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about the photo

A home by Coventry Log Homes in New England proves log cabins can be as energy-efficient as they are charming.

Photo by Roger Wade

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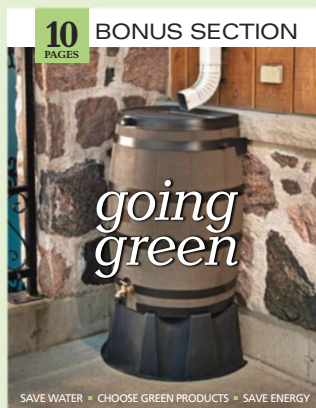


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Dive In!

Summer is in full swing as you read this, but I'm writing on Earth Day—the perfect time to consider the incredible bounty of nature and our role in caring for our favorite planet.

When I head to our family cabin, I can't wait to kayak on the lake, climb mountains, smell pine forests, see beautiful sunsets and, if my timing's right, pick wild blueberries. If you're lucky enough to live in a cabin year 'round, I bet you still savor the nature that surrounds you daily.

One way to tip your hat to Mother Nature is to choose to live smaller. For readers who plan to build a new cabin, this issue offers scads of resources; a special **Cozy Cabins** section, photo tours of small homes, a design guide for uncovering hidden storage spots and our special insert on "green" living.

As current cabin owners know, living small doesn't mean sacrificing anything. In fact, you stand to gain from lower utility bills, less home maintenance, freedom from clutter and the knowledge that you're doing your part for the health of the planet.

Back to blueberries: There's just something that connects good food with cabin living. From campfires to picnics to feeding a crowd, we offer a few tips on memory-making meals on page 6.

And now the really big news: Starting with our next issue, *Country's Best Cabins* will sport a new look and a new name as we merge with *Cabin Life*, a magazine that's covered the cabin lifestyle for 14 years. Look for the all new *Cabin Living* on newsstands August 25. From recreation to remodeling to recipes, you'll find a deep pool of cabin content in this new magazine just waiting for you to dive in.

Cheers!



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Time to Eat!

Ringling the dinner bell.

Good times at the cabin often revolve around good eats. While some of your family's favorite memories may include epic food failures, as a cabin owner, you want to be able to feed friends and family terrific meals without too much fuss. It's summertime: The eating should be easy.

Campfire Cooking

Summer weather, a beautiful setting and fewer dishes to wash: You can enjoy it all when cooking over a campfire. From

traditional favorites like s'mores and hot dogs to more adventurous eats, you can make it work outside given the right ingredients.

Pick a cooking method. Roasting sticks, forks or skewers are the perfect tools for cooking some foods. Heavy-duty aluminum foil can be used to create packets that seal in steam while cooking directly on the coals. Investing in a large cast-iron kettle will allow you to cook a variety of foods in an open fire. If you're really enamored with campfire cooking, you can set up a rotisserie spit or tri-pod

to hang a kettle over the flames. A grill or grate can be set over the fire, as can a cast-iron skillet.

Go out on a limb. A quick search online will reveal plenty of campfire recipes beyond boring burgers.

Share the work. Set out the prepared ingredients and let guests create their own meals. This individualization works especially well with meals cooked in foil packets. Each person can modify the ingredients according to personal preference.

Give your fire time to settle down. Hot coals and glowing embers are better

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for cooking than blazing flames.

Use dry, seasoned hardwood if possible for a cooking fire.

Keep it safe and legal. Before you light a fire, make sure you understand your local regulations for campfires. You may need to acquire a permit for your fire. You must supervise children around campfires. Do not throw anything non-combustible into a fire. The Forest Service offers other safety tips for campfires (see box on page 11).

Pack a Perfect Picnic

Eating outside at your cabin is fun, but for a change in scenery, plan a picnic that can take you farther afield. Here are a few ideas for your next outing:

Pick your destination. Where you go for your picnic can make a difference in your menu. If you have to hike into your picnic spot, you don't want to lug a big cooler. But if you'll drive to your favorite picnic spot, you can bring a wider assortment of food, beverages and serving pieces.

What's on the menu? A spur-of-the-moment picnic where you brown bag a sandwich and a thermos of lemonade is fun and requires very little prep. If you have the time, you can make your meal a gourmet affair. Pick foods that travel well

and can be served at room temperature or cooler.

Add a basket. An old-fashioned picnic basket adds a sweet touch. Some baskets have built-in trays or dividers to keep food from being smashed en route. A cooler or insulated pack or bag will keep foods chilled. Some coolers have wheels; perfect for picnic spots near paved walks.

Pack it up. Along with your food, be sure to bring dishes, glasses, napkins and utensils for serving and eating. Don't forget the corkscrew! A plastic bag will hold your trash for the trip home. For added comfort, throw in a picnic blanket or old sheet, bug spray and sunscreen.

Make it fun. Leave the electronic gadgets at home and bring along some low-tech fun: Playing cards, a Frisbee, candles if it's an evening picnic and a camera to record your picnic memories.

Feeding a Crowd

Your family may seem to multiply at meal time. Having guests at the cabin means preparing plenty of food. Make it easy to feed the masses by:

Choosing foods that don't have to be served piping hot or kept chilled. Dishes that can be set out and enjoyed at room temperature take a bit of pressure off the

cook and allow people to dig in when they're hungry.

Estimating how much you'll need by following tried-and-true guidelines. Look online or in a comprehensive cookbook for estimates on appetizer counts, drinks and food servings per guest.

Keeping it simple. Unless you truly love being in the kitchen, don't choose elaborate dishes with complicated preparations.

Saying "yes" when guests ask if they can bring something. If you have several families spending a longer period of time together, create a sign-up so everyone knows who is bringing what.

Asking about your guests' preferences. It's better to know ahead of time if you're cooking for people with dietary limitations.

Searching "cooking for a crowd" on the Internet to find recipes that serve large groups.

Starting a file. When the party or weekend is over, you will be tempted to just put your feet up, but take a moment to write down the number of guests you served and food and beverages consumed. These notes will help you shop and prepare more efficiently for the next party or weekend at the cabin. You can also add recipes for dishes that worked well to the file.

Starting from Scratch

If you're designing your own cabin, you can make it easier to entertain a crowd. Start by considering your kitchen: An open layout will encourage people to help in the kitchen. If space permits, you can create a second prep station in the kitchen. Consider a secondary refrigerator or freezer in a location where guests can easily help themselves to drinks and ice.

Will you often serve meals outside?

If possible, locate your outdoor eating area close to the kitchen. Consider where you can place a firepit or grill. Is there space to create a full outdoor kitchen?

Plan ahead for food storage. If your cabin is miles from the nearest grocery store, a large pantry will help you keep essentials for feeding guests on hand. Will you need a spot to stow guests' coolers, large serving pieces or oversized pots and pans that you don't use every day?

Designing your home with entertaining in mind will make it that much easier to serve a crowd with ease. **CBC**

LEFT: fotolia.com/Vasily Koval photo; RIGHT: fotolia.com/Alexander Potapov photo

ONLY YOU

The Forest Service and Smokey the Bear offer the following tips for building and putting out a campfire:

Once you have a strong fire going, add larger pieces of dry wood to keep it burning steadily.

Keep your fire to a manageable size.

Make sure children and pets are supervised when near the fire.

Never leave a campfire unattended.

Use dry wood, not live trees or branches cut from live trees.

To extinguish a campfire, allow the wood to burn completely to ash if possible.

Pour water on the fire, drowning all embers, not just any that are red.

Pour water until any hissing sounds stop.

Stir the ashes and embers with a shovel.

Scrape sticks and logs to remove any embers.

Make sure all materials are wet and cold to the touch.

If you don't have water, you can suffocate the fire by adding loose dirt.



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Thanks for your letter. We include listings of builder/dealers from companies that advertise in that particular issue. New York-based builder/dealers listed in the buyer's guide of our sister publication, *Log Home Living*, include the following:

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Beaver Mountain Log & Cedar Homes (beavermtn.com)
Cedar Knoll Log Homes (cedarknollloghomes.com)
Lok N Logs (loknlogs.com)
Allegiance Log Homes (northeasternlog.com)
Marshall Scott Contracting, Inc. (315-866-7518).

Best of luck in your search, and be sure to send us photos when your cabin is complete.

Sharon Stempson
Via email

Compliments for the well-done and comprehensive edition of the 2015 Buyer's Guide. However, since I live in upstate New York, I am somewhat puzzled as to why the builder/dealer by state directory does not list any builders/dealers in the state of New York. Is there a reason?

CORRECTION

The log package for the home featured in *Mountaintop Hideaway* (page 30-39, *Country's Best Cabins*, June 2015) was supplied by **Log Homes of the Smokies**. For more information, call 888-586-1916 or go to loghomesofthesmokies.net.

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James Ray Spahn photo



Outdoor living is almost synonymous with cabin life. A deck (or two) makes a great spot to eat, entertain or just relax. Because it's a horizontal surface, wood decking is subject to constant wear and tear from exposure to the elements, foot traffic and accumulating debris. Keeping your deck looking as good as possible for as long as possible requires some maintenance.

The first step to re-finishing your deck is easy: Check the local weather forecast to find a stretch of clear, mild weather. Most products are best applied in temperatures that are not too hot or cold, and not in direct sunlight. It's ideal to have no rain for several days. "If rain can't be avoided, be sure to protect the stain from direct rainfall for one to two days after the stain is applied to prevent it from being washed off the surface," suggests Sashco, a building products supplier located in Colorado.

Choosing a Product

A variety of products are available for use on your deck: some are water (acrylic)-based and others are oil-based. If your deck has been treated previously, it's best to stick with a similar product when re-treating, unless you plan to strip the wood completely.

Fans of water/acrylic-based products appreciate the products' ability to breathe and flex with wood's movement. They also like the easy clean-up. Some people prefer the way oil-based treatments penetrate the wood's surface. Newer wood finishes on the market combine the best of both water and oil-based formulas.

You can also choose how opaque your wood finish will be, depending on the look you prefer. In general, according to Cabot, a wood stain manufacturer, there is a range of options. A colorless weather-protecting wood finish will screen harmful UV rays, help your deck repel moisture and preserve the natural grain and beauty of the wood. Some products

provide all those benefits and add a bit of color in the form of a wood stain. A semi-transparent stain may resist fading a bit longer. Weathered wood decking may require a more full-bodied finish to extend its useful life. Explore your options in local home improvement stores and online. If you have a log home, you may want to sample deck stains to ensure color compatibility with your cabin's log walls.

Start Clean

Before you can apply any stain or wood treatment, you should clean debris from the surface of the deck and between boards. You can use a broom or putty knife or pressure washer on a low setting. Unless you have rough, degraded wood planks or stained decking, you should not need to sand, strip or chemically clean the deck.

Once you've prepped your deck, plan to start staining fairly soon. Raw wood can be damaged by UV rays in just a few weeks. A clean deck is key to your wood treatment product adhering well and

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Use a sprayer, brush, roller or stain pad to stain one or two entire boards, Sashco says. Then back-brush the stain into the wood, giving the stain good penetration and an even appearance. Less is better than more: A too-heavy coating of stain can result in a sticky or spotty finish. Applying two coats can help the stain last longer.

Allow the wood treatment to dry before walking on the deck or replacing furniture. To help prolong the life of your stain, try to sweep dirt, pollen and leaves off your deck regularly, Sashco suggests. The company recommends sweeping light dustings of snow off the deck, or removing heavier snow with a plastic shovel.

How Often?

Your deck maintenance routine may vary depending on the type of wood treatment you use. Follow the instructions provided with the product, or visit the manufacturer's web site for further information. Some companies recommend re-treating

of decks every one to two years. If you're unsure if it's time to re-stain your deck, Cabot suggests spraying a bit of water on the surface. If your stain repels the water, it's still working.

While you may not look forward to

deck maintenance, remember the old saying about an ounce of prevention: Sticking to a regular schedule of treating your deck will keep it from degrading so much that it will require a major, time-consuming refinishing job. **CBC**

A GOOD START

A new deck can enjoy a long life if its builder follows good construction practices. If you plan to do the work yourself, make sure you understand your local building codes as they relate to decks and railings. Read and follow the instructions on deck hardware and fasteners.

You want to ensure that water or soil doesn't remain in contact with your deck's structural posts and joists. Flashing and post caps can help create physical barriers that will prolong the life of wood—even pressure-treated lumber.

Care should also be taken when installing the actual decking. Wood-care product manufacturer Perma-Chink Systems says their crew members sometimes see mistakes in the orientation of decking boards. "Wood most often warps in the direction of the growth rings," according to Perma-Chink. If those growth rings face down, the boards will "crown," creating a high spot in the center of the board that tapers to lowered edges. This curve helps the board shed water. Attach the boards with growth rings up, and the boards may cup, leading to water pooling on the boards and contributing to failing wood treatments and decay.

If contractors will build your cabin's deck, talk to them about what steps they will take to help the deck last longer.



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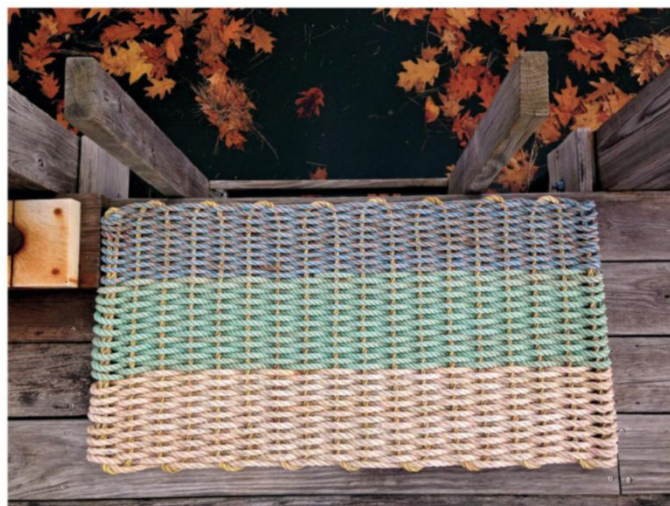
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Cast Off

Maine artisan transforms trash into treasure.



Michelle Kinerson has discovered a unique and beautiful way to repurpose rope that once connected lobstermen's buoys to traps on the bottom of the ocean floor. Customers from Germany to California and beyond have purchased her goods as fun and functional reminders of Maine.



When she saw rope door mats for sale in a local gift shop, Maine resident and designer Michelle Kinerson thought, "I could make those."

With help from instructions she found online, Kinerson built a jig and wove her first mats from used rope salvaged from a lobsterman friend. "But I put my own spin on them," she says.

Now Kinerson's mats with her unique color combinations are sought after by people from all around the world.

Re-use

Living in Cape Porpoise, Maine, Kinerson is familiar with local lobster fishing and the lobstermen's need for sturdy, dependable rope to haul their precious catch on board. "The fishermen replace their rope about once a year," she explains. "They either throw it away or burn it." Determined to give this rope a second life, Kinerson now works with the Maine Lobstermen's Association, purchasing tons of retired rope all along the coast. She recently picked up 26,000 pounds of rope from just 14 fishermen.

With plenty of raw materials and customers clamoring to bring a little bit of Maine to their homes, Kinerson needed more time to weave the mats. As luck would have it, she was let go of her administrative job. "It was a blessing in disguise," she says. Her mat and home décor business, Cape Porpoise Trading Co., now employs her and a few helpers year 'round.

The perks for Kinerson are being able to support her community, making a living in her own backyard and savoring her unique coastal location. "I love where I live," she says. "This is about a lifestyle for me. I get to work outside looking over a tidal creek." When the weather is fair, Kinerson takes her boat out for a spin in the afternoons.

Function and Form

Kinerson takes custom orders or uses her design sense to mix colors and patterns on her mats, which she offers in two sizes

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through her online shop on Etsy. She has a rainbow of rope colors to choose from, because fishermen use a variety of colors to help them identify quickly the length of each rope. One lobsterman might use blue ropes for fishing at a 30-foot depth, while his orange ropes might be longer for deeper fishing. Each lobsterman decides what colors to use on his boat.

Maintaining the recycled-rope door mats is easy. A soiled mat can be turned over or hosed off if necessary. And although the used rope may not be strong enough to hold up to the rigors of fishing with heavy lobster traps in Maine's rough waters, it will still last for years and years as a welcome mat.

Kinerson has shipped orders across the country and around the world; often to people who have visited her beloved state. "They like to have a piece of Maine as a reminder," she says. Other customers appreciate that she's re-using a material destined for the landfill. Kinerson delights in bringing a pop of color into daily life. "It turns something mundane into a piece of art," she says. "It lights people up when they see it." **CBC**

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LEFT: Kinerson's durable mats attract all kinds of admirers.

ABOVE: Having a variety of colored rope helps lobster fishermen keep track of the length of their lines.

