms, natural materials, strong indoor-outdoor connections, and straightforward construction methods. His vernacular architecture and construction in native timber shows an understanding of the surrounding environment: the building was clearly designed to withstand the test of wind, weather and time. In 1936, the architect explained his design direction: “I like to work on direct, honest solutions, avoiding exotic materials, using indigenous things so that there is no affectation and the best is obtained for the money... Over and over again I would reiterate that Modern is a point of view not a style... Use the site, the money, the local materials, the client, the climate to decide what it shall be.”

THE BUILDING. The original, post and beam lodge was just 15,000 sq ft. In 1941, and again in 1962, it was expanded by William Wurster to a total of 32,500 sq ft. Before the proposed renovation, it spans nearly 34,000 sq feet over 4 floors, with an additional 6,800 sq ft of exterior space.
CLIENT. The homeowners and shareholders of Sugar Bowl value a sense of community and the ski experience. Their goal is not to commercialize the resort, but rather gradually grow the village to acquire the support necessary for future financial stability. “Our ownership is very mountain-experience driven. They are ski and snowboard enthusiasts,” says Rob Kautz, president of Sugar Bowl and past chairman of the NSAA. In order to maintain success, Sugar Bowl must balance modernization with moderation.

GUEST PROFILE. Guests of Sugar Bowl are winter sport enthusiasts of all types and ages: city dwellers, weekenders, tourists, backpackers, athletes, beginners, families, young singles, and resort employees. The hotel environment is comfortable and accommodating for all kinds. However, in order to keep the village community thriving, the hotel’s goal is to attract those who might show long term commitment to the mountain.

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC. Young professionals and adventure seekers. Socializing, eating, drinking and laughing are important to this group during a mountain vacation. Public spaces that cultivate conversation and fun are essential, while sleeping amenities should be casual, functional and economical.

The hospitality industry under-serves this demographic in the Lake Tahoe mountain region: those looking for a step above an economy motel without the pretentiousness of a luxury resort. Guests of The Village Lodge might stay at The Standard Hotel when visiting New York or Los Angeles.
James Paxton

Off-road dirt bike rider, snowboarder and triathlete

Business Ventures:
Founder of the Extremity Games, a sports event for athletes with limb loss and limb difference

Company Based In:
Berkeley, CA

Extension Of Himself:
“I view extreme sports as an outlet. It gives me an incredible amount of exhilaration, and then there’s that little fear of death, just a little bit. You’re on the edge, it invigorates you and puts passion back into my life. I love competing in extreme sports, and I love watching them.”

Gabi Shaw

Freelance graphic designer, illustrator and skier

Nine To Five:
Web design for emerging, young music talents.

Born And Raised:
San Francisco, CA

A Little Bit Of Her:
“When I’m not designing, I’m running, skiing, hiking, sculpting, travelling, or checking out new boutiques and restaurants. My crew makes an effort to leave the city on weekends, to take advantage of the California goodness. We love meeting new people and appreciate good design. I spend what I make. You only live once.”
PROGRAM
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THE VILLAGE LODGE. bringing it back

Minimal changes are made to the exterior in appreciation of Wurster's original architecture. A clean window layout simplifies the southwest façade; a stone terrace grounds the building to the earth; super-sized and triple-glazed windows draw additional sunlight, connect to the environment and reflect the surrounding landscape.
SOUTHWEST EXTERIOR ELEVATION
FL-01 PLAN
1 ENTRY FROM GONDOLA
2 RECEPTION
3 LOBBY BAR
4 RESTAURANT
5 CAFE (MULTI-LEVEL)
6 KITCHEN
7 EXTERIOR TERRACE
8 RESTROOMS
Tahoe's only snowbound lodge makes a tribute to the evolution of transportation that made access to the site possible. A covered walkway from the gondola to the main lobby protects visitors from the elements and adds suspense of what lies up ahead.
Visitors are stopped in their tracks to take in the surrounding view upon entering the Main Lobby. Buffed concrete floors and rustic, weathered beams comprise a sleek backdrop for quirky accessories and textiles.
MAIN LOBBY.  fireplace and bar
Floor to ceiling windows provide natural light during the day while bringing darkness and mystery at night. It’s a casual, warm, contemporary environment for apres ski.
For a laid-back vibe, furniture appears to be a collection in a residential living room rather than formal seating arrangements. Bar stools, pub tables, a suspended fireside bench, comfortable upholstery and exterior fire pits provide several options for social groupings on cold and warm days.

