Our inspiration for 24 Crystal Drive required very little searching. By far one of the most dramatic sites we have encountered, the question we asked ourselves was how we could introduce a building to the site without ruining it.

Early explorations of a serpentine architecture threading through large boulders and evergreens eventually had us arrive at an architecture which cascades the site, negotiating the sectional character of the lot, leading to the water’s edge.

Set on a rugged masonry base the house unfolds from an elevated entrance and bridges across the site by means of a double story stair atrium. Delicate wood screens simulate the filtering forest vistas until one’s arrival at the great room and deck that hovers above the bluff and lake waters below. Views towards Incline Village transition to sights of mountain and shoreline horizon across the lake and resolve in an intimate cove below.
For this single family residence our approach for promoting a sustainable and responsible design centers around several larger philosophies:

1. Honest use and application of natural materials. We actively attempt to minimize use of over processed and synthetic materials. For this design, we are calling for a natural wood rainscreen cladding combined with simple stone masonry. We also attempt to source and use vendors who source FSC certified wood.

2. Ample provision of natural light. We feel that ample provision of natural light, along with omnipresent views of the surrounding landscape, help promote a meaningful and more efficient occupation of site. We have incorporated some light shelves and roof overhangs to help shade and bounce light farther into the space. Vertical wood screens also help to provide shading without blocking precious views.

3. Natural ventilation and maximum operability of apertures for cooling and air circulation coupled with radiant floor heating.

Our design attempts to occupy the site and preserve as much of its natural state as possible. We believe that a more authentic occupation of the site leads to multiple levels of sustainability for not only the house and site but the region as a whole.
Our material inspiration for this project grew organically from the surrounding elements discovered on site. In some instances we drew directly from elements such as the somber, towering Fir and Pine trees. Their textured bark and dark tones inspired a dark stained western red cedar rainscreen skin at both exterior and interior surfaces of the house.

The irresistible and monumental boulders slumbering on site also informed the cladding of tall stone wall masses using grey natural cleft limestone. We also borrowed the boulders “interior” finish material when made visible through large expanses of glazing, particularly at the lower level.

Finally, a medium toned white oak floor provides a warm neutral surface to inhabit, akin to the forest carpet of fallen needles and bark. In total combination, we sought emulate the tonal and textural experience of the site in its virgin state.
TAHOE LAKEFRONT

SITE - AERIAL VIEW

CALIFORNIA
NEVADA

INCLINE VILLAGE

CRYSTAL BAY

PROJECT SITE

LAKE TAHOE
EARLY CONCEPT SKETCHES - PLAN OPTIONS
RENDERING VIEWS OF THE SITE