

# Come Together

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IN A BREATHTAKING SETTING, EVERYTHING IN THIS SUN-KISSED HOME PROVES THAT PERFECT PLANNING PAYS OFF—RIGHT DOWN TO A MAGNIFICENT STAIRCASE.

An inspiring prow design with floor-to-ceiling windows allows Judy and Bill Grover to take in glorious winter views, including the Big Hole Mountains and a front yard dotted with yellow pines, willows and a whispering stream. The 4,200-square-foot home features 12-inch lodgepole pine and Douglas fir.





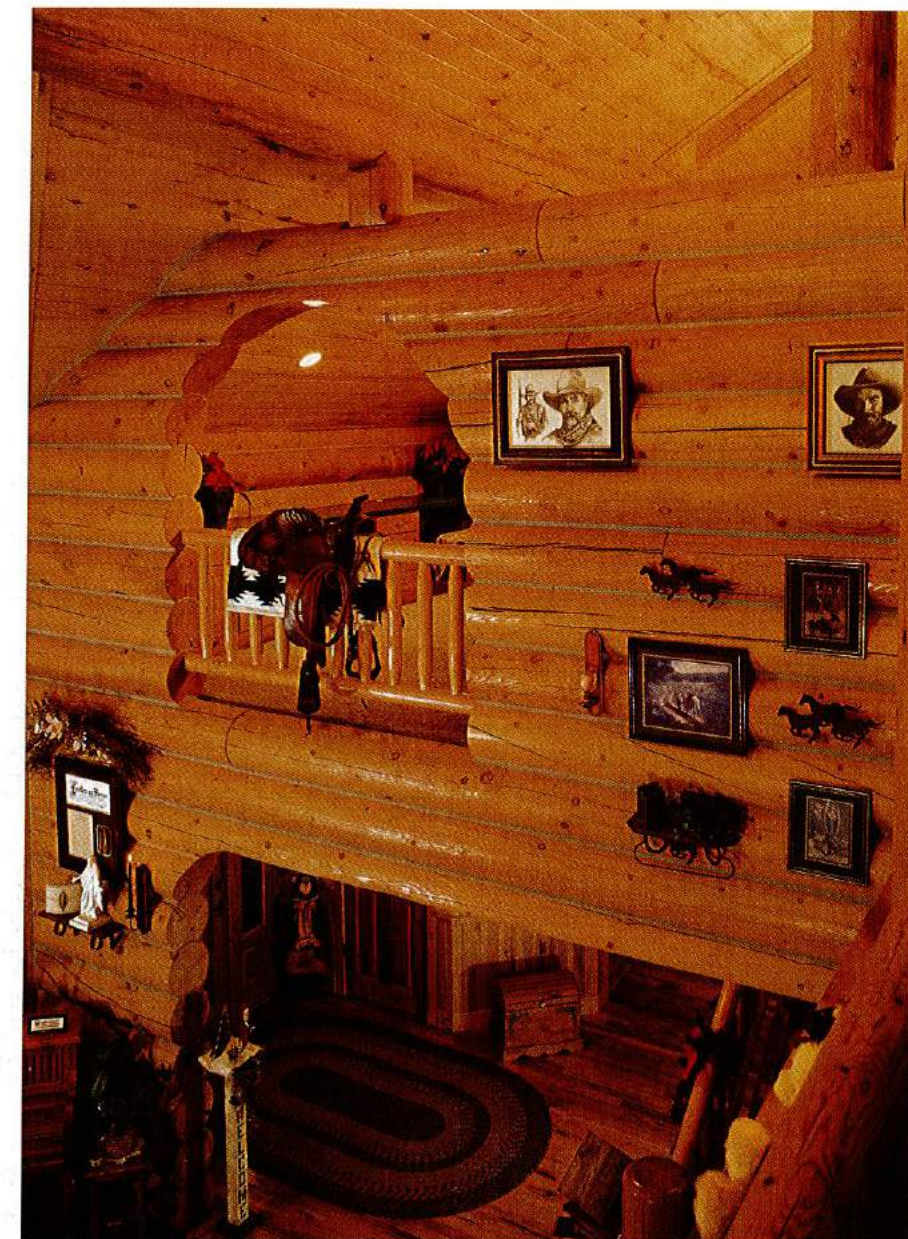
It was one of those lucky breaks that rarely seems to happen when building a new home. In the market for a massive timber to anchor the spiral staircase they had planned for their log home, Judy and Bill Grover had heard about an enormous Douglas fir some logger friends had felled.

Hoping to avoid the \$3,000 price tag log home companies put on such lumber, Bill wasted no time in making the 2 1/2-hour trek to check out the log at a saw mill in Preston, Idaho.

It was perfect. All the mill had asked for was 300 bucks to get the behemoth out of its yard. Bill drove the 27-foot, 38-inch diameter monster home that day in his 18-foot pickup truck.

