

# “THE NEW SECOND-HOME OWNER IS BUILDING A HOUSE FOR FOUR-SEASON USE; THE BERKSHIRES IS A DESTINATION SPOT YEAR-ROUND.”

LOU BOXER, AS TOLD TO KELLY HAYES

**Where you have cosmopolitan people building second homes or primary residences, there will be a style that is prevalent.** Right now, I'm seeing modern. In years past, the trend was for more traditional, shingle-style homes, which were big in the Hamptons and Carolinas. Today, I build more design-forward houses, which are often more rectilinear and square, with interesting exteriors and use of steel. I worked on a cool, modern project in New York where the home is hanging off of rock, with a creek running underneath. The home has butt-glazed windows at the corner of the rooms, interesting siding patterns, dark mahogany windows, and powder-coated steel grid work.

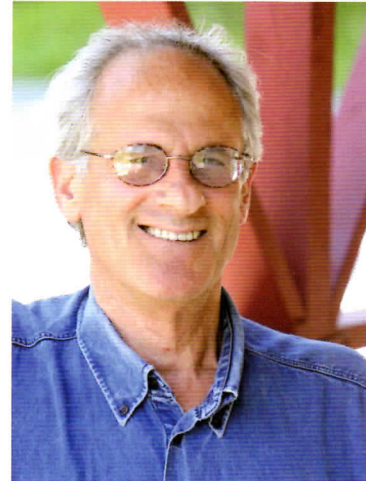
**In the Berkshires, land and privacy define luxury.** You can buy large parcels of land here—50, 100, or 200-plus acres. You can have a sense of being in the middle of nowhere, perhaps even with a dirt road yet near town. The Berkshires hosts many cultural organizations, with world-class music, art, theatre, and botanical gardens. People all around the country come here—often with their architect—and then find a local builder.

**There is an ease of living in the Berkshires, which is valued by locals and second-home owners alike.** The new second-home owner is

building a house for four-season use; the Berkshires is a destination spot year-round. Proximity to Boston and New York, as well as major international airports, makes the Berkshires more affordable even at the top end. The beauty here is unsurpassed, largely unspoiled, and still available in large parcels.

**The outside is very important here.** The beauty of the Berkshire landscape plays a major role in choosing to move here. Bringing that beauty to one's front door, through water features such as ponds, waterfalls, or swimming pools, is more and more common. Gardens also play a large role, be it naturalistic plantings that look like they have been here forever, or very stylized and sleek plantings that virtually bring the outside right in.

**Multiple buildings are critical in the luxury-home building market.** Luxury homes in the Berkshires are not about retirement anymore—people are looking to participate actively in the community. More often than not, there is a core house for the couple and then a house nearby for visiting family and guests. People want to be able to come and go easily, just flicking on a light switch and cranking up the heat, so the homes tend to be both luxurious in amenities and sustainable in size. ●



**ABOUT LOU BOXER** / A New England-based residential builder with more than 30 years of experience, Lou Boxer specializes in luxury homes in the Berkshires and the surrounding area. Boxer has weathered three recessions and has enjoyed watching the Berkshires' luxury-home market evolve. While his work ranges from minimalist to outrageous, Boxer is known for doing more elaborate homes. Many of his clients hold primary residences in New York or Boston and look to him to build their second homes in the Berkshires.



**01 BERKSHIRE PRAIRIE STYLE**  
This 6,500-square-foot home in Southern Berkshire County, MA, sits on over 200 acres of land, sited far away from the main country road. The home was designed by Matt Larkin.