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Another Day, Another Huge Off-Market Sale for Aspen's High-End Home Market

Interior designer Holly Hunt has sold her roughly 13,000-square-foot home about a mile from city limits for \$70 million

By [E.B. Solomont](#) [Follow](#)

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In 2015, the year she sold her eponymous design firm for \$95 million, Holly Hunt paid \$5.85 million for a secluded property just outside Aspen, Colo., and set out to build a family home.

After completing it in 2022, the Chicago-based designer considered selling but instead decided to “live in it a while,” she said. Then she got a call from an agent who wanted to show the property in Aspen’s still-tight real-estate market, where wealthy buyers’ ability to find luxury homes has been limited by a dearth of available properties.



Holly Hunt, shown in 2021, sold her design brand to the furniture-and-design company Knoll.

PHOTO: ALBERTO E. TAMARGO/SIPA USA/REUTERS

Hunt said she consented, but stressed that the home wasn’t for sale. Nevertheless, she sold the house soon after to an unknown buyer for \$70 million, records show. “I always said I wouldn’t sell if it didn’t have a seven in front,” she said.

The deal is the latest in a string of major off-market deals for Aspen, which is still riding the pandemic-era boom despite a slowdown in luxury real-estate markets around the country. Prices in Aspen have grown exponentially since 2019, thanks to high demand, extremely limited inventory and restrictions on

development, according to Tim Estin of Aspen Snowmass Sotheby’s International Realty, who wasn’t involved in the deal but tracks the market.

When Hunt bought the roughly 4.23-acre property, located a mile from Aspen’s city limits, it was accessible via an older bridge over the Roaring Fork River and had a 1980s-era house on it. Hunt said she rebuilt the bridge, tore down the old house and spent about five years designing and building a modern home.

The estate spans about 13,000 square feet across the main house and a caretaker’s house, said Hunt. With six bedrooms, the main house has a large patio off the main living and dining rooms. Hunt said she hosted large parties

there for the Aspen Art Museum and other groups. “I have a 24-foot room in the back with double-height ceilings in which the acoustics are amazing,” she said.



Accessed by a bridge over the Roaring Fork River, the property is about 4.23 acres. PHOTO: EAGLEVIEW

She also did extensive landscaping. Before building the house, Hunt said she raised the ground level by 7 feet, allowing for some gentle slopes and colorful plants. Long and low steps lead to the entrance, and she planted full-size evergreens on the property. A large stone patio toward the rear of the house has an oversize hot tub. The property itself is surrounded by a nature preserve, making it extremely private.

Hunt sold her design brand, Holly Hunt Enterprises, to furniture-and-design company Knoll in a deal that closed in 2015. Around 2021, she founded House of Hunt, an interior-design firm that has done some real-estate development projects. She lives primarily in Chicago but said she used the house as a vacation home where she spent time with her sons and grandchildren.

As for why she ended up selling the house, she said: “I have other projects I need to get to. Building and creating is half the fun.”

She declined to comment further on the negotiations.

Carrie Wells of Coldwell Banker Mason Morse, who handled both sides of the transaction, didn't respond to requests for comment.



Aspen is still riding the pandemic-era boom despite a slowdown in other luxury real-estate markets around the country. PHOTO: KELSEY BRUNNER/THE ASPEN TIMES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

During the first half of the year, Aspen inventory was down 32.5% compared with the first half of 2019, Estin said. Although there was a slight uptick in new listings this summer, the market has the second-lowest inventory level on record. (The lowest was the first half of 2022.) As a result, the number of sales during the first half of the year dropped 38% from the prior year. “We're still at overall historically low, low inventory,” Estin said.

Steven Shane of Compass said for his clients looking to buy, there are so few publicly available options that he has been forced to look elsewhere. “I am compelled to try to identify other luxury homes that are not listed for sale and see if their owners would be willing to sell at a price,” he said, adding, “There are luxury homeowners who, if they can get an aspirational number, they are willing to sell.”

As a result, Aspen has seen a number of significant off-market transactions lately, he said, noting that five out of six sales above \$40 million over the past 12 months have been off-market.

Tampa Bay Lightning owner Jeff Vinik and his wife, Penny Vinik, recently bought a \$63.75 million Aspen mansion in an off-market deal, while a company tied to car-dealership owner Terry Taylor paid a record \$76 million for a ski-in ski-out property that wasn't on the market.

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