"It looked like a toy truck," says Judy, whose job it was to peel the log's 3-inch-thick bark with just a hammer and chisel.

But it was all worth it, according to the couple. The magnificent staircase leading up to the master bedroom from the outside is one of the defining features of their 4,200-square-foot log home in Labelle, Idaho, 70 miles west of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Call them the consummate do-it-yourselfers, the couple got the idea for the staircase and other standout features from touring several log homes in Montana. They came up with the plans for the home themselves with the help of their builder and played a major role in the building process. "We had gone through so many homes," Judy says. "We knew what we liked." The result is a fabulously open,



ABOVE: Antique saddles, images of kindly cowboys and galloping broncos add depth and personality to the full-round log walls, which were sand-blasted to accentuate the wood's grain and color.



LEFT: A grandfather clock built into a log beam was handmade by builder Bing Roberts.

OPPOSITE: Southwestern allure: As Idaho natives, Judy and Bill Grover gravitated toward Western designs, especially with the earthy color palette of reds and greens in the great room. Renowned artist Burt MacDonald carved a wildlife scene into the ponderosa-pine mantel.





ABOVE: Just past the breakfast bar, nestled in a bright nook, sits a dining area that is at once quiet and inviting. Rustic elegance pervades the space, with a handmade table and functional hutch. A modest oak server provides the room with a visual boundary and the perfect spot to display a holiday crèche.

airy and eminently livable home that is the envy of all who get a peek.

### Quality of Light

Although Judy had always dreamed of living in a log home, it wasn't until they bought the 11-acre property in Labelle nine years ago that the couple became serious about the idea. "We just love the look of these homes," Bill says. After talking to several companies, the couple chose Snake River Log Homes, which, in its 11 years in business, has built hundreds of homes as well as supplying components to other log home companies. The company air-dries logs for two to four years before milling, says

President Rick Berry, "So all the shrinkage takes place before we sell them." Snake River had the added perk of being located in nearby Rigby—handy for Judy and Bill in case they needed a replacement log and, later, for the company to showcase its product.

"They're always calling up to ask if people can come by and see the house," says Judy, who good-naturedly recalls the time a Greyhound bus pulled up in front to get a look at the place. Of course, the spectacular setting doesn't hurt the home's curb appeal either. In order to take advantage of their valley site located a quarter mile off the road, Judy and Bill wanted a prow with a vaulted



Room to roam: A spacious kitchen, showcasing knotty alder cabinets and a breakfast bar, is a visual and functional winner.



Brightness abounds in the master bedroom, with rich Southwestern tapestries, exotic window treatments and handmade furniture crafted by a local artisan.



## GETTING WIRED

If you want your home to have all the latest media creations (think projector TVs, surround sound in every room, cable lines), make sure you do a little planning. Judy and Bill Grover learned this lesson as they were mapping out space for their home-entertainment system. By working closely with an electrician, their builder Bing Roberts pre-drilled in areas behind door jams and along doorways. "It's quite a project," he says. With Bing's help, Bill built an entertainment system by carving out chinking and pulling up carpeting to hide wires. Bill's tip: "Try to plan for everything you could ever think you *might* want in your house before you build." —M.L.

roofline and floor-to-ceiling windows. So while they're warming up next to a fire in the great room, they enjoy a sweeping view of their spacious front

yard dotted with pines and willows with a stream running nearby. From the upstairs, you can glimpse the Big Hole Mountains and, in the distance, part of

the Teton range. "A lot of log homes you see are dark with tiny windows," Judy says. "The things people notice about our home is the light."

To reflect that lovely light from the windows, the couple opted for 12-inch-diameter logs with a natural finish and light gray chinking. They used lodgepole pine and Douglas fir, with Colorado quaking aspen for the ceilings. Although the logs were milled, they were hand-planed on the site for a handcrafted look. Once the structure was complete, they had the interior sandblasted to bring out the grain in the wood and even out the color.

RIGHT: Saving space (corner tub, with adjacent cabinetry) was just one of the mantras behind this bathroom design, along with a black-and-white color scheme that works wonderfully with the room's eggshell-colored accent walls, aspen ceiling and pine logs.