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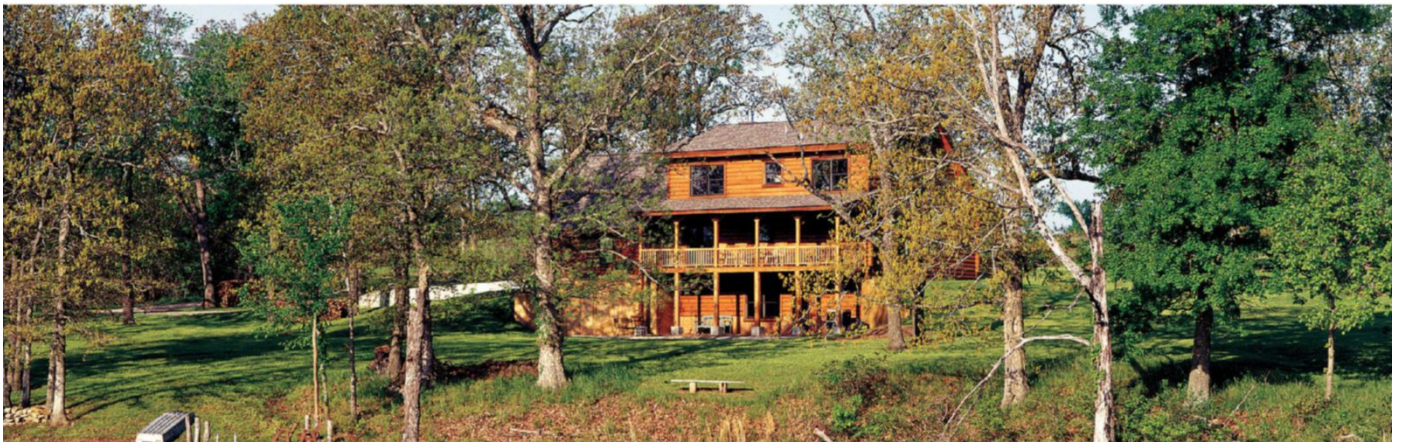
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Keep, Cut or Plant?

A guide to trees and your cabin.



James Ray Spahn photos



When you imagine the perfect site for your dream cabin, there are probably at least a few trees in your vision. After all, there's a reason many people choose a wooded lot for building their cabins, rather than a bare, tree-less site.

Visualizing your beautiful cabin nestled in among the trees is easy: Actually building on a tree-covered lot can be tricky. While trees are beautiful, they can also pose a number of challenges when it comes to actually building your home. Large root systems can present risks for driveways, foundations or septic systems. And the construction process can make

some trees vulnerable and increase the risk of them falling in the years ahead.

For reasons of aesthetics and safety, give careful consideration to trees when planning to build your cabin. By making some important decisions upfront when it comes to which trees to keep, which trees to remove and which to plant, you can ensure that your cabin and trees can exist in perfect harmony for many years to come.

Surveying the Site

When you're getting started on a new cabin, it's easy to overlook the trees in favor of the home's design. But Matthew

Sullivan, a landscape architect with Sudbury Design Group in Massachusetts, says consideration of the trees should begin very early in the process. "Doing an initial site analysis of the lot and trees is the most important aspect of executing a successful design," he says. He suggests bringing a landscape architect to the site to examine the health and quality of the trees. The architect's findings may shape the overall decision on house siting and landscape design.

If the lot is heavily wooded, for example, it's not as easy as simply clearing a wide swath of land to make room for the cabin. "Trees in a forest setting



GET IN THE ZONE

With trees, what you can't see is critical: Tree roots extend far beyond the diameter of the tree's canopy. And while a tree's trunk or branches can be subject to cuts or breakage during construction, the most serious injury to a tree is root damage, says the University of Minnesota's Extension. In general, the Extension estimates that the vast majority of a tree's root system sits just one to three feet below the surface of the soil.

Keeping a treasured tree safe during construction requires you to identify the tree's protected root zone (PRZ) on the ground around the tree. According to the UMN Extension, this circular zone typically extends from the tree's trunk out to the tips of the leaves, or the tree's dripline. Keep construction trucks out of the PRZ by cordoning it off with temporary fencing during the building process. Don't park cars or pile heavy construction materials in this area beneath the tree's branches, either. Excess weight in the PRZ can compact soil and impair the root's ability to gather water and nutrients.

If you want to be extra careful, the UMN Extension explains how to estimate a tree's critical root radius, which is larger than the PRZ. First, measure the tree diameter in inches at a height of 4.5 feet up from the base, then multiply that number by 1 for a hardy younger tree and by 1.5 for an older, sensitive or less healthy tree. Express the result in feet. So, if a tree trunk measures 15 inches in diameter, its critical root radius would be 15 to 22.5 feet. Fencing off this area can help minimize damage to the root structure and keep the tree healthy and strong.

work together," says Wesley Kocher, a certified arborist and educational development manager of the International Society of Arboriculture. "The trees are typically tall, slender and have no lower branches. So if you clear for a home site, you create a void in protection. It can make the trees on the perimeter of the clearing more likely to take damage or even fall on the house at some point in the future."

If possible, Kocher says you can overcome this concern by looking for a natural clearing on the land as a possible home site. Also, look for larger trees with lower branches. These have likely grown in more open conditions and should remain sturdy in the years ahead.

The roots are another key consideration. "Trees aren't like carrots," Kocher

says. "Their roots often extend well beyond the canopy of the trees." So you'll need to give trees a wide berth when it comes to building your home's foundation, driveway and septic system. Building too close to the tree poses the risk of future damage to some of your home's essential components. And if you have to remove or excavate too much of the root system, it could greatly compromise the health of the tree, as well.

Construction Considerations

Fortunately, there are a number of ways that trees and your cabin can coexist. Proper planning upfront and taking appropriate precautions before you build will protect trees you want to keep. The trees that remain on your site will not just look good; they will work hard, too. The

U.S. Forest Service estimates that properly placed trees can reduce a home's need for heating and air-conditioning. The U.S. Department of Energy says that just three trees can save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in energy costs annually.

Saving trees is worthwhile. "Preventing compaction on the root mass can be controlled by installing temporary fencing around the trees' canopy line," Sullivan notes. "It is very important to stay out of the critical root zone for the construction process. Also some trees can be put on a fertilization program if they are required to be stressed during the construction process."

Kocher suggests talking with your contractors to make sure tree health is promoted as much as possible. Some of

the steps that help are simple, such as having a designated parking zone for construction vehicles that won't harm the trees, or not depositing dug-up soil on top of a tree's root system. When digging, it's also important for contractors to stick to the original footprint of the foundation or driveway as closely as possible. Keeping tabs on excavation will minimize the impact on the surrounding tree root structures.

Obviously, you want to avoid damaging trees you hope to keep. But if damage does occur during the construction process, it's probably best to take care of it immediately. "If a piece of equipment damages the roots extensively (bulldozer rash), the tree will probably die or get diseased," says John Ricketson, project manager for Hearthstone in Macon, Georgia.

It is much less expensive (and far less dangerous to people and property) to remove a questionable tree before construction starts, Ricketson says.

Where to Plant New Trees

The decision to add new trees to your property will depend on your site and your own wants and needs. "The planting design is based off a client's desires, as well as taking functional purposes into account," Sullivan says. "Trees can be planted for shade as well as aesthetics around the foundation of a house or around the terrace or patio."

In general, however, two rules for planting trees are fairly consistent: It's a good idea to plant deciduous trees on the exposed south and west faces of the home. "These offer shade in the warmer

months of summer," Kocher says. "Then, in the winter the leaves fall off and let the sun in for warmth." Be sure you know how large the trees you're planting tend to grow and allow for enough space between your cabin or outbuildings and the new tree. Cabins in areas prone to wildfire must take extra precaution when planting trees.

Knowing the direction of prevailing winds on your property will guide you in planting a windbreak. Kocher says conifer trees, which do not lose their leaves, can help protect your cabin from wind all year long.

The Arbor Day Foundation offers guidelines for choosing the right tree for your climate and the space available on your site. Go to arborday.org for more information. **CBC**

TIMBER!

Can't decide whether a tree should stay or go? The University of Minnesota Extension offers the following tips for choosing which trees to save during construction:

- Save the best and chip the rest. Use those wood chips to provide a blanket of protection over the root systems of trees that can be saved.
- Select tree species that fit the spatial constraints of the site, remembering that trees grow throughout their lives. Be sure to consider overhead powerlines.
- Young, small trees tend to survive disturbance better than old, large trees.
- Large trees almost never survive within 5 feet of a new building and should not be kept.
- Healthy young trees that fall in the construction zone may be saved by transplanting.
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket! Save a mixture of tree species to safeguard your landscape against contagious diseases or insects.
- Improve tree survival by saving groups of trees rather than individuals.



Uncovering Overlooked Storage

When dealing with small spaces, every inch counts.



LEFT: JK Lawrence photo; OPPOSITE: Satterwhite Log Homes photo

Storage can be an issue in any home, but things get particularly tight in small cabins. Even if you've downsized your abode, odds are you have more space than you think. Much more. And you'll be amazed at how much you can fit into those spaces.

All you need is an eye for picking out the storage opportunities most homeowners overlook.

Nooks and Crannies

Take your typical closet, for example. "If you hang a coat in a normal coat closet, usually there's two or three feet at the bot-

tom that's not used," says Steve Kemp of the Atlanta architectural firm Kemp Hall Studio. Capture that space by installing a cabinet or shelving unit.

The space under staircases is another storage goldmine. Add cabinetry or shelving, or carve out space there for a walk-in closet, computer work station or a play space for the kids.

Got a spacious hallway? Give that wasted circulation space more purpose. A little craft desk along one side of the hallway can serve as additional storage while making the area more functional, Kemp says.

Space behind the knee walls in rooms

with sloped ceilings lends itself well to built-in closets or cabinetry. The upper area of the room can be transformed into a loft either for extra storage or as a kid's room. You may not be able to stand up in it, but the kids are sure to love having their own small, adult-free space.

Kitchen Cubbies

In a small kitchen, you can fit shallow drawers into the toekicks beneath your lower cabinetry for storing flat items like placemats, tablecloths and linens. Cabinets built into the base of an eat-at counter can stow away baking pans or dishes. Some cabinet companies even offer back-

LEFT: Look for spaces, like this area below a set of stairs, to add extra storage in a small home.

RIGHT: A built-in cubby turns a knee wall into a functional shelf for toys and books. Cupboards fill the space beneath the window seat.

splashes with interior storage.

“One area to look at is above your stove where the hood typically goes,” says Jonas DiCaprio of Denver-based Design Platform. “If the hood is vented through a cabinet, have your cabinet supplier or finish carpenter build in around that vent to get back some valuable space for spices, oils and other cooking essentials.”

Sometimes stock cabinets don’t fit perfectly in a kitchen space, leaving you with a space too small to accommodate a full cabinet. DiCaprio recommends installing a vertical pan rack or cutting board holder in that tall, narrow space.

Banquettes are also a huge space-saver in a kitchen, whether they form a U-shape around a table or are just a bench on one side of the table. “They eliminate the need for additional circulation behind the seating and allow a table to nest into a tight corner of the kitchen,” DiCaprio says. Add a lift-up top on the banquette or drawers that come out from the front for extra storage under the seating. Use the same concept with window seats to nab additional storage space around the house.

“Bathrooms are always tough areas,” says Jeff Balmer of Lands End Development, a custom home builder in Crosslake, Minnesota. Tough, but not impossible.

Capitalize on the space beneath a bench in or outside of the shower with a couple of deep drawers. A tub surround can offer similar storage opportunities beneath the bathtub. Likewise, drawers can be tucked into any steps leading up to the tub.

In a pinch, utilizing the space between the toilet tank and the floor or installing drawers in the toekick space underneath vanities and cabinets can provide some extra space.



Tucked Away

Balmer says he’ll occasionally see a pedestal sink with a small piece of furniture next to it for storage. But because bathrooms tend to measure in on the small side, it’s best to go easy on the furniture.

That’s likely why there’s such a strong preference for vanities built around the sink, even in powder rooms. They hold everything from toiletries to extra towels or toilet paper. “The older vanities tended to have a false panel at the top because of the plumbing behind it,” Balmer explains. “A lot of the newer ones will do a couple of small drawers or one big drawer with the back of the drawer cut out in a particular shape to adapt to the plumbing.”

Drawers have also found their way into kitchens. Especially in lower cabinetry, as drawers eliminate the need to open cabinet doors, bend over and strain to see what’s tucked in back. They also save on space within the cabinet box, according to DiCaprio.

Another overlooked area is above the refrigerator. A cabinet extending from the top of the fridge to the ceiling is perfect for those infrequently used appliances. Align the cabinet with the depth of the refrigerator as opposed to that of the other cabinets to eke out as many inches as possible.

If you have room for a pantry cabinet in your kitchen, consider stretching it to the ceiling for maximum storage. For a walk-in pantry, DiCaprio recommends carefully spacing your shelving vertically so as not to leave excess space between the top of the items you’re storing and the shelf above them. Also consider storing bulky items on the floor below the first row of shelving.

Balmer suggests jogging the wall behind a standard fridge to get the counter-depth look without sacrificing the capacity of a full-depth refrigerator. In the bathroom, the toilet can also be recessed into the wall to reclaim some space and align the depth of the toilet closer to that of the vanity. The same trick also works with the medicine cabinet.

Consider an over-the-toilet cabinet or open storage, like shelves and hanging baskets, for over the toilet. These storage units have a bit more depth than a medicine cabinet and are great for tucking away towels or larger toiletries.

Clearing clutter helps, but there will always be items that need a place to belong. Most houses have pockets of space that often go unnoticed, Kemp says. “It ultimately comes down to looking at every nook and cranny in your home and figuring out how you can use them.” **CBC**

A large, two-story log cabin with a deep deck and a pergola. The cabin is constructed from light-colored logs and has a steep gabled roof with a stone chimney. A wide wooden deck wraps around the side of the house, featuring a wooden pergola structure. In the foreground, there is a stone fire pit, several Adirondack chairs, and a stone wall. The deck is furnished with a rocking chair and potted plants. The background shows a clear blue sky with scattered clouds.

The house faces south for maximum sun. The homeowners chose Coventry Log Home's Ascotney model and modified it to add more windows, a shed dormer and a more open floor plan. The deep deck runs around three sides of the home. Out back, a pergola awaits a planned outdoor kitchen.

comforts of home

**Building a dream cabin
in New England.**



story by STACEY FREED photos by ROGER WADE styling by DEBRA GRAHL





This past winter gave the Northeast a real jolt with record snowfalls and frigid temperatures. But Kym Smith and Wayne Carpenter stayed comfortable in their log cabin all season burning just a cord of wood and using their radiant floor heat.

“It’s been said that cabins can never get a good energy rating, but this home is one of the tightest buildings in the state of New Hampshire,” says Andy Kapchensky, owner of AK Construction in Lempster, New Hampshire, and the builder of the couple’s log cabin. The home was given a Five-Star Plus Energy Rating through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star program.

Energy efficiency wasn’t the only reason Kym and Wayne couldn’t wait to move into their log home.

A New Lifestyle

Kym wanted more land to exercise her horses and had always wanted a log home. She and Wayne planned to purchase property where they would build a home and eventually retire. In 2011, the couple bought seven acres on a dead-end road with potential views of New Hampshire’s Sunapee ski area. They decided then and there to make the spot a full-time residence right away.

They had the land cleared and purchased an Ascutney cabin model from Coventry Log Homes, a manufacturer based in Woodsville, New Hampshire. The couple worked with Coventry’s design staff to make a few modifications to the stock plan: They added more windows, expanded the kitchen and opened up the floor plan. And since they would live there full time, Kym says, “We wanted it to be as

ABOVE: Soaring ceilings and lots of windows bring in natural light. The living room’s dark teak hardwood floor makes a nice contrast with the lighter colored walls.

OPPOSITE: A stone hearth was on Kym Smith’s wish list for the cabin. It includes a customized wood box. The beam at a lower ceiling height helps define the room and adds an architectural element that fits the geometric shapes of the room’s design.



energy efficient as we could get it.”

According to Richard Titorenko, a salesperson for Coventry Log Homes, all the company’s materials are “eligible to be five-star energy rated.” The logs are pre-cut, lettered and numbered at the factory and then taken to the site to be stacked into exterior walls.

Kapchensky faced the house south for maximum sunlight and built it in six months. A deep open deck ringing the front and sides is perfect for entertaining. “It’s a great area where we can have a

few people over and not worry about the neighbors,” says Kym, a competitive barrel racer who keeps a horse and mini-donkey in a barn on the property. The couple loves to hike, snowshoe, cross-country ski and walk their dogs in the nearby woods.

Weather or Not

To get the energy efficiency they were looking for, Kapchensky made sure that areas where air can leak out or in—corners and between the logs—were sealed. “We did stick framing in the roof and we used a lot

of spray foam in the corners, rafters and floor joists,” he says. The basement is built with reinforced ICF (insulated concrete forms)—basically 2 1/2-inch-thick styrofoam panels filled with concrete. “Then there’s an ice and water shield on the outside as added protection from critters,” he explains. The basement, like the rest of the home, has radiant heat floors, which are fueled by propane.

According to the EPA, to achieve the highest energy rating, a new home has to have comprehensive air sealing, properly



Stone, wood, slate and granite add varied texture and color to the sleek kitchen. A tin backsplash reflects light and makes the kitchen feel like a vintage work space.





