

Custom Home Design Inspiration Guide

Architectural Styles and Design Ideas for Central Oregon

By Kevin Rea, Master Builder Since 1977

Introduction

Central Oregon's dramatic landscape—with its volcanic peaks, juniper-dotted high desert, and pine forests—provides an extraordinary canvas for custom home design. This guide explores the architectural styles that work beautifully in our region and provides inspiration for your dream home.

Architectural Styles

Mountain Contemporary

Mountain Contemporary is the most popular style in Central Oregon, blending modern design principles with natural materials that complement the landscape.

Key Characteristics:

- Clean, horizontal lines
- Large expanses of glass
- Natural materials (stone, wood, steel)
- Open floor plans
- Indoor-outdoor living spaces
- Flat or low-slope roofs

Best Suited For:

- Tetherow

- Caldera Springs
- Awbrey Butte

Design Elements:

- Floor-to-ceiling windows framing mountain views
- Cantilevered roof overhangs
- Exposed steel beams
- Concrete or polished floors
- Minimalist fireplaces

Ranch Modern

Ranch Modern honors Central Oregon's ranching heritage while incorporating contemporary comfort and design. This style is particularly suited to the high desert landscape.

Key Characteristics:

- Low, horizontal profile
- Natural, weathered materials
- Deep covered porches
- Rustic-contemporary fusion
- Connection to the land

Best Suited For:

- Brasada Ranch
- Rural properties
- High desert settings

Design Elements:

- Board-and-batten siding
- Weathered steel accents
- Timber post-and-beam entries

- Stone fireplaces
- Barn-inspired details

Northwest Modern

Northwest Modern emphasizes the integration of architecture with the natural environment, using sustainable materials and passive design strategies.

Key Characteristics:

- Organic forms
- Natural wood exteriors
- Green building practices
- Daylighting strategies
- Native landscaping

Best Suited For:

- Sunriver
- Forested lots
- Environmentally conscious clients

Design Elements:

- Cedar or reclaimed wood siding
- Living roofs (green roofs)
- Rainwater collection
- Passive solar orientation
- Natural ventilation

Traditional Mountain

Traditional Mountain style evokes the classic mountain lodge aesthetic with warm, inviting spaces and timeless appeal.

Key Characteristics:

- Steeply pitched roofs
- Heavy timber elements
- Stone and log accents
- Warm, rich interiors
- Symmetrical facades

Best Suited For:

- Broken Top
- Pronghorn
- Mt. Bachelor area

Design Elements:

- Exposed log or timber trusses
 - River rock fireplaces
 - Copper roofing accents
 - Wraparound porches
 - Dormer windows
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Design Elements

Windows and Views

In Central Oregon, windows are more than openings—they're frames for the spectacular landscape. Strategic window placement can capture Cascade Mountain views, morning sunlight, and dramatic sunsets.

Window Strategies:

- Corner windows for panoramic views
- Clerestory windows for privacy with light
- Picture windows as focal points
- Operable windows for natural ventilation

Glass Options:

- Triple-pane for energy efficiency
- Low-E coatings for UV protection
- Tinted glass for glare reduction
- Structural glass walls for maximum views

Indoor-Outdoor Living

Central Oregon's climate—with over 300 days of sunshine—makes outdoor living spaces essential. The best designs blur the line between inside and out.

Outdoor Living Features:

- Covered patios with heating
- Outdoor kitchens
- Fire pits and fireplaces
- Hot tubs with views
- Screened porches

Transition Elements:

- Multi-slide glass doors
- Consistent flooring materials
- Extended roof lines
- Outdoor rooms with fireplaces

Material Palette

The materials you choose define your home's character and how it relates to the landscape.

Exterior Materials:

Material	Character	Maintenance
Cedar siding	Warm, natural	Medium
Fiber cement	Clean, durable	Low
Stone veneer	Substantial, timeless	Low
Weathered steel	Industrial, modern	None
Stucco	Smooth, contemporary	Low

Interior Materials:

Material	Character	Application
Reclaimed wood	Warm, storied	Accent walls, beams
Concrete	Modern, industrial	Floors, counters
Natural stone	Organic, substantial	Fireplaces, baths
Steel	Contemporary, strong	Railings, accents
Leather	Luxurious, warm	Built-ins, doors

Fireplaces

In Central Oregon, the fireplace is often the heart of the home. Modern designs range from traditional stone hearths to minimalist linear gas units.

Fireplace Styles:

- Stacked stone with timber mantel
- Floor-to-ceiling concrete surround
- Linear gas with clean steel frame
- See-through between rooms
- Outdoor fire features

Lighting Design

Proper lighting enhances architecture and creates atmosphere. In Central Oregon, we balance natural light with carefully designed artificial lighting.

Lighting Strategies:

- Maximize daylight with strategic windows
 - Layer ambient, task, and accent lighting
 - Use dimmers throughout
 - Highlight architectural features
 - Consider dark sky compliance
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Room-by-Room Inspiration

Great Rooms

The great room is the social heart of Central Oregon homes, typically combining living, dining, and kitchen areas with soaring ceilings and mountain views.

Design Ideas:

- Vaulted ceilings with exposed beams
- Statement fireplace as focal point
- Open kitchen with large island
- Dining area with view windows
- Comfortable seating arrangements

Primary Suites

The primary suite should be a private retreat with spa-like amenities and connection to the outdoors.

Design Ideas:

- Private deck or patio access

- Fireplace for ambiance
- Sitting area with views
- Spa bathroom with soaking tub
- Walk-in closet with natural light

Kitchens

Central Oregon kitchens are designed for both serious cooking and casual entertaining, with high-end appliances and generous counter space.

Design Ideas:

- Professional-grade appliances
- Large islands with seating
- Walk-in pantries
- Butler's pantry for entertaining
- Views to outdoor spaces

Home Offices

With remote work increasingly common, dedicated home offices are essential. Central Oregon's inspiring landscape makes working from home a pleasure.

Design Ideas:

- Separate entrance for clients
 - Built-in cabinetry and shelving
 - Views for inspiration
 - Good natural light
 - Sound isolation
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Sustainability Features

Building sustainably in Central Oregon makes sense both environmentally and economically.

Energy Efficiency:

- Super-insulated envelopes
- Triple-pane windows
- Heat pump systems
- LED lighting throughout
- Energy recovery ventilation

Water Conservation:

- Low-flow fixtures
- Xeriscaping
- Drip irrigation
- Rainwater harvesting
- Greywater systems

Renewable Energy:

- Solar-ready design
 - Solar panel integration
 - Battery storage
 - EV charging stations
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Working with Your Design Team

Communicating Your Vision

The best custom homes result from clear communication between homeowner, architect, and builder. Here's how to share your vision effectively.

Preparation Tips:

- Create a Pinterest board or image folder
- Write a narrative about how you want to live
- List must-haves and deal-breakers
- Share examples of what you don't want
- Be open to professional guidance

The Design Process

- 1. Discovery:** Share your vision and lifestyle
 - 2. Concepts:** Review initial design options
 - 3. Refinement:** Develop the chosen direction
 - 4. Documentation:** Finalize construction drawings
 - 5. Selections:** Choose materials and finishes
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Conclusion

Your custom home should be a reflection of your lifestyle and values, designed to take full advantage of Central Oregon's spectacular setting. Whether you prefer Mountain Contemporary, Ranch Modern, or Traditional Mountain style, the key is working with experienced professionals who understand both design and construction.

At Rea Co Homes, we've been helping clients realize their design visions for over 45 years. We'd love to discuss your ideas.

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