



# BLUE RIDGE DREAMING

Luxury Mountain Living comes to North Carolina with Eagles Nest. **By Elizabeth Joyce**

Images of the idyllic Blue Ridge Mountains conjure a sense of peace, serenity, and, perhaps the most elusive sense of all, home. Flanked protectively by these hazy giants, the Lodges at Eagle's Nest are at once a haven, an escape, and a dream. The ambitious and renowned Miami-based developer John Turchin, his wife Susan, and their two children promise to make their dream a reality with their current project of unique and luxurious mountain homes. They represent the best of both worlds; they sacrifice no modern advance, yet preserve the classic sense of rustic simplicity.

Inspired by nostalgia for the summers of his youth, Turchin promises to build a community for families where summer camp fantasies are brought to life. Families will live and play together on 1,500 acres developed to national park standards, just outside of Banner Elk, North Carolina. There, elevation ranges from 3,500 to 5,200 feet and on an average day the mercury rises to just 68 degrees.

"This generation will spend the next 50 years growing young—that's our real concept. It's an alternative," Turchin said. "We've created a brand inspired by a family lifestyle. We have some of the most unique people wanting to become be a part of it."

Turchin, however, has not abandoned his fundamental maxim, "It is impossible to overdo luxury." No one at Eagles Nest will do without any amenity; it would

be quite a stretch to call the leisure living in the majestic setting "roughing it." This luxury year-round camp for all ages is a lavish playground, fully equipped for all manners of outdoor experiences. Activities like horseback riding, mountain biking, motocross, and archery are available to residents at a moment's notice. As the days shorten and the air gets cooler, skiing and snowmobiling are on the menu. A summer spa in an authentic Tee Pee village, tennis courts, swimming pools, and even a 400-acre equestrian center all promise to pamper, delight, and rejuvenate even the most jaded of modern families, reminding them of the simple pleasures of outdoor fun. Daily activities run the full range from wine tasting to paintball wars.

For Turchin, a love of the arts is in his blood; his philanthropist parents raised him with a healthy respect for the arts. Therefore, Eagles Nest offers classes in everything from painting to sculpting to woodworking to metalsmithing. But the crown jewel of the arts program is the residency of world-renowned glassblowing artist, Ryan Blithe, who has his full-time studio on the property, and shares the secrets of his craft with the lucky individuals in his classes.

The Great Camp is the central constellation of facilities and will act as both event headquarters and the focal point of the community. With pools, a cliff edge, library, an amphitheater, athletic facilities, art studios, and both a fine restaurant and barbeque pavilion, the separate areas of the retreat are



connected by hiking trails and offer families the very best in community living. Turchin aims to create a community where responsible parents can raise children with an eye for traditional values. He hopes that by encouraging children to participate in wholesome activities, like tending community gardens and helping to nurse injured wildlife, they will grow up with the same deep respect for the environment that Turchin's parents cultivated in their children during their summers in North Carolina's mountains.

Each home sits on two to 10 private acres. Famous for his Miami estates, Turchin takes quality seriously. Known for lavish appointments and unique designs in Miami—seashell-shaped bathrooms, pools that look like lakes or moats, and terraces topped by real sails—Turchin creates luxury that is perfectly suited to its context. While some developers do little more than erect structures, Turchin separates himself from the pack by creating "lifestyles." Calling the lifestyle he created in Miami "barefoot luxury living," Turchin aims to fully incorporate his developments into their environment, taking cues from the surrounding area whether it is the Miami shoreline or the majestic mountains of North Carolina. The Lodges at Eagles Nest has a rustic but elegant feel.

"When the project is complete we'll have more than 400 families living on 1,500 acres with homes ranging from \$850,000 to \$5.5 million," Turchin said.



Turchin seems to be acclimating to this new mountain lifestyle, heart and soul. He has relocated his family to the enclave and sings the praises of the local culture. “You don’t need to lock your doors, people are sincere. I could be anywhere, but I chose to be here and plan to spend the rest of my life here. I’ve found a special place and I want to keep it special and invite people to be a part of it,” he gushes.

**A** third generation South Florida native, Turchin has had a huge influence on his family’s business. His family began its work in South Florida in 1927, rebuilding the peninsula after the famous hurricane of 1926. They built an empire of development in the young city and brought John up in the business. Turchin is generally known for lavish parties at his Miami home and his enthusiasm for water sports, he called the ocean his “personal playground.” With a reputation like that, one wonders what turned this archetypal Miamian onto mountain life and drove him from the sandy shore.

“In Miami, nowadays, you can’t even have a party; in North Carolina, it is pro development—city leaders are for development, taxes are low, insurance is a fraction of what it is in South Florida. I saw a shift in South Florida. When I paid

\$24 million for six acres on Indian Creek, I realized that I had lost my mind. I wanted to get out of South Florida. I foresaw what was going to happen,” he explained. “We were in the club business for 10 years. In 1982, we designed cafés and galleries on Lincoln Road, and nightclub Club Nu. Part of our belief is that the ability to be a visionary is to be at the right place at the right time. I think where we are in North Carolina is the right place at the right time.”

Turchin has not moved north to retire. Instead he brings a dynamic and multi-phased vision to the small village in North Carolina. Turchin has expanded the local retail scene with “The Great Train Robbery Design Center,” a high-end shopping destination in Banner Elk that takes a rustic railroad theme to an elegant extreme. He has also brought his expertise to open Mountain Sotheby’s International Realty. Turchin has never been able to keep his vision to himself and now can’t wait to share his knowledge—as well as his hideaway—with others. He urges like-minded individuals to trade six acres in Miami for 1,500 acres in North Carolina like he did, to raise children in a safe, luxurious and wholesome environment, and, finally, to take a deep breath of cool mountain air. 🌲

For more information call 888.259.4148 or visit [eaglesnestbe.com](http://eaglesnestbe.com)