The downstairs bathroom features a vanity made from reclaimed log cabin wood and a round copper sink bowl.

installed insulation, high-performance windows, a high-efficiency heating and cooling system, comprehensive water management system, and energy-efficient lighting and appliances. Kym and Wayne purchased Energy Star appliances, LED lighting and an air-exchange system. Because the house is so tight, the couple installed a heat recovery ventilator (HRV) in the basement to bring fresh air in from the outside.

A Home Energy Rating Score (HERS) showed all the extra steps taken in construction paid off. The HERS index is a number between 0 and 100 that represents a home's energy use compared to homes of similar size and shape that were built to the minimum energy code. For example, a home with an index of 80 means that it uses 80 percent of the energy consumed by a similar home built to minimum code.

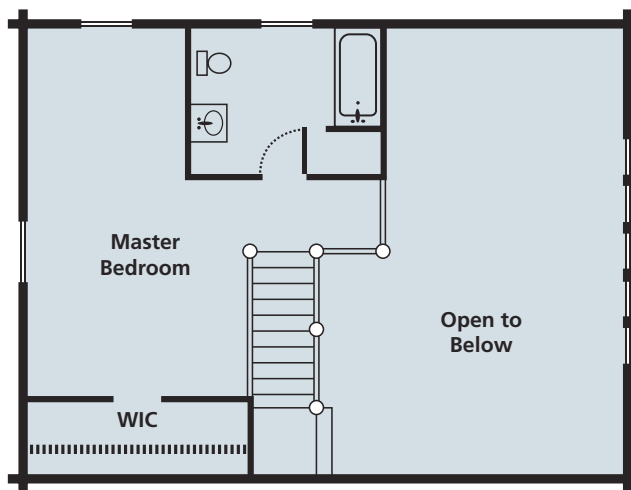
After a home is built, a third-party rater collects data from tests such as the blower door, which measures air infiltration, to come up with a rating. Kym and Wayne's cabin was rated by the local utility company. "It came in at 47 and got a five-plus rating. We're pretty proud of that," Kapchensky says, adding that because the score was so good "the people who did the test thought their machine was broken." Not only will the couple save energy and see savings on their utility bills, but they also received rebates.

Finishing Touches

For a home to be truly wonderful, it should be beautiful as well as functional. Kym and Wayne chose a knotty cedar for the interior of the pine log house. It makes a great contrast with the kitchen's blackish granite counters and grey slate tile as well as the teak hardwood floors used in the rest of the home. The ever-practical Kym says the teak floors "are really durable for the dogs' claws and work well with the radiant heat, which can fluctuate with the temperature and humidity."

The 24-by-32-foot home has two bedrooms: one up and one down. The master bedroom occupies the entire top floor and includes a walk-in closet and full bath. In the living room, Kym's must-have was a stone chimney. The stone, purchased from a Vermont quarry, is from an old Calvin Coolidge home site. Both the living room and master bedroom have exposed beams for a timber frame touch.

Now the horses, the dogs and their owners all have plenty of trails to roam as well as a cozy, warm home—or barn—to come home to. "It's quiet and relaxing and the mountain views are phenomenal," Kym says. What more could they ask for?



Upper Level



Main Level

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,100

BEDROOMS: 2

BATHROOMS: 2

Log Home Manufacturer: Coventry Log Homes
(800-308-7505; coventryloghomes.com)

Builder: AK Construction (603-398-3908)

A photograph of a rustic log cabin porch. The cabin's exterior is made of horizontal log siding. The porch has a steeply pitched roof with exposed wooden rafters. In the foreground, there are two wooden chairs made of logs, with blue and white striped cushions. A wooden bench is also visible. The porch floor is made of wooden planks. In the background, there are mountains and trees. A small decorative hanging ornament is visible on the right side of the porch.

The steeply pitched roof's overhang shades the front porch. A local artist carved a moose into the front door, which the couple purchased from Timber Valley Mill Works.





Set on the pristine Priest Lake in northern Idaho, this vacation cabin was designed to feel one with the sand and water. Natural materials ground the cabin with its natural setting. Extra wide 18-inch concrete steps serve a dual purpose as access to the lake from the cabin and as extra seating space for outdoor living. Soaring eaves protect the upper balconies.

to infinity

Making memories in an Idaho cabin.







ABOVE: Glue laminated timbers, commonly known as glulams, add architectural interest to the home's overhang and are ideal for carrying the extra weight of heavy snow loads.

OPPOSITE: Glass lines the front of the cabin that overlooks the lake. When guests enter from the driveway side of the home, they can see straight through the interior out to the lake.

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community of artisans to build a truly special cabin. And such a community exists at and near Priest Lake. Living in relatively close proximity allows this talented group of architects, builders and craftspeople to form a cohesive team that can turn what might be a utilitarian cabin into something special.

Priest Lake, located in the northern Idaho panhandle just 80 miles north of Spokane, Washington, is often touted as one of the world's premiere vacation destinations. For many years, Curt and Nancy brought their two sons to this high Alpine glacier lake for summer vacations, staying in one of the many available guest cabins. In 1990, they purchased a small non-winterized cabin at the end of a steep, single-lane road.

"The cabin worked well for us for summer vacations but was impractical for year-round

visits. When our boys grew up and starting having children of their own, we decided it was time to find something that would suit our expanding family," Curt says.

A Blank Slate

Since they loved their location so much, Curt and Nancy decided to tear down the old cabin and start over. They had previously worked with architect Jon Sayler when they were considering building a new residence in Spokane. They subsequently moved into a home he had designed and were very impressed with his work.

"I have been designing homes for over 30 years and, although I never originally intended for it to work out this way, almost 85 percent of my business is waterfront homes," Sayler says. That percentage makes sense: Sayler's area is replete with lakes and rivers.

For Curt and Nancy's home, Sayler's de-





sign team included Eric Owens and Matt Kerr, architects in his Sandpoint office. Owens, the project manager for the home, played a pivotal role by translating the homeowners' must-haves into a tangible plan the other members could use as the blueprint.

They started the cabin design by taking into consideration the large amount of precipitation that falls at Priest Lake. In addition to having the reputation of being the rainiest place in Idaho, the area also has a yearly average of six to eight feet of snowfall. Although most architects might opt for a steeply pitched roof to speed the shedding of snow, Sayler has long thought that a gently sloping roof, similar to what is found in Swiss chalets, is actually preferable. "The idea is to prevent the snow from falling off and injuring people and damaging property. A flatter roof allows

the snow to melt naturally," he explains.

Owens took the low slope idea and designed a tweaked rectangle shape to the roof that not only responds to the site, setbacks and natural contours, but also provided cover where needed: at the outdoor grilling area on the lake side and the parking area on the entry side.

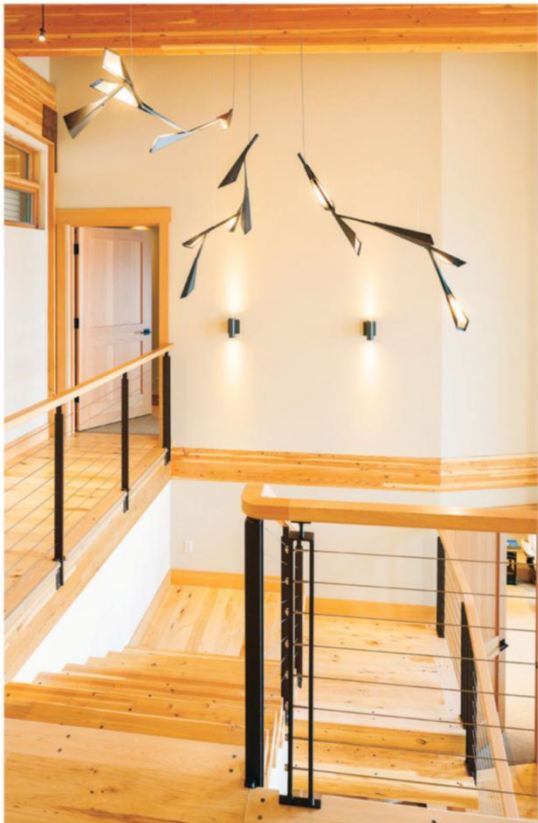
A second consideration in the design was the location of the cabin at the end of a single-lane steep road, which made turning a standard-sized vehicle around very difficult, if not impossible. To solve the problem, Owens created a lower-level shop where the family could store their kayaks, catamaran and other recreational items. The shop has a reinforced concrete roof that doubles as a three-car parking slab/carport and automobile turnaround space.

ABOVE: Bleached walnut cabinets, custom-made by Mingo Mountain Woodworking, are topped with granite. A cable light system with LED fixtures highlights the kitchen island. Open space in the kitchen makes room for several cooks to work together.

OPPOSITE: A simple L-shaped leather couch and a set of gray upholstered metal side chairs fulfill Nancy's desire that all materials in the home be natural. Curt salvaged the front door from their old cabin and converted it into a coffee table.

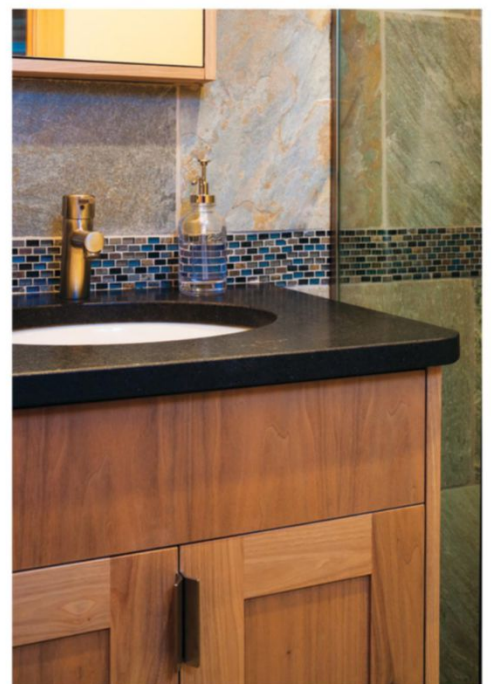
Interior designer Tammie Ladd selected matte-finish aluminum tiles for the kitchen backsplash to complement the stainless steel vent and gas range. Nancy selected the cabinet hardware to keep the lines simple.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Stairs with cables in lieu of traditional balusters set the home's contemporary tone. ■ Wood beams and ceilings add warmth and continue out to the timbered overhang seen through the windows. ■ The reinforced concrete slab roof over the lower-level shop space serves as a covered parking area outside the main entrance. ■ The master bathroom is finished with Jua Gray limestone tile. ■ A rainfall showerhead elevates the luxury of the walk-in shower. ■ Architect Jon Saylor finished the exterior with wire-brushed, sanded and pre-sealed reclaimed fir by Montana Timber for a stylish look that's low-maintenance.



View Points

"We loved the large sand-level deck on our original cabin," Curt says, "but above all, the cabin had to have an indoor-outdoor feel and make the most of the views of the lake. After all, Priest Lake is the reason we are here."

Because the unusual shape of the lot didn't lend itself well to a traditional floor plan, the architects envisioned the home as a modified rectangle, which allowed for the greatest vantage point to the southwest overlooking the lake.

The resulting 2,800-square-foot cabin is arranged to accommodate all of the family's wants. The home, which is accessed on the main level from the carport, includes three bedrooms and two baths. The master and one of the guest bedrooms each have a private balcony with a view of the lake. The lower level walks out to the lake and includes all of the public spaces: living room, dining area, kitchen and a family room that could double as a fourth bedroom, and a three-quarter bath. As an example of how every square inch of the cabin was put to a functional use, the area under the stairs with the lowest ceiling serves as a play nook for the children while the taller space was planned as a pantry.

Dream Team

Another critical member of the team was Sandau Builders, led by Mike Sandau, who lives on Priest Lake and is very familiar with the climate and challenges of building a lakefront home. Von Sandau and Dan Griesemer served as foremen for the project. Ernie Ahlers, John Haworth and Daniel Dixon all contributed to the project's success.

Sandau Builders started construction in November and had to ensure all the materials would be delivered to this remote area over snow-packed roads in a timely manner. "I was confident Mike would be on site to supervise the project. He has such a good reputation for reliability," Curt adds.

Sandau credits the success of the project to his team of craftsmen who have



A color-infused concrete finish accents the wall with the gas-burning fireplace in the master bedroom. The private balcony is outfitted with metal railings. Screens for the patio doors retract when not in use to allow for unobstructed views of the lake.

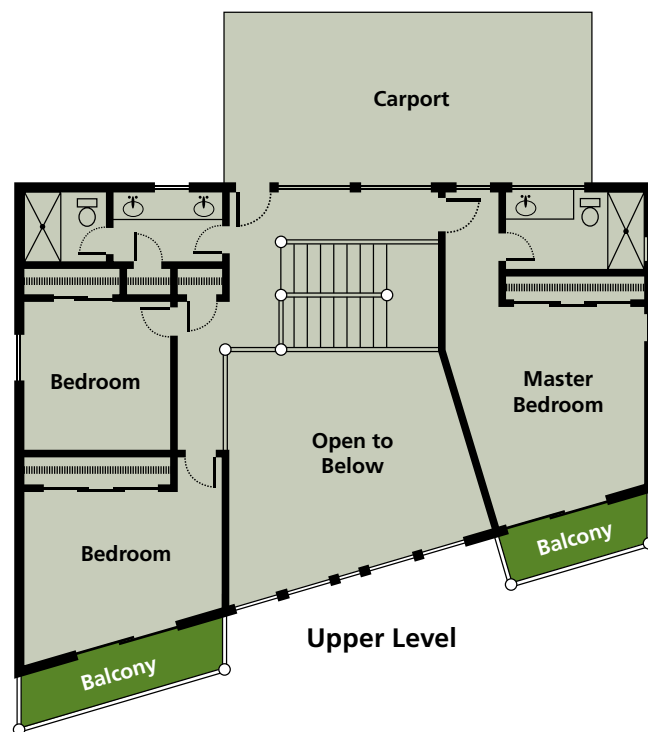




The gas fireplace, with its rustic-yet-contemporary concrete hearth, is one focal point in the room—the other is the water view just beyond the deck, which is constructed of lpe wood.



Main Level



Upper Level

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 2,800

BEDROOMS: 4

BATHROOMS: 3

Architects: Jon Sayler and Eric Owens
(208-265-9160; jonsayler.com)

Builder: Sandau Builders, Inc. (208-443-3324)

Interior Designer: Tammie Ladd Design, Inc. (509-230-7495)

Iron work: Mountain Metal Works (208-263-6031)

Masonry: Kingstone Masonry (509-336-4561; kingstonemasonry.com)

Exterior siding: Montana Timber Products
(406-552-0462; montanatimberproducts.com)

Cabinets and woodworking:
Mingo Mountain Woodworking, Inc.
(509-389-4114; mingomountainwoodworking.com)

Drywall: Premier Drywall Inc. (208-610-1009)

Electrical Contractor: Action Electric (208-265-4789)

Plumbing: Bailey's Plumbing (208-290-6869)

Light Fixtures: Hubbardton Forge (800-826-4766; hubbardtonforge.com)

worked together for many years and are dedicated to creating handcrafted homes. “We are a package deal so that the homeowners don’t have to worry if I will be able to find subs to complete the job to their specifications,” Sandau says.

Tammie Ladd, an interior designer, worked with Nancy and the other team members to select the finishing touches. The goal was for the home to flow seamlessly with the lake. Ladd accomplished this flowing feeling by selecting colors that harmonized with the natural beauty outside the windows. The infinite view feel was achieved by taking a minimalistic approach to the interior such as in the railings and lighting. The home only has as much

furniture as is required for utility and comfort because the real beauty is visible through the large expanses of windows.

One of the special aspects of the home is the programmable thermostat, which the owners can access remotely to adjust the heat from their home using their cell phones. The reason it is so special is that their mechanical engineer son was on the team at Honeywell that designed the unit. “Because he also is a designer, his input was invaluable in helping make this home unique,” Nancy says.

Carefree Days

Over the years, Priest Lake has been a special place for Curt and Nancy and their

family. “Almost immediately after we began the drive from Spoke to the lake, we would begin to relax,” Curt says. The couple would look forward to hiking, kayaking or sailing the family’s catamaran. “We would spend our days, not worrying about what needed to be accomplished, but rather what different species of wildlife we might see,” he says.

“This is where we have good memories of family and friends,” Nancy says. In the new cabin, they are looking forward to time spent with their children and grandchildren—moments that will last a lifetime. “This is truly our infinity cabin,” Nancy says.

A scenic photograph of a log home in a valley with mountains in the background. The log home is a two-story structure with a gabled roof and multiple windows. It is situated in a lush green field, and a wooden fence runs across the foreground. In the background, there are snow-capped mountains under a clear sky.

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- Choosing Your Producer
- Energy Efficiency for Today's Log Home
- How Will Your Home Look and Live?
- Keep Your Eyes on the Prize
- Square Footage 101
- Staining Options for Your Log Home
- Your Log Home: Custom Design or Model Plan?

