



A Secluded Backcountry Home in the Sierra Nevada Mountains

How an ex-pro athlete built a snowboarding Shangri-La on a slab of granite in California's High Sierra.



“Right now, I’m watching the sky change color from blue to orange to green while I cook dinner over the fire,” says Mike Basich, describing his idyllic winter home 7,100 feet (2,164 meters) up Donner Summit, California. The pioneer snowboarding champion who established his roots in the punk days of the late-’80s shred scene and once dropped a mind-boggling 120 feet (37 meters) from a helicopter onto an Alaskan mountain, is now a photographer and off-grid nomad, having renounced a sprawling mansion in Utah for simpler, stripped-back living. Not only can the maverick snow-chaser roam wherever the mood and weather take him, courtesy of a tiny portable cabin hauled by his Dodge truck, but he also has his own powder paradise, perched on a slab of granite in the Sierra Nevada. Area-241, as Basich named his backcountry home (the moniker of his outer-

wear clothing label is Two For One), is his personal playground—accessible only by snowcat much of the year and equipped with its own chairlift. It’s a diminutive house with the same idiosyncratic, easygoing charm of its owner: just one room, made from local stone with a curving design based on the golden ratio—a special number that can be found everywhere in nature, from plants and animals to star systems. Inside, a floor-inlaid pentagram radiates out to floor-to-ceiling windows that frame the pristine mountain scenery. The stove, couches, and shelves are built into the walls below a cozy loft bed. Out front, there’s a wood-fired hot tub and cold plunge bath; since there’s no indoor plumbing, a composting toilet sits