The design concept is manifested in graphic, cut panels behind the reception desk. The reception area identifies separately from the bar and lounge with a lower ceiling height.
The dining experience at the Village Lodge gives a nod to William Wurster and his direct, simple style and use of indigenous materials.
RESTAURANT. fireside
Wurster’s original stone fireplace remains untouched. Sculptural art and enveloping wing chairs add reflection and texture.
RESTAURANT. flexible seating
Furniture may be rearranged for various party sizes. A gastro pub menu offers comforting food and micro-brews to hotel guests and villagers.

RESTAURANT. group room
The cozy back room may be used for communal dining or large parties.
CAFE. “Untracked Line Cafe”
An escape from the main lodge’s lunch rush, the cafe provides counter service in an active environment.
CAFE. two-stories

Opening the floor to the basement level lets daylight pour through to additional seating below. Acoustic, recycled tiles work to mitigate sound while energizing skiers and boarders for an afternoon of pow.
1 LOCKERS & STORAGE
2 SPA, FITNESS & HOT TUBS
3 MEDIA ROOM
4 MEDIA LOUNGE & BILLIARDS
5 ADDITIONAL CAFE SEATING
6 RESTROOMS
7 ADMINISTRATION
8 HOUSEKEEPING
9 STORAGE & FACILITIES
10 BOILER ROOM
11 NOT IN SCOPE
SPA & FITNESS. “Detox Retox”
The Village Lodge spa offers a space to disembark and re-energize after a long day on the slopes. Workout, soak, detoxify - whatever it takes to prep for getting back at it tomorrow.
SPA & FITNESS

SPA & FITNESS. hot tubs
Guests and villagers escape from the chaos in the industrial, underground spa baths.
MEDIA ROOM. on track
Space for laptops and dim lighting provides the perfect spot to compile "Go-Pro" footage from the day. Collaborate, deliberate, recap, be inspired.
MEDIA LOUNGE

LOUNGE. “15fame”
Impress your friends and get your 15 minutes of fame as your homemade movies are shown for all to see.
FL-02 PLAN

1 GROUP ROOM 440 SF
2 STD GUEST ROOM 250 SF
3 LOFT ROOM 290-500 SF
4 HOUSEKEEPING 60 SF
1 GUEST SUITE 440 SF
2 STD GUEST ROOM 250 SF
3 LOFT ROOM 290-500 SF
4 HOUSEKEEPING 60 SF
GROUP GUEST ROOM

Designed especially for The Village Lodge’s primary audience, the group room provides an opportunity for friends to stay together.
GROUP ROOM: camp out
A large mattress space with individual sleeping bags makes sleeping arrangements efficient and fun for groups of 4 or 5. Storage is open and ample.
GROUP ROOM. lounge
Plan tomorrow's activities or recap today's in a casual lounge environment of hip and vibrant colors.

GROUP ROOM. storage solutions
Open storage at entrance leaves ample room for gear to dry out.
GUEST ROOM. snowbound
The roof overhang is designed for maximum sunlight during winter months. Enveloped by the environment, guest rooms are understated and airy.
GUEST ROOM. storage solutions
Standard rooms of 250 sq ft are economical and creative when it comes to storage. Open hooks, heated entry way and boot driers help gear dry overnight.
WORKS CITED

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Interview with Paul Griffin n – Manager, The Inn at Sugar Bowl

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NSSA The Green Room [http://www.nsaa.org/nsaa/environment/the_greenroom/]
Ski Area Citizens Coalition [http://www.skiareacitizens.com/]
DESIGNER PROFILE

INTERIOR DESIGN FOR
THE VILLAGE LODGE:
Kerry Devine

Kerry Devine was born and raised in Hingham, Massachusetts. After earning a finance degree at the University of Massachusetts, she worked in Boston as a financial analyst. She returned to the academic world for a masters degree in Interior Architecture and Design first at the Boston Architectural College, then the Academy of Art University.

While in Boston, she worked as an entry level designer at CBT Architects. Upon completion of her MFA, she plans to continue working in the Interior Design field in San Francisco with Steven Miller Design Studio. Kerry’s passion for interior design is fueled by its mix of creative and practical requirements.