**Or sit back, relax and watch a few
videos and webinars:**

- Kitchen Confidential: Expert Tips for Bringing Your Dream Kitchen to Life
- Design Your Perfect Log Home
- Log Home Living: Cost Effective Design
- Developing Your Dream Home Budget
- Start Planning Your Dream Home Today

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Rocky Mountain Log Homes photo



10
PAGES

BONUS SECTION



*going
green*

SAVE WATER ■ CHOOSE GREEN PRODUCTS ■ SAVE ENERGY

going green

Your cabin can be an eco-hero.

For cabin owners, the natural beauty that surrounds their cherished homes is priceless. Nature does much more than provide a pretty backdrop; it provides healthy living conditions, recreational opportunities, inspiration and peace in the midst of busy lifestyles. What cabin owner wouldn't want to help protect nature from harm?

In this section, we offer pointers on choosing green products as you're building your cabin and saving water and energy while you live in it.

Keep in mind that while these are smart decisions that will save money and resources, and they are admirable actions, much of what makes a home earth-friendly is found in other factors:

DESIGN: Is the cabin well-sited to take advantage of its property's micro-climate? Can it be built without destroying the land's inherent beauty?

SIZE: Is the cabin so large that some interior spaces are rarely if ever used?

LIFESTYLE: Does the cabin encourage its owners to enjoy the outdoors, step more lightly on the earth and appreciate non-material things?

Let your cabin's hero journey begin!

HIGHLIGHTS

GOING GREEN

BONUS SECTION 4

Your cabin can be an eco-hero.

DROP BY DROP

BONUS SECTION 6

How to save water in your cabin.

POWER UP

BONUS SECTION 8

Making your new cabin energy-efficient.

AGAIN AND AGAIN

BONUS SECTION 10

Selecting green materials for your cabin.

RESOURCES

BONUS SECTION 12

Where to find eco-friendly options.

SPECIAL SECTION: GOING GREEN



Start your eco-friendly cabin off on the right foot with reclaimed or sustainable flooring. These leather planks from Torlys bring rich texture to a room while making good use of a durable and beautiful recycled material.

Drop by Drop

How to save water in your cabin.



A green roof system, like this one from Living Roofs Inc., uses low-growing plants to absorb water that would otherwise flow into storm sewers. Green roofs also save energy by keeping buildings cooler in the summer.

Although we often take it for granted, water is a resource we rely on in many aspects of our modern homes. Using this resource prudently can save you money and lighten your impact on the planet's water supply.

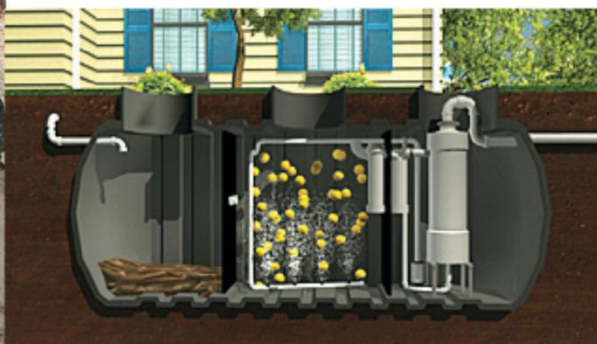
Water Use

According to the Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program, the average American family of four uses 400 gallons of water per day. Most of that water is used indoors. Not surprisingly, the bathroom is the biggest water guzzler in most homes. Toilets alone can account for 27 percent of all water used in a home, the EPA reports. Following

close behind are showers, clothes washers and other faucets.

For people who live in more remote settings, just getting running water to their cabins represents a challenge. Many cabin owners have to drill a well for water. Before you purchase land for a new cabin, be sure you will be able to fulfill your needs for water on the site in some way.

Whether you use municipal water or a well, conservation makes sense. Some conservation measures will also help you avoid runoff and protect the ecosystem of the lake, stream or pond that drew you to your cabin site originally.



Slow the flow. Replace older showerheads with low-flow models that run at two gallons per minute or less. The EPA reports that making this change to just one showerhead can save a family 2,900 gallons of water each year and lower utility costs for water and the energy needed to heat that water. Add aerators to other faucets in your home, too.

Upgrade your commode. Newer models of toilets can use as little as 1.28 gallons per flush, a huge improvement over the 6-gallon-per-flush models of years gone by.

Turn off the tap. You've probably heard this tip before, but shutting off the water while brushing your teeth, shaving or cleaning up in the kitchen makes a difference. The average sink faucet delivers two gallons of water per minute. If it's

running, that's money and resources that literally go down the drain.

Rethink the disposal. Composting food scraps adds nutrients to your garden and decreases the water used to run your garbage disposal.

See the big pitcher. Storing drinking water in a pitcher in your refrigerator will keep you from running the water in the sink until it gets cold. A refrigerator that dispenses cold water will serve the same function.

Load them up. Only run your clothes washer and dishwasher when they are full. Use short cycles if possible, and choose high-efficiency models when buying new or replacing your current appliances.

Don't rinse. Scraping dishes before putting them in the dishwasher will keep you from running water to rinse them.

TOP LEFT: Rain barrels come in a variety of sizes and styles, but all serve the same purpose of harvesting rainwater. This barrel, by Clean Air Gardening, features a spigot to make using the accumulated water easy.

TOP RIGHT: New showerheads, like this model from Delta, feature water-saving low flow, while still providing adequate pressure.

ABOVE: The NewGen septic scrubs wastewater with an innovative filtering system, allowing homeowners to reuse the water for irrigation. The system requires no leach field.

Power Up

Making your new cabin energy-efficient.

RIGHT: Don't let your computers or entertainment systems suck up energy while they're not in use. The Smart Strip from BITS Ltd. automatically shuts down the flow of power when it senses an appliance is not in use.



ABOVE: Make the heat from your wood- or gas-fueled stove work harder. Heat automatically activates and powers the Eco-fan from Plow & Hearth to circulate warm air.



ABOVE, RIGHT: Hanging clothes to dry is an age-old practice that is sparking renewed interest with people eager to save energy. The Breezecatcher provides yards of line space in a compact unit.

Cabins have come a long way from their pioneer roots. Even vacation cabins and seasonal cottages offer almost all the comforts of modern homes. The majority of those amenities require some source of power. If you're building a new cabin from scratch, you can design it to be as energy-efficient as possible. Already own an existing cabin? Read on for ways you can save energy, too.

Know Your Sources

Your cabin's location may affect what type of power sources you'll use. If public electricity is too far from your building site, or too expensive to bring to your site, you will have to weigh

alternative options, like natural gas, propane or solar power. To help you decide, talk to other landowners in your area, your builder and your real estate agent if you have one.

Your local climate may allow for your cabin to be powered by the sun, wind or water. You can calculate how much power your cabin will need and how much solar power you can realistically generate by using the tools on the site solar-facts.com. If you're considering wind power or hydroelectric power, do your homework. The American Wind Energy Association (awea.org) offers information on small residential wind turbine systems. An experienced installer can estimate whether you can generate enough power on your site to run



ABOVE: Solar ovens, like this tube-shaped model by GoSun, use the sun to cook and bake a wide variety of foods while using no electricity or fossil fuels.

LEFT: Insulated shades help cut down utility costs by restricting air passage from windows into the room. These blinds from EcoSmart Shades slide along vertical tracks set into the window frame.

your home off-the-grid.

Most properties don't offer the necessary resources to produce power using running water. But if you do have a stream on your site, it can be considered. According to Home Power (homepower.com), it takes an optimal combination of vertical drop and constant water flow to produce reliable power in a micro-hydro-electric system.

Super Saving

No matter what source powers your cabin, there are many steps you can take to save energy whenever possible:

- Choose energy-efficient light bulbs and use motion detectors on light switches to automatically turn off the lights in rooms you're not using.
- Cut back on heating and air-condi-

tioning by using ceiling fans to push warm air down from ceilings in the winter and circulate cooling air in the summer.

- Install a programmable thermostat to make savings automatic.
- Run dryer loads back to back to take advantage of heat built up in the dryer.
- Re-consider your need for a second refrigerator in your garage or basement.
- Grill out instead of turning on your oven.
- Outfit your fireplace with glass doors and close them when the fire's out to keep warm air from escaping out the chimney.
- Be sure drapes and furniture aren't blocking your heating vents.
- Specify high-performance windows, if possible, when building a new cabin to help reduce the need for heating and cooling.

- Ask your designer to help you utilize passive solar energy to heat your home.
- Building a cabin with plenty of windows to bring in natural light will cut down on your use of light fixtures.

Watch Your Footprint

Cabins tend to be on the small side—a desirable characteristic from an energy-efficiency standpoint. Less square footage means smaller spaces to heat and cool, and fewer materials required to build it. You'll save personal energy, too, by spending less time cleaning and maintaining a smaller home.

As you plan a new cabin, talk to your designer about how to keep your home's size in check. In the end, your wallet—and the environment—will thank you.

Again & Again

Selecting green materials for your cabin.

RIGHT: Carpet tiles can be replaced if necessary so you don't have to completely re-carpet a room. These tiles from Flor contain recycled content.

FAR RIGHT: Barnwood can be painted or left to display its natural patina. Red barn siding from Appalachian Antique Hardwoods gives this home rustic charm.



ABOVE: Recycled steel shines in this vessel sink from Stone Forest. The base provides a pop of industrial chic style.



ABOVE, RIGHT: Wine barrels that have reached the end of their vineyard lives can be repurposed. Viva Terra splits a barrel in two to make an outdoor table.

You'll discover a sometimes confusing range of "R's" when planning a new green cabin: Reuse, recycle, reclaim, repurpose... As you seek to do the right thing for the planet, you want to understand just what you're purchasing. Let's take a look at your options:

New Life

Taking a product that has already served a function and giving it a new role in your home can be called reusing, reclaiming or repurposing. Examples might be installing vintage marble countertops in your new kitchen or antique brick around your fireplace.

Cabin owners are often drawn to re-

claimed or salvaged wood. Wood that's already sawn into lumber (like barnwood) can be used as flooring, siding or in cabinet construction. Larger timbers that are rescued from old buildings or bridges can be used as support posts and beams or cut into dimensional lumber that offers the patina of age and the unique grain of old-growth trees.

Craftspeople who fashion cast-off items into functional pieces for the home are repurposing those items—making a light fixture from an old galvanized bucket, for example, or a coffee table from an industrial cart.

By choosing to re-use or repurpose, you're helping the environment. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),



“salvaging building materials and reusing them saves energy and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by minimizing the need to extract and process raw materials and ship new material long distances.”

Trash to Treasure

A wide variety of building supplies are made with recycled materials. The EPA lists drywall, insulation, countertops, composite (or plastic) lumber, glass tiles and carpeting as a few categories of materials that are readily available.

As you research options, you'll see products described as containing post-consumer waste or recycled content. The Recycled Products Cooperative (recycled-products.org) says the term “recycled” refers to both pre- and post-consumer waste. Scrap materials that are the byproduct of a manufacturing process are called “pre-consumer material,” the cooperative says. These byproducts can be used to create new items that have pre-consumer material content.

The term “post-consumer” refers to a product, like a cereal box, that has been purchased, used and returned to the system. Newsprint or cardboard made from this type of material, for example, would have “post-consumer” content.

To make your cabin more planet-friendly, look for products like carpet made from recycled plastic soda bottles, countertops that sparkle with crushed recycled glass or insulation composed of paper fibers.

By choosing products like these, you're saving natural resources, taking advantage of the “embodied energy” already invested in the once-used materials and reducing the load on landfills.

Where to Buy

Many materials with recycled content are available at lumberyards or home improvement stores. Online searches will help you locate specialized items. If you're interested in re-using some items for your home, start by looking for a Habitat for Humanity ReStore in your area. Local stores are listed on the organization's web site (habitat.org) and offer a range of donated new and used cabinets, appliances, trimwork, hardware, plumbing fixtures, lighting and other building materials at reduced prices. On the internet, Planet ReUse (planetreuse.com) connects people with building materials to donate with others who are looking for those items.

Salvage yards, antique shops and Craigslist (craigslist.com) are other good

sources for homeowners willing to do a bit of digging to find just the right thing for their cabins.

Eco-happiness

Still another option when outfitting your cabin is to buy products made from renewable or sustainable resources. Comparing “green” products can be daunting. For instance, you might be asking, “Is it better to use more energy to ship renewable bamboo flooring from overseas for my home or choose wood flooring from a local source?” Again, the EPA offers further insight. “Reducing our environmental impact requires thinking and learning about not just how we use products, but where they came from and where they're going.” The agency suggests you consider the amount of energy required to make and ship an item, the source of its raw materials and the effects of its manufacture on the environment. You might also consider what happens to the product when it has to be replaced. Can the used item be recycled?

If weighing all these options seems overwhelming, at least consider a product's expected lifespan. Selecting a material that will last longer is a good step in a green direction.

SPECIAL SECTION: GOING GREEN

resources

AM CONSERVATION GROUP

888-866-1624; amconservationgroup.com

APPALACHIAN ANTIQUE HARDWOODS

877-817-7758; aahardwoods.com

BITS LIMITED

877-424-8758; bitsltd.com

BONDED LOGIC

480-812-9114; bondedlogic.com

BREEZECATCHER

866-715-9267; breezecatcher.com

CARLISLE WIDE PLANK FLOORS

855-557-0436; wideplankflooring.com

CLEAN AIR GARDENING

214-819-9500; cleanairgardening.com

DELTA

800-345-3358; deltafaucet.com

EARTHEASY

888-451-6752; eartheasy.com

ECOBATT

317-398-4434; ecobatt.us

ECOSMART SHADES

877-338-9392; ecosmartshades.com

ELMWOOD RECLAIMED TIMBER

800-705-0705;
elmwoodreclaimedtimber.com

FLOR CARPET DESIGN SQUARES

866-952-4093; flor.com

GLOBUS CORK

718-742-7264; corkfloor.com

GREEN DEPOT

888-625-4189; greendepot.com

GREEN BUILDING SUPPLY

800-405-0222; greenbuildingsupply.com

GREENHOME

877-282-6400; greenhome.com

GOSUN

gosunstove.com

ICESTONE

718-624-4900; icestoneusa.com

INCINOLET

800-527-5551; incinolet.com

INSULSPAN

517-486-4844; insulspan.com

LIVING ROOFS INC.

828-252-4449; livingroofsinc.com

MARMOLEUM

800-842-7839; forbo.com

NEWGEN SEPTIC

513-607-9639;
greenforwardtechnologies.com

PAPER STONE

360-538-1480; paperstoneproducts.com

PLOW & HEARTH

800-494-7544; plowandhearth.com

PIONEER MILLWORKS

800-951-9663; pioneermillworks.com

SQUAK MOUNTAIN STONE

206-763-0905; squakmountainstone.com

STONE FOREST

888-682 2987; stoneforest.com

SUPERIOR WALLS

800-452-9255; superiorwalls.com

TORLYS SMART FLOORS

torlys.com

TRESTLEWOOD

877-375-2779; trestlewood.com

VIVA TERRA

800.247.6799; vivaterra.com



PLOW & HEARTH



GREENHOME



ICE STONE

FURTHER READING

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

energy.gov

OIKOS

oikos.com

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

usgbc.org

WATERSENSE

epa.gov/watersense



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October 23-25

ASHEVILLE, NC
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demonstrations.

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research.

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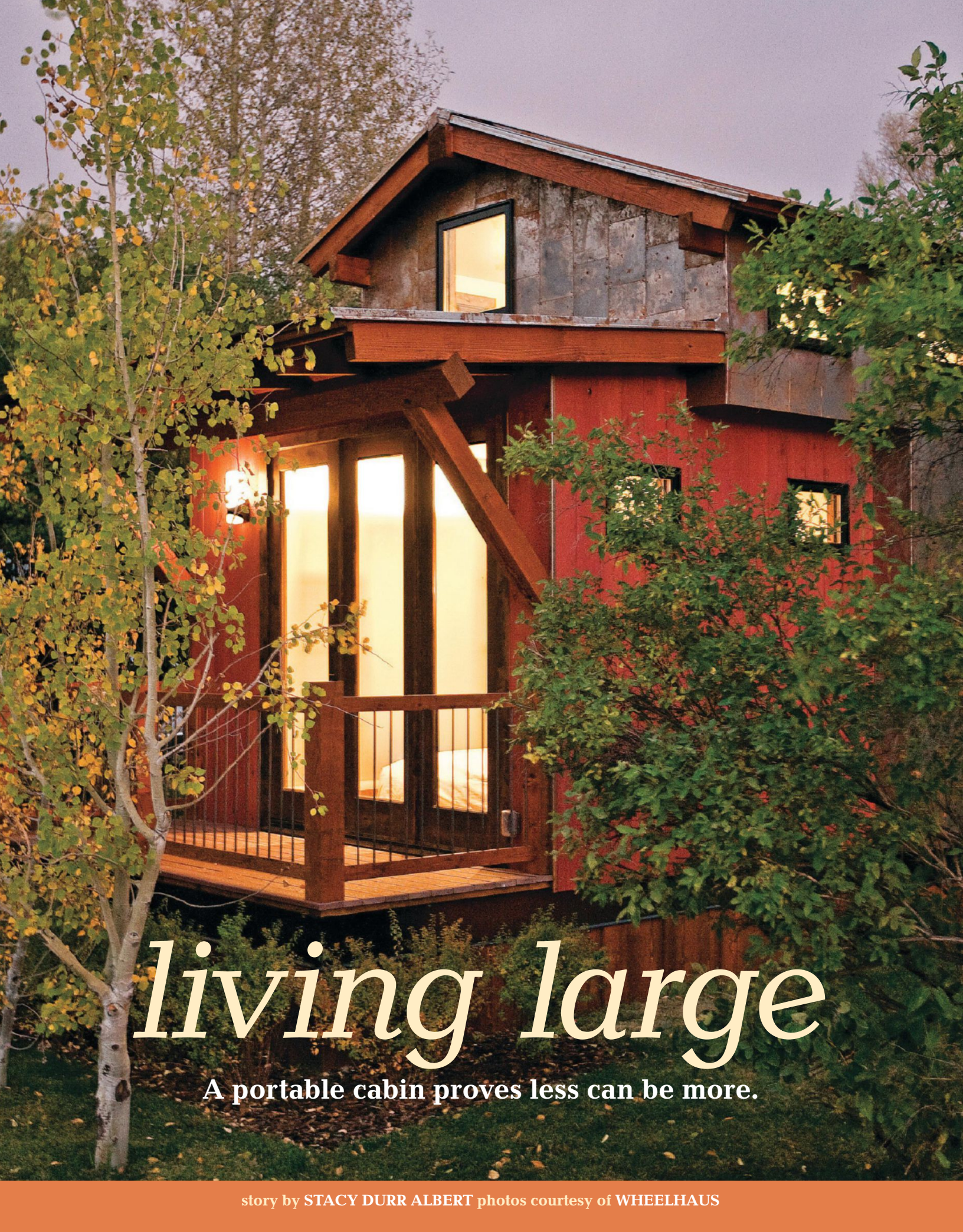
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living large

A portable cabin proves less can be more.



There's a lot of buzz these days about something called The Tiny House Movement, a back-to-basics concept that promotes simple living in super-small homes. The idea—fueled by dreams of financial freedom, a simpler lifestyle and the goal of leaving a lighter footprint on the planet—has even spawned a crop of new TV shows starring the minute dwellings.

While the premise behind the trend is simple, today's tiny homes are anything but. One example is the Caboose, a sophisticated modular cabin created by Wheelhaus, a company based in Wyoming. Filled with high-end materials and custom woodwork, this "recreational park trailer" feels much more like a luxury house than a pre-fab rolling cabin that can be transported just about anywhere.

"It's the BMW of the tiny house move-

ment," says Wheelhaus owner Jamie Mackay. "Its architecture, full timber-frame roof system and top-of-the-line fixtures and materials set it apart from other homes in this market."

Downsizing

While portable homes are often designed with mobility in mind, the Caboose cabin is intended to serve as a more permanent residence. Though its main area measures just 400 square feet, the luxury mobile cabin is making a mark as a full-time residence for many homeowners.

"People are starting to realize they don't need as much as they thought they needed to live," Mackay explains. "People often have an albatross of things around their neck, and we are showing them how they can be liberated from the story of stuff. Think about everything in

ABOVE: Reclaimed wood is used for the cabin's door and window trim, introducing a note of nostalgia and sustainability. The large expanse of glass in the living room blurs the line between outdoors and in, making the space feel much larger than it really is.

OPPOSITE: One of this cabin's defining features is its "big glass factor," according to Wheelhaus owner, Jamie Mackay. The front of the cabin is almost entirely glass, which affords spectacular views of the Grand Tetons and Snake River.

A complex roofline that enables a loft gives the Caboose cabin a look of architectural distinction. A standing seam metal roof adds additional flair; it has the potential to accommodate solar panels if the homeowners choose to take that path later on. The roof system is a full, structural timber-frame system complete with wooden pegs.







your closet that you haven't worn in 12 months—you really don't need it all."

Those who purchase the Caboose range in age from young homeowners who are ecstatic to get out of renting, to Baby Boomers and millionaires who are eager to scale down, shed big mortgages and high-maintenance homes so that they have more time and money to spend traveling or with family.

"The recession really took a toll on people, and it made them realize that they don't need the extra cost or the burden of a huge

home with a big lawn to mow," Mackay says. "A lot of the spaces in today's homes, such as dining rooms, are vacant, unnecessary rooms that cost money to heat."

Thoughtful Design

When Mackay set out to create the floor plan for the Caboose, he spent time thinking about where people spend most of their time. "We all gravitate to the kitchen and living room, so these are the areas we focused on," he says.

The layout incorporates an open kitch-

en/living room area with vaulted ceiling, one bedroom, one bathroom, a private deck and a bonus 120-square-foot loft area that measures 5 feet high. The front of the model is almost entirely glass. "The cabin has a big glass factor," Mackay says. "This helps bring the outside in, so the space doesn't feel so confined."

The hallmark of the cabin's design is its striking architecture. "It resembles an old railroad car, and its full timber-frame roof system enhances its architectural appeal," Mackay explains. "It's a true, structural



ABOVE: The cabin's L-shaped kitchen boasts granite counter-tops, stainless-steel appliances and custom cabinetry. A two-burner cooktop fits perfectly in the small space. "It's important to carefully plan the space you have available," Mackay advises.



A scaled-down fireplace is just one of the cabin's many luxury features. Hardwood floors, stainless steel appliances and top-of-the-line finishes also contribute to the high-end flavor.



SPACE MATTERS

While tiny cabins certainly score big in the cuteness factor, some come up short when it comes to storage. "It's all about space management," says Jamie Mackay of Wheelhaus. Here are a few of his tried-and-true tips to help you maximize your space:

Utilize crawl space. Consider high-end rollers that roll out from under your house to store kayaks, fishing gear, bikes and more.

Make the most of the space you have. Opt for a two-burner range and a smaller fireplace instead of trying to shove too many oversized pieces into a tight space.

Bring the outside in. Go for a model with a lot of glass so that your space doesn't feel so confined.

Minimize clutter. The whole point of the small house movement is to simplify. Learn to live with less.

Try before you buy. If possible, stay in a model or similar size home before you purchase to see if small-house living is really for you.

Travertine tile and a full-glass shower enclosure sound a note of sophistication in the bathroom. The well-appointed room also features Kohler fixtures and high-end hardware.

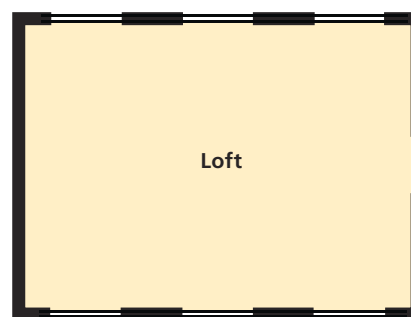
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 400

BEDROOMS: 1 (plus loft)

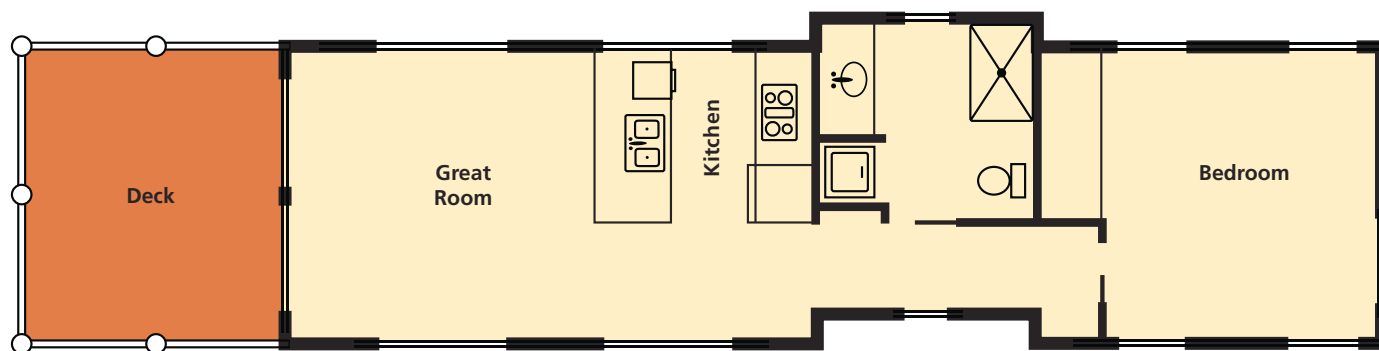
BATHROOMS: 1

Manufacturer: Wheelhaus
(307-733-7700; wheelhaus.com)

Rental: Fireside Resort
(877-660-1177; firesidejacksonhole.com)



Upper Level



Main Level

roof system complete with wooden pegs, and the cabin has a standing seam metal roof that can accommodate solar.”

Green, Not Lean

The potential for solar isn’t the only eco-friendly aspect of the design. Reclaimed wood, SIPs, Energy Star appliances, and windows and doors with high R-values have all helped Wheelhaus meet LEED Gold Standards and achieve a Certified Green designation. “We place a high value on building with sustainability,” he says.

Luxury plays an equally important role in the Caboose. Granite countertops, stainless-steel appliances, custom cabinetry, hardwood floors, Travertine tile, quartzite and a gas-burning fireplace all sound a note of sophistication in the trailer home (which feels much more like a house than an RV). Outside, cedar siding, reclaimed wood and metal tiles with

an aged patina impart a look of distinction. The cabin comes complete with all hardware, appliances and finishes.

“We’re building a very high-end home,” Mackay says. “We want to do the best we can with the space we have, so we’re always evolving—for example, we made the ceiling heights higher and the hallway wider so that it doesn’t feel so tiny.”

One Size Fits All

Those who buy the Caboose (which measures just 10.5 feet by 38 feet) are drawn to its distinctive roofline and contemporary lines, as well as the extra space that the loft provides. Some owners opt to use the loft as their main sleeping area, converting the downstairs bedroom into an office area instead. Others use the loft as sleeping quarters for grandkids.

Another bonus feature of the Caboose is its spacious outdoor deck, which ex-

pands the living space of the small cabin and affords spectacular views of the surrounding landscape. The model shown on these pages is set on the grounds of the Fireside Resort in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, which offers breathtaking vistas of the Teton Range, picturesque woodland and the Snake River.

“When visitors enter, they are stunned by how spacious the cabin feels,” Mackay says. “They all say it feels bigger than it really is, and that the photos don’t do it justice.”

If you’d like to find out just how big a tiny cabin can feel, try it out for yourself—for your next vacation, you can rent this cabin or another Wheelhaus cabin on the grounds of Fireside Resort. But be warned—if you fall in love with one of the cabins, you just might find yourself rolling home a keepsake that costs a bit more than a typical souvenir shotglass.

small homes BIG IDEAS

11 plans to inspire your dreams.

Longing for a getaway from their home in the busy Washington, D.C. area, Saul and Sue scoured available properties within a few hours' drive. With persistence and a bit of luck, they found a spot in Virginia and planned to build a small getaway.

One thing was clear: The cabin had to be low-maintenance. "I didn't want to be a slave to it," Sue says.

They found a 1,100-square-foot cabin plan online created by R.C.M. Cad Design Drafting in British Columbia, then took the plan to a local log home builder, Dogwood Mountain Log Homes, for help in creating a contemporary cabin in logs. (See the finished home and its plan on page 75.)

Although Sue and Saul are thrilled with how the finished home looks, most importantly, it has given them a place to create precious memories with friends, their grown children and teenage daughter. "We love this cabin," Sue says. "It's such a part of our lives."

SIZING IT UP

How large is your dream cabin? Like Sue and Saul, are you looking for a place to reconnect with family without committing to overwhelming housework? Do you need a bit more space to live in your cabin full time, but want to stick within a tight budget? Are you contemplating shrinking your living space down to truly tiny?

You might have quick and easy responses to these questions, or it might be something you're still considering. Who

will use the cabin and how frequently will affect the size you need. Your lifestyle, family size, plans to entertain...even the climate where you plan to build will all play a part in determining your ideal square footage.

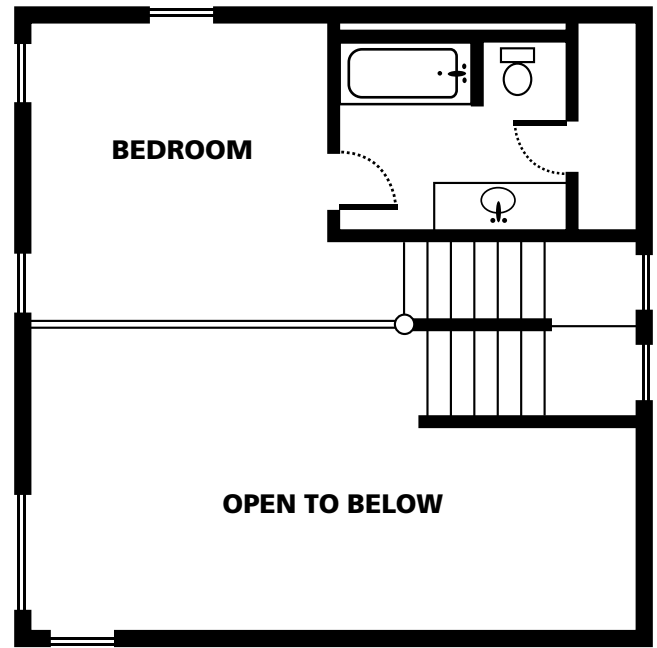
THE DRAWING BOARD

Seeing how designers and other homeowners have successfully fulfilled their dreams in compact plans can be inspiring. The following pages highlight cabin plans in a range of configurations and sizes (but all under 2,000 square feet). As you look through the plans, consider your needs for bedroom and bathroom count and the characteristics of your property.

Budget often dictates design decisions. If you are approaching your project with a cost-per-square-foot number in mind, remember that building small can actually raise that cost. A smaller kitchen, for example, still needs big-ticket items like appliances, countertops, cabinetry and flooring. If you choose high-end finishes, your small kitchen will carry a higher price regardless of its size.

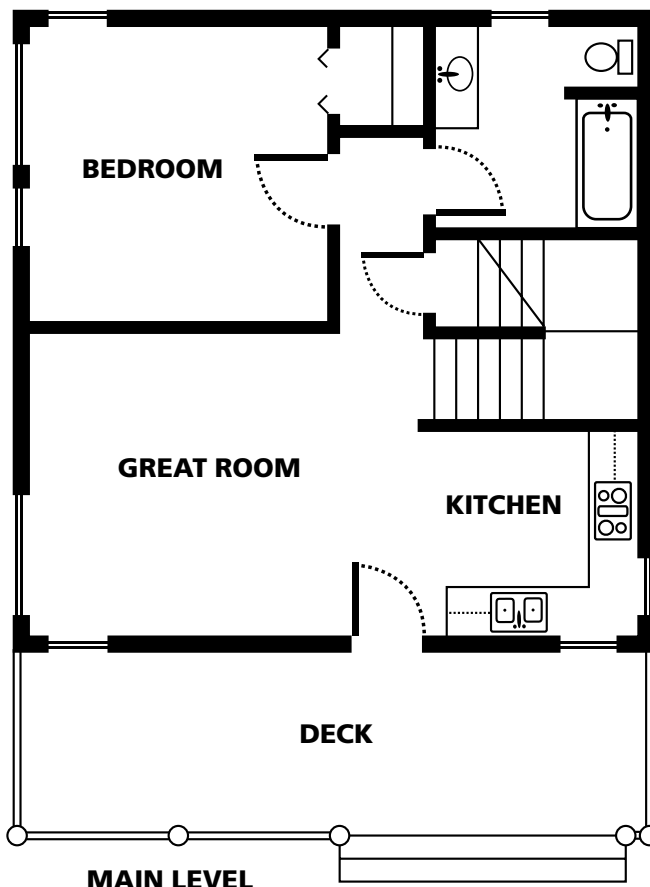
The type of construction you choose will also affect your cabin's cost, no matter if its big or small. Conventional construction with readily available materials will cost less than a cabin built with handcrafted, upgraded materials like massive logs and reclaimed wood timbers.

Fortunately, there's a style and size of cabin that's just right for everyone and every budget.



UPPER LEVEL

BROOKSIDE



MAIN LEVEL

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 844

BEDROOMS: 1, plus loft

BATHS: 2

This simple cabin floor plan stands out with contemporary style. A front porch welcomes friends and family. Inside, the post-and-beam frame gives an organic feel that's right at home on any wooded or lakeside property. All the comforts of home are found in this small package: an open floor plan, vaulted great room with plenty of windows, two sleeping areas with closets and two full bathrooms.

WOODHOUSE

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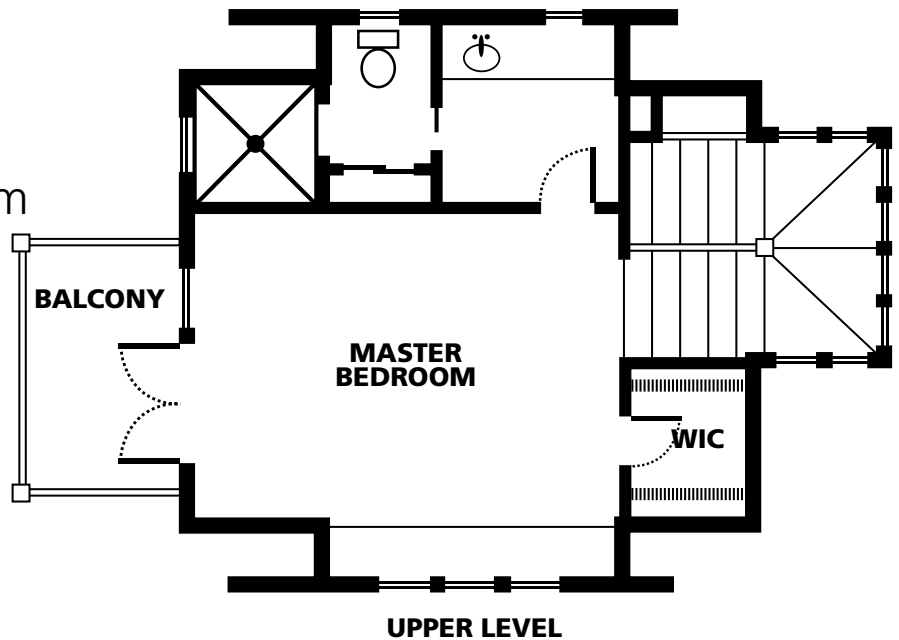
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thebungalowcompany.com

THE SEA GRASS

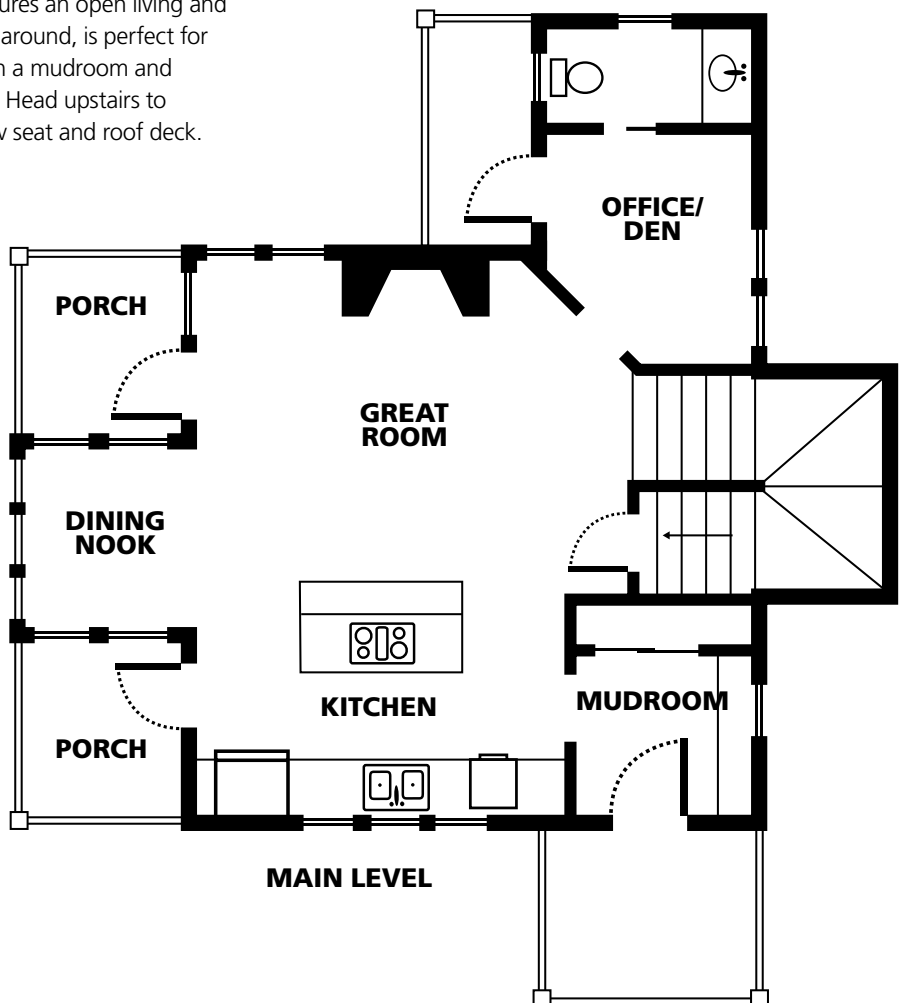
This one-bedroom retreat loaded with charm features an open living and kitchen space. The dining nook, with windows all around, is perfect for capturing a view. The small home works hard with a mudroom and laundry center that offers a compact home office. Head upstairs to a master suite with delightful details like a window seat and roof deck.

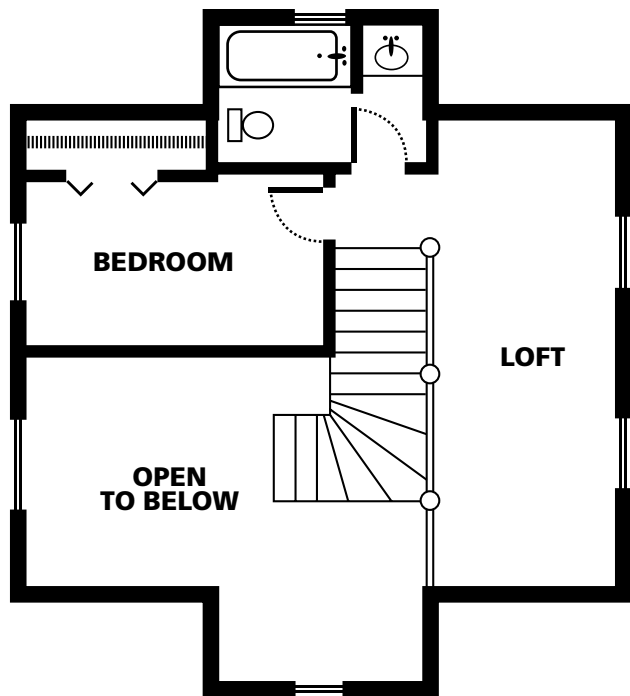


SQUARE FOOTAGE: 859

BEDROOMS: 1

BATHS: 1.5





UPPER LEVEL

THE 12 POINT

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 956

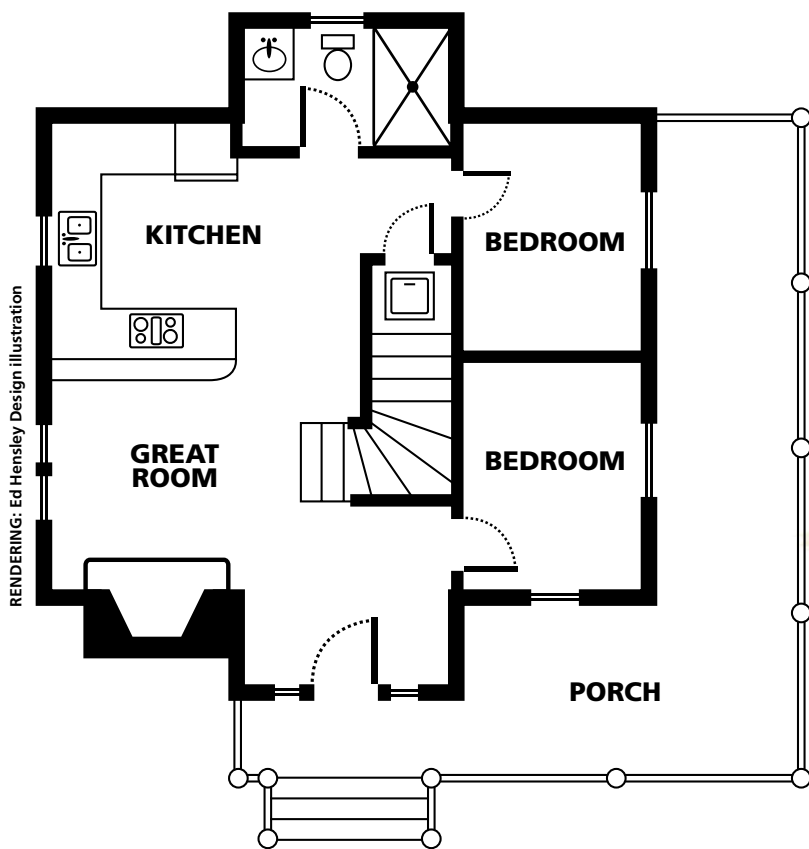
BEDROOMS: 3

BATHS: 2

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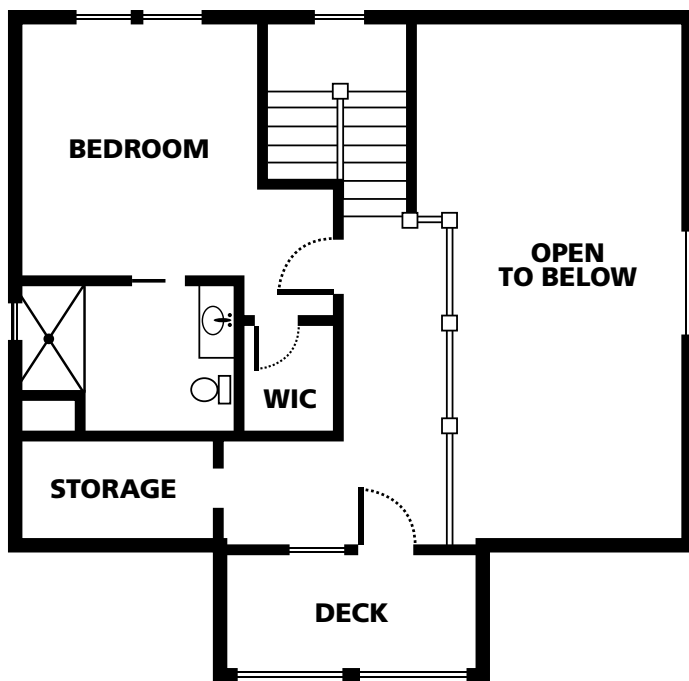


MAIN LEVEL



Three bedrooms and an open loft make this storybook-style cabin just right for accommodating family and friends. The kitchen flows right into the great room, which offers a cozy fireplace. The upstairs bedroom features an en-suite bath and could be used as a private master. A front porch provides a charming welcome.

THE CIDER MILL



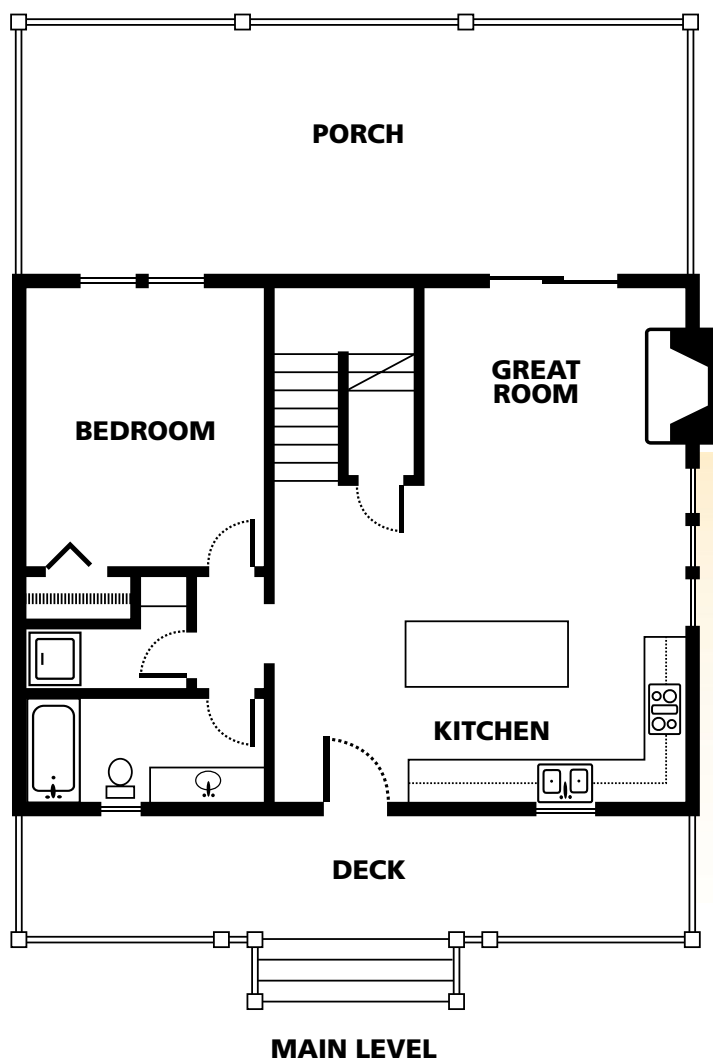
UPPER LEVEL

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,112

BEDROOMS: 2

BATHS: 2

Years ago, mills were used to grind apples in the first step of making cider from bountiful harvests. This cabin model by MossCreek draws its life from the land as well. A narrow footprint makes it fit almost any site. The home features MossCreek's signature mix of natural materials like wood, stone and glass to create a distinctive rustic home.



MAIN LEVEL



MOSSCREEK

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moss creek.net

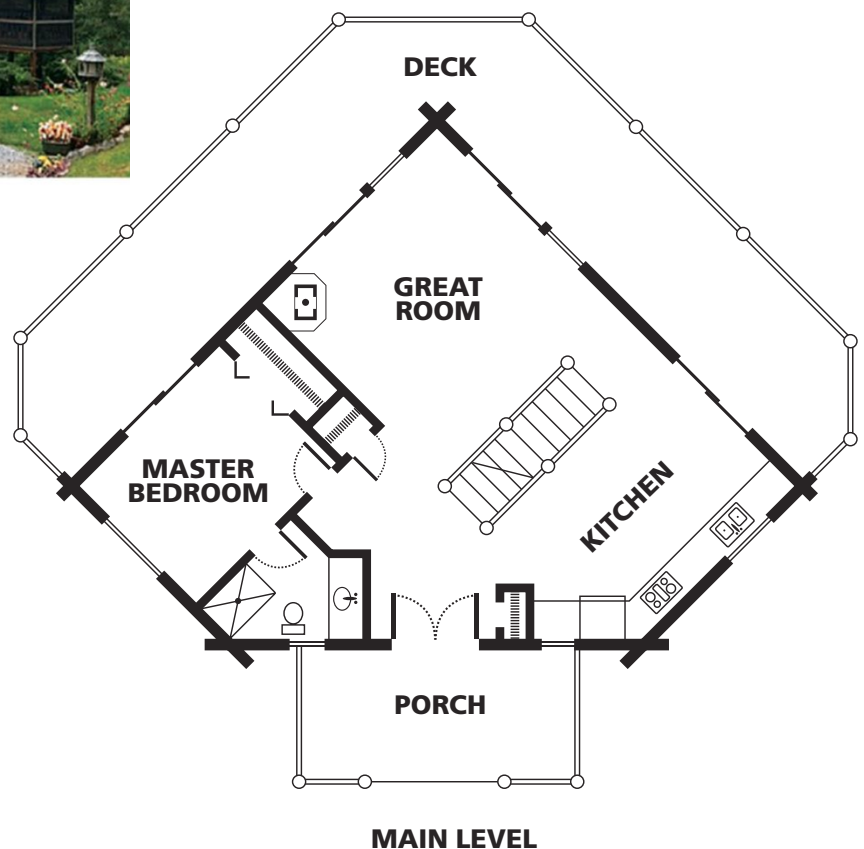
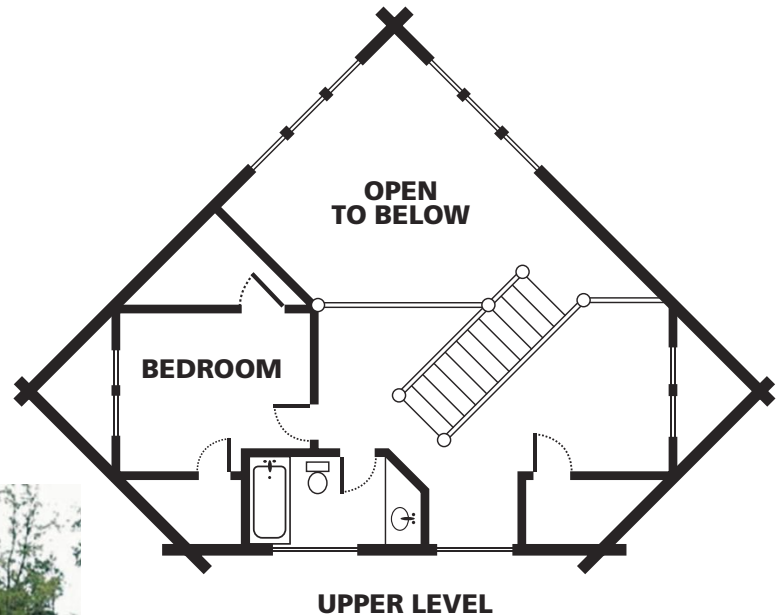
THE SPRING

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,150

BEDROOMS: 2

BATHS: 2

Turning a square-shaped home on its point creates long diagonal sight lines from the front door to the great room. The great room's prow shape, vaulted ceilings and wide windows make the compact room feel spacious. A lower level can be added with access under the existing stairs to the loft. Designed by R.C. M. Cad Design Drafting, this home was adapted for log construction by Dogwood Mountain Log Homes and Appalachian Log Structures.



**R.C.M.
CAD DESIGN**
604-288-7663
rcmcaddesign.com

**DOGWOOD
MOUNTAIN
LOG HOMES/
APPALACHIAN
LOG STRUCTURES**
540-433-1873
applog.com/sales/dogwood

THE TREE HOUSE

This house truly stands above the rest: Designed to recall all the fun of a childhood tree house, the home still provides plenty of living space, with four bedrooms and an open living space with a view.

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,200

BEDROOMS: 4

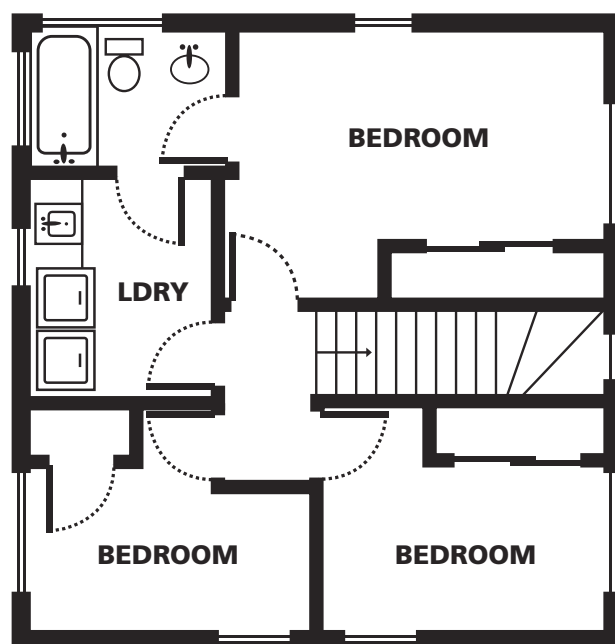
BATHS: 2



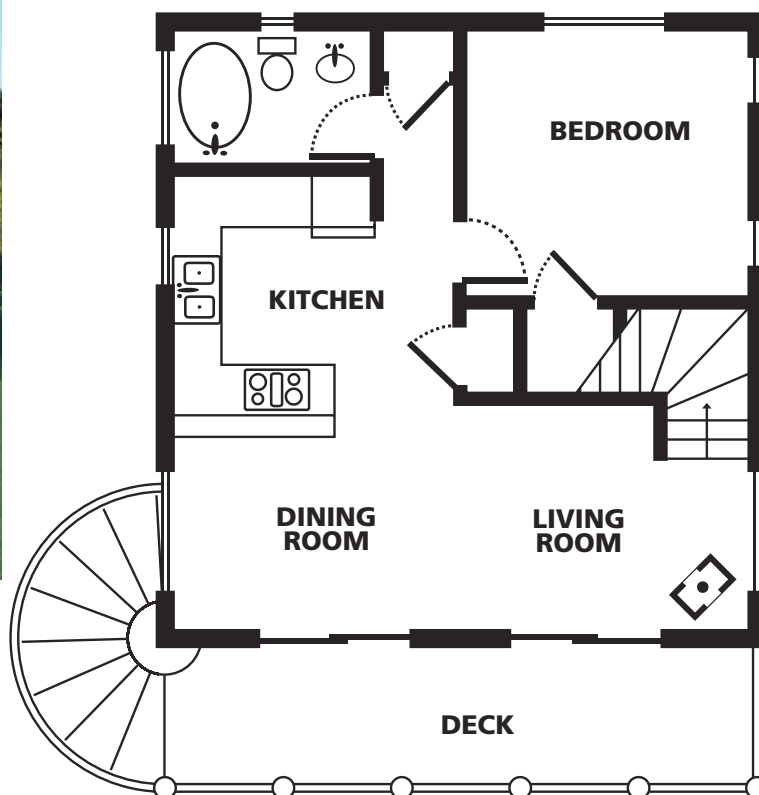
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UPPER LEVEL



MAIN LEVEL

BUNGALOW

SOUTHLAND LOG HOMES

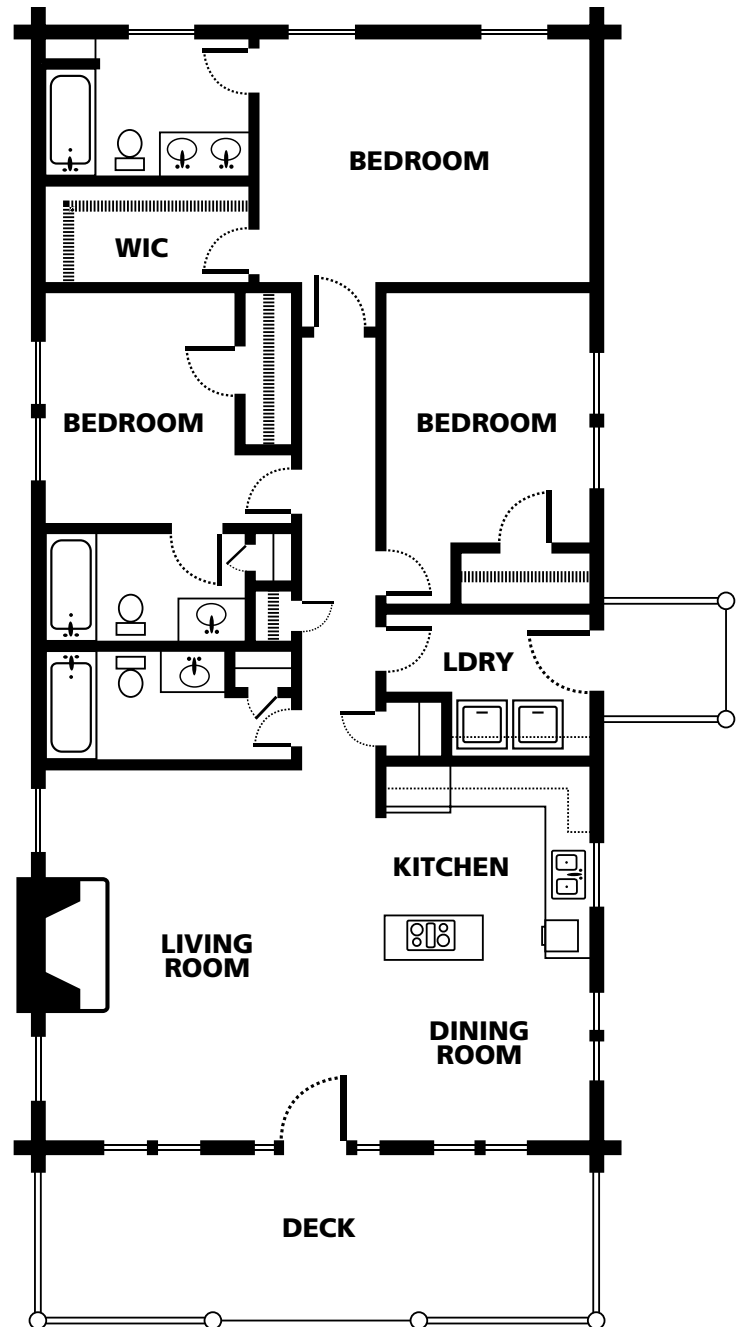
800-641-4754

southlandloghomes.com

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,400

BEDROOMS: 3

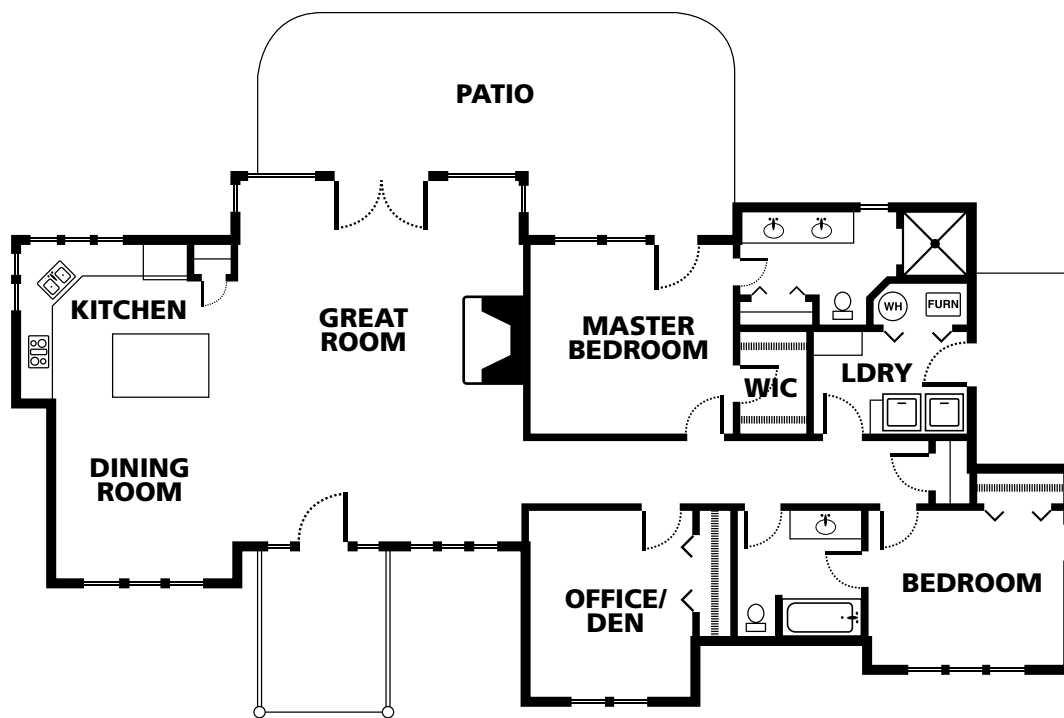
BATHS: 3



For buyers who prefer a one-level home, the Bungalow features all the amenities on a single floor. An open floor plan in the front of the home is followed by three bedrooms that open onto the main hall. Two of the bedrooms feature en-suite baths, adding to the plan's versatility. A laundry and pantry space could be customized to serve as a mudroom or connection to an attached garage.



TRUCKEE



A luxury take on a single-level home, this model mixes large, handcrafted logs, stone and vertical siding. Post-and-beam construction provides the grand feeling of full round logs without overpowering the compact design. An open patio and covered porch provide outdoor living space in this home, estimated at a \$300-per-square-foot cost to build.

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,565

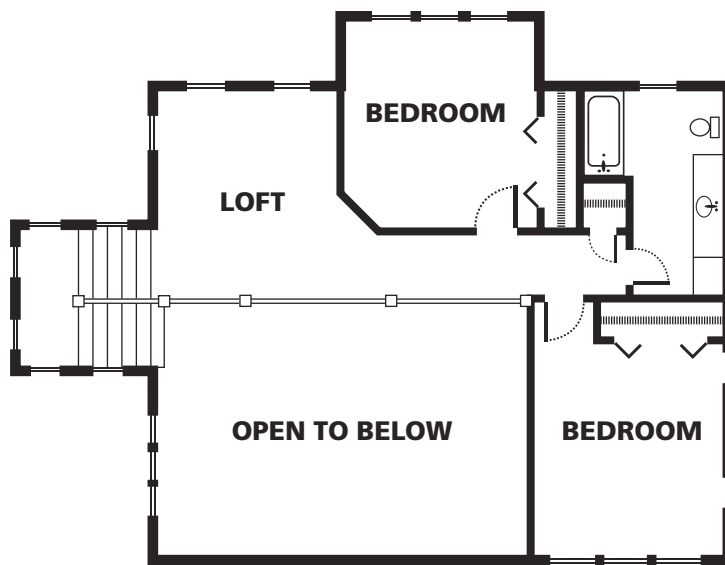
BEDROOMS: 2

BATHS: 2

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UPPER LEVEL

CRESCENT FALLS

Setting the stairs off to one side gives this home a unique layout that's perfect for a lot with a view. Windows allow for views from the kitchen working area, dining space and living room area. Sliding glass doors open onto a pergola. The exterior of this custom home features a hybrid mix of building materials.

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,739

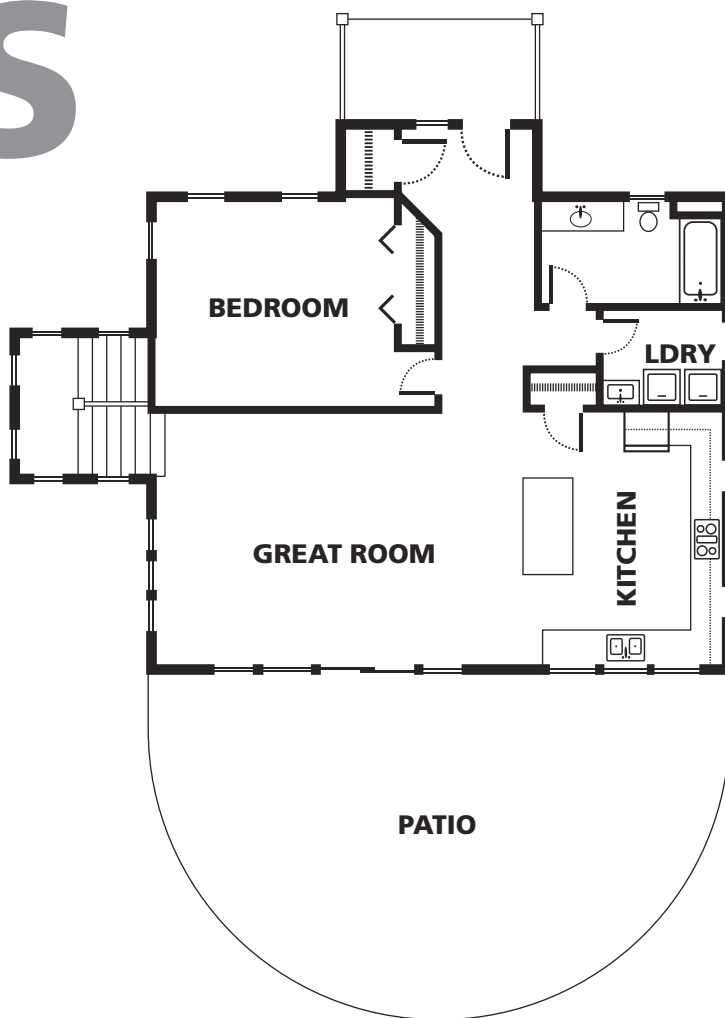
BEDROOMS: 3

BATHS: 2

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LOG HOMES**

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wisconsinloghomes.com

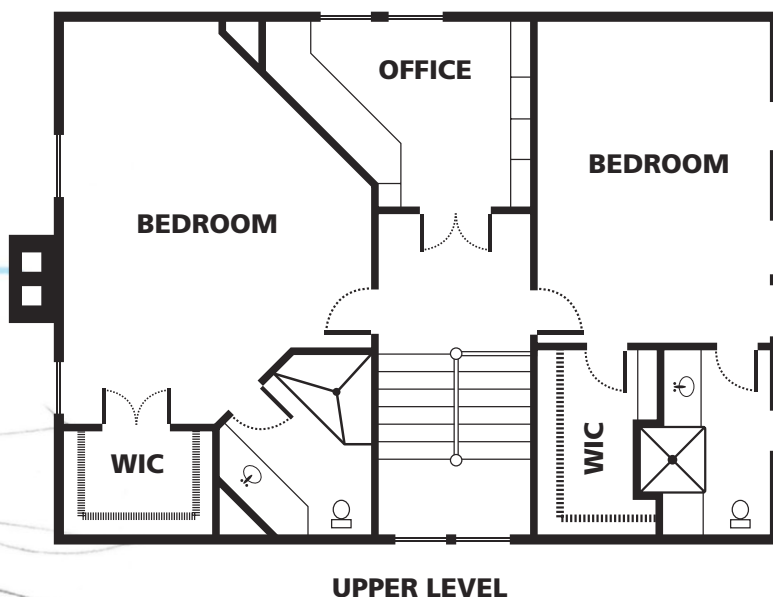


MAIN LEVEL

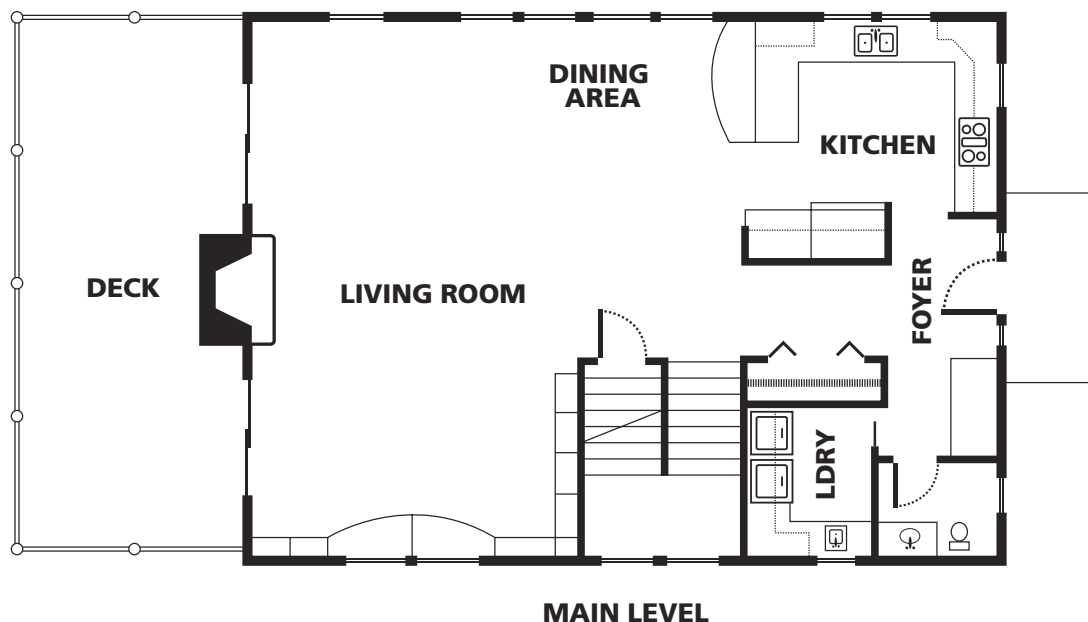
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,872

BEDROOMS: 2

BATHS: 2.5



THE COTTAGE II

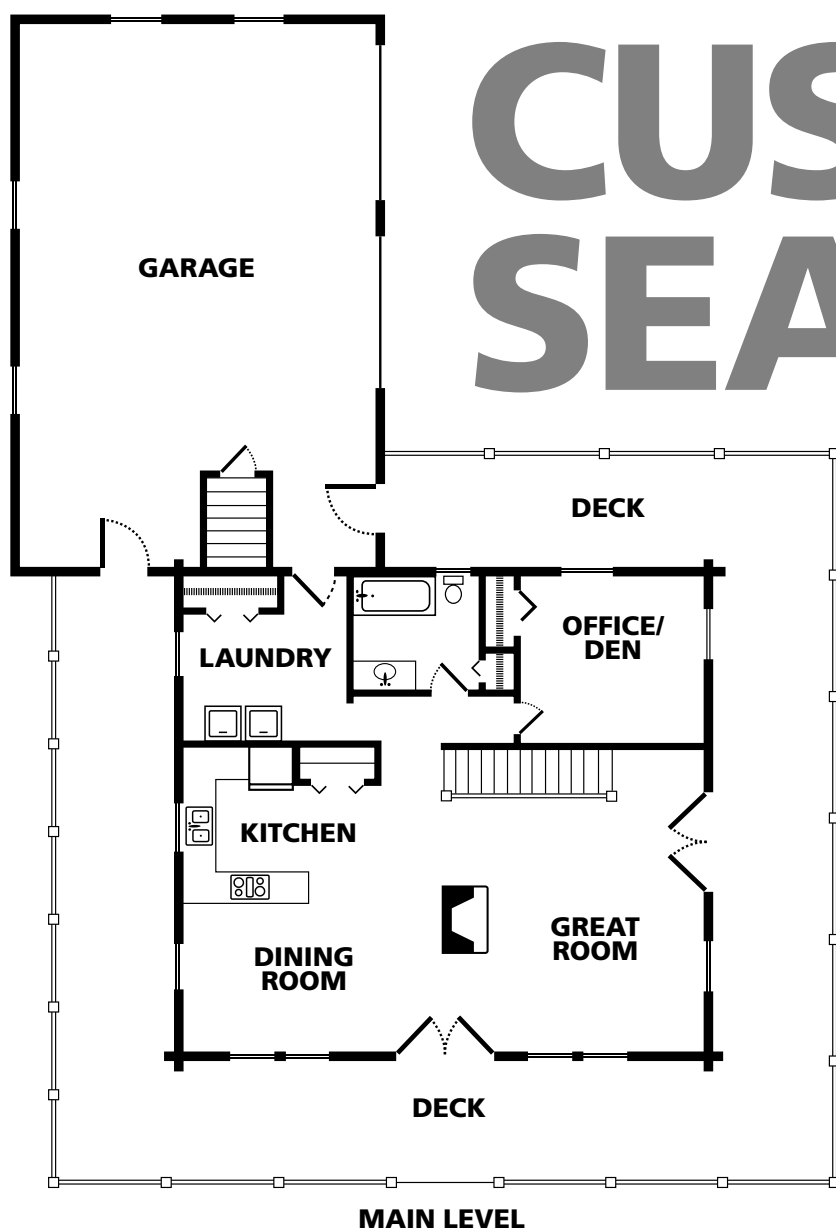
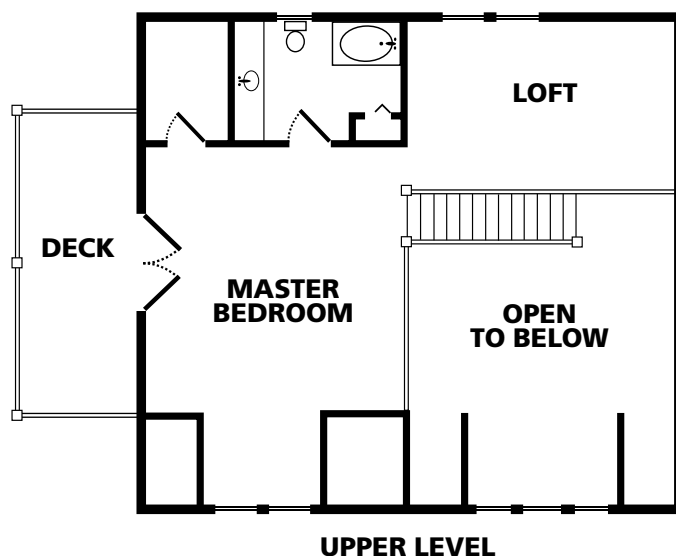


TIMBERPEG

800.636.2424

timberpeg.com

Choose an Eastern white pine or Douglas timber frame for this cottage plan that features an open layout and special touches like a curved kitchen peninsula and window seat. Upstairs are two bedroom suites set at unique angles to make room for a cozy home office.



CUSTOM SEARS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,880

BEDROOMS: 2

BATHS: 2

Wraparound porches and a private balcony off the master suite make this cabin perfect for people who love the outdoors. A wide-open floor plan combines the living and dining spaces together with the kitchen. For added convenience, the plan offers a first-floor laundry room and an attached oversized garage. The cabin provides the versatility of a full bath on each floor.

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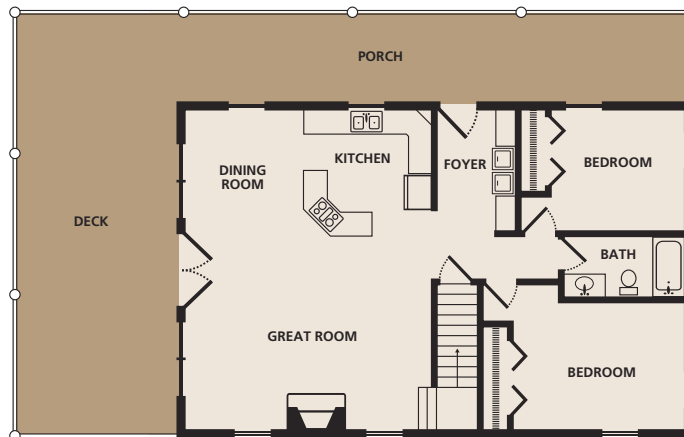
info@betterthanlogs.com • www.betterthanlogs.com



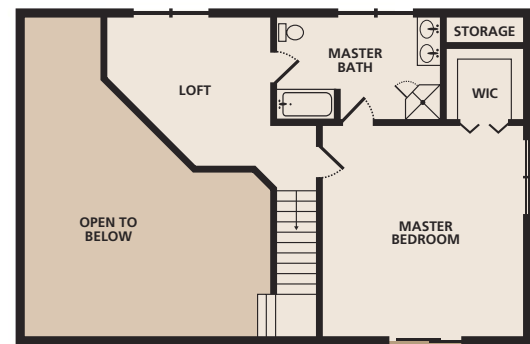
PATAK

2,075 square feet | 3 bedrooms | 2 ½ baths

The Patak is a traditional chalet style where a prow roof is nicely punctuated by a dressed up front shed dormer. Outside, a porch extends along the front of the home and is joined to the deck on the side. Perfect for a lot with a view, the soaring cathedral ceiling is banked with windows bringing Mother Nature in.



Main Level



Upper Level



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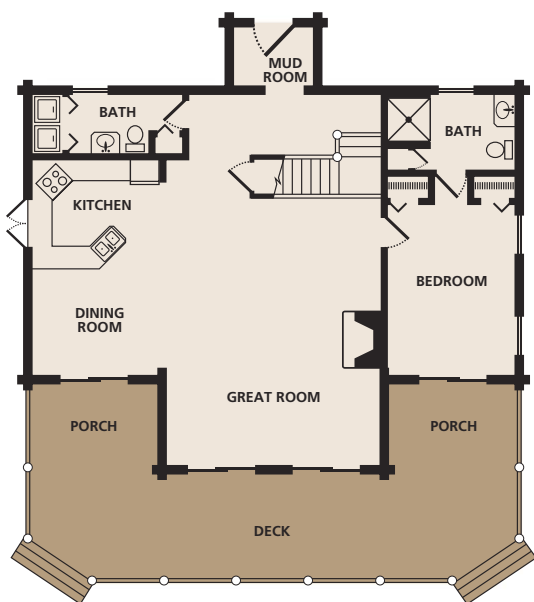
FLOOR PLANS



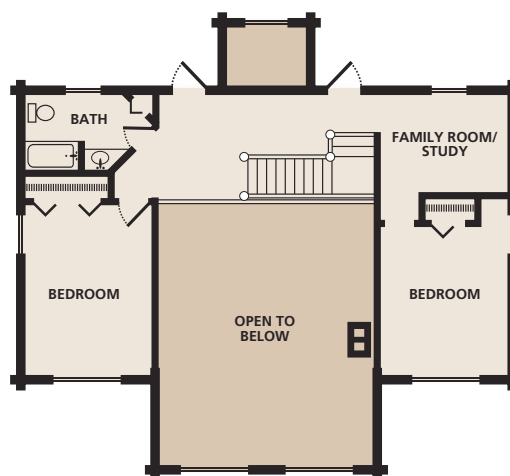
THE LAKE HOUSE

2,096 square feet | 3 bedrooms | 2 ½ baths

The Lake House is designed to make a breathtaking view available from almost every space in the house. This model features an expansive great room, mud room/front entry, three bedrooms, two full and one half bathrooms all efficiently designed into 2,096 square feet. Two covered porches and an open deck make outdoor entertaining a breeze. The original Lake House was built on Lake George in New York State and easily conveys the Adirondack style of the region.



Main Level



Upper Level



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The Patterson

Main Floor: 1 Bedroom 1 1/2 Baths

Lower Level: 3 Bedrooms 1 Bath

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Clearwater

Complete Package Price
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\$78,050
RETAIL 6x8 Log



26x36 • 1,586 sq ft
3 bedrooms • 2.5 baths

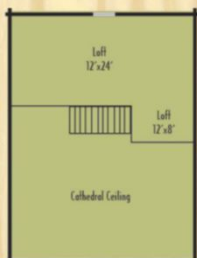
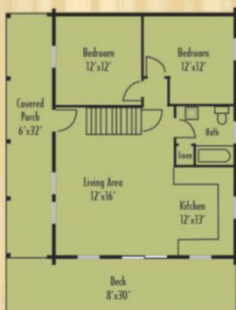


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2 bedrooms • 1 bath



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RETAIL 6x8 Log



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24x32 • 1,140 sq ft
2 bedrooms • 1 bath

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6x8 Log



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Mountaineer

16x24 • 564 sq ft
2 bedrooms • 1 bath



Complete Package Price
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4x8 Log

photos may vary from actual design

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1 bedroom • 1 bath



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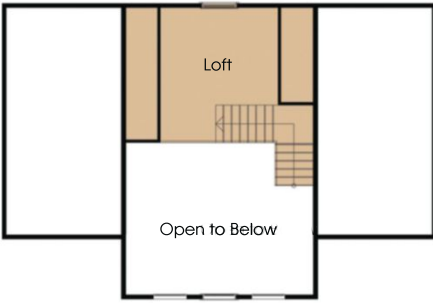
Bedrooms: 1
Baths: 1 1/2
Square Footage: 1,456
Package Price: Call for Pricing

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1st Floor



2nd Floor



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GIBSON

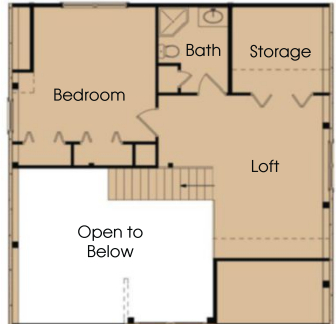
Bedrooms: 2
Baths: 2
Square Footage: 1,590
Package Price: Call for Pricing

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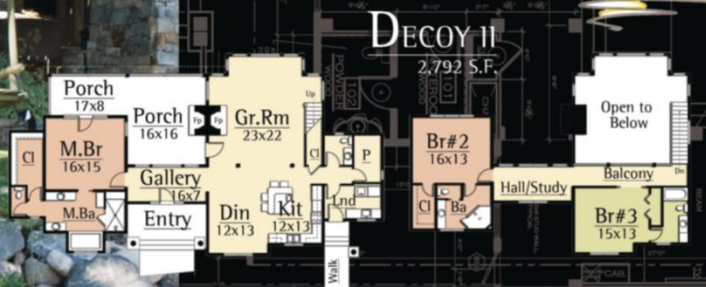
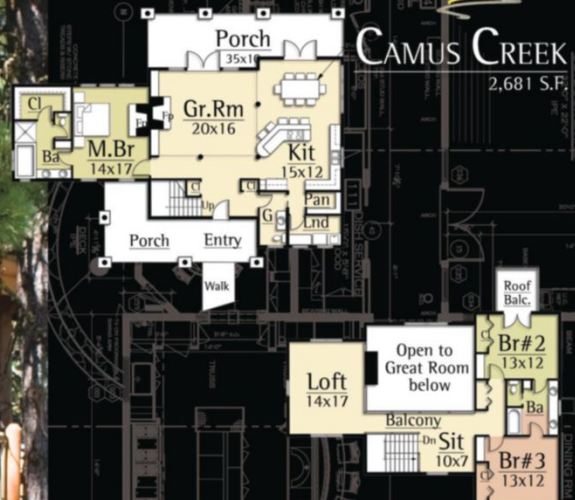


1st Floor



2nd Floor

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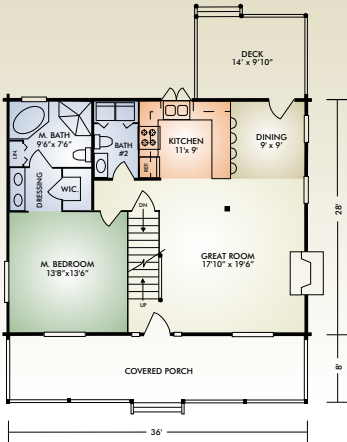
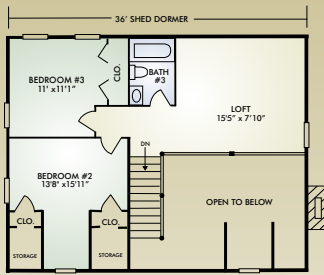
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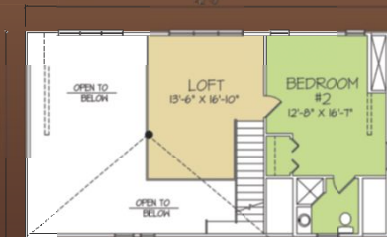


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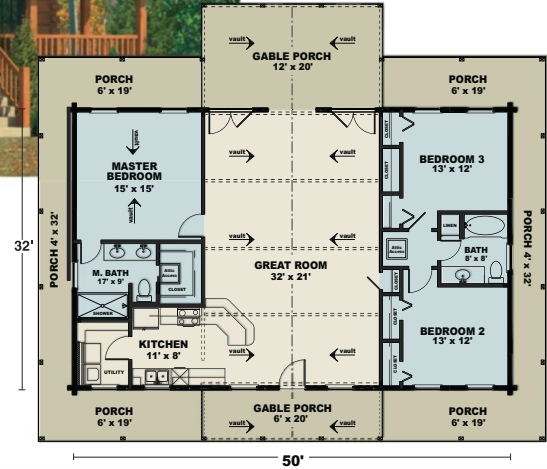
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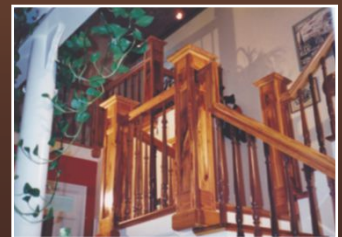
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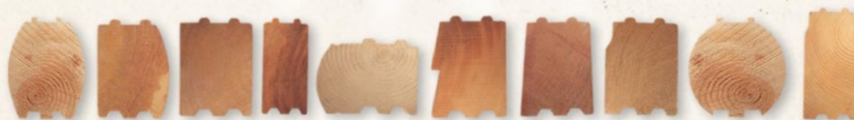


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