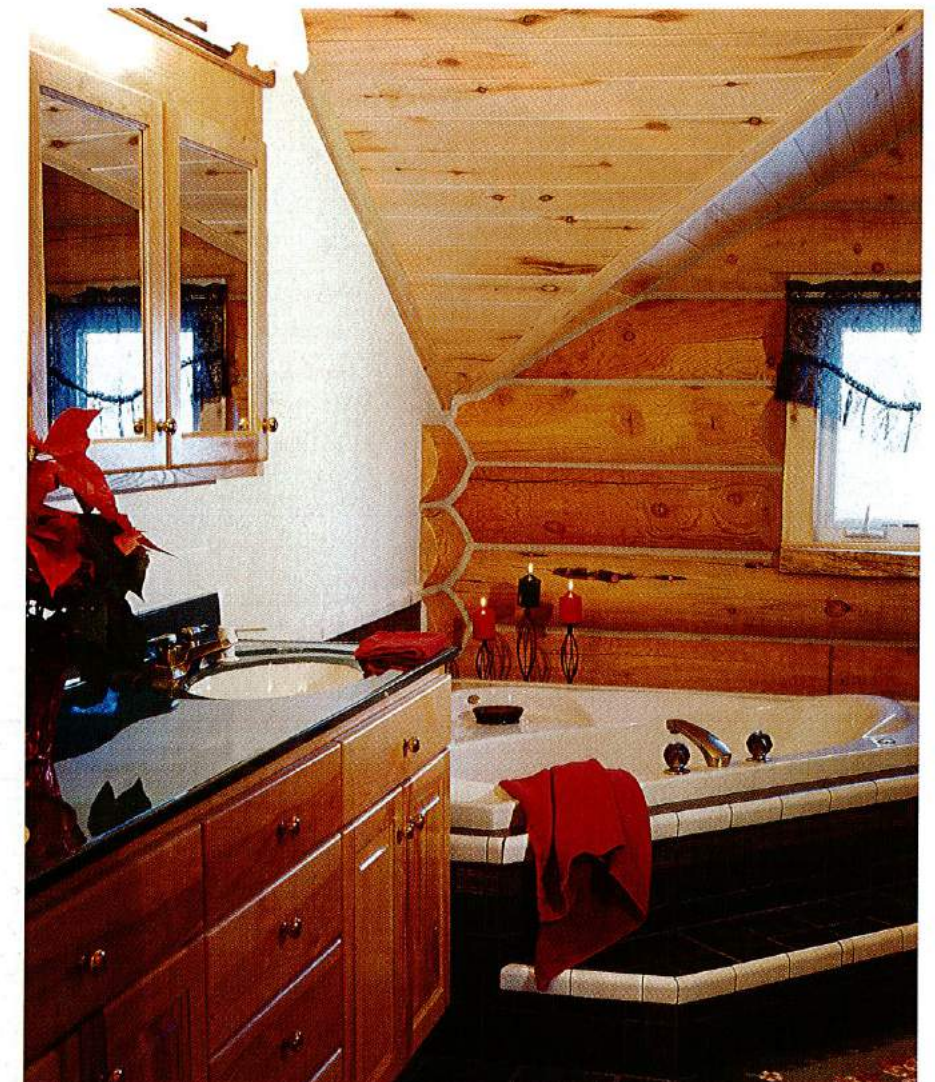
BELOW RIGHT: Douglas fir logs serve as the base of the home's staircase.

## Sweat Equity

Between coats of clear finish, Judy sanded the entire interior by hand to produce a smooth and silky finish. With Bill serving as general contractor and his brother, Merrill, on the job daily, the entire project took 10 months from groundbreaking to completion. Owning a nearby business with two of his sons meant Bill could be at the work site in 10 minutes. The family installed the hickory flooring and played a major role in the construction of the outbuildings: a 1,500 square-foot three-car garage, horse shed and tack building.

The couple's do-it-yourself philosophy extended to the decor as well. As native Idahoans who horseback ride and snowmobile, they gravitated toward a Western great-outdoors theme and hired artisans from the mountain states to achieve that look. The wonderfully solid bedroom furniture was handmade by Ed Roberts (son of the home's builder, Bing Roberts). In a piece of ponderosa pine that serves as a mantel, renowned Utah artist Burt MacDonald carved a mountain lion stalking a deer. Three entry doors have western scenes etched into the glass by Patrick Brower, a Montana craftsman. And Bill and his son converted a wagon wheel they found in an antique store into a table.

Native American-themed paintings by Maijai, a favorite of Judy's, line the walls. At the top of the stairway is an epic mural of the Tetons by Bing. Although he's been constructing log homes for more than 25 years, Bing has painted many murals as a creative outlet. So when he came to Judy and Bill with an idea for







OPPOSITE: The magnificent staircase, leading up to the master bedroom balcony from the outside, is one of the defining features of the 4,200-square-foot log home. Judy and Bill Grover got the idea for it while touring homes in Montana before they even decided on the design of their home.

the main post that he'd been itching to carry out for a long time, the couple gave it the go-ahead; the weight-bearing log features a built-in grandfather clock.

### Gathering Place

Judy and Bill's home is open, but warm and eclectic—a great spot for entertaining. For now, the couple's youngest son, Lance, who just graduated from high school and works for a local log company, lives with them. But on Monday nights, the whole crew—two more sons, their wives and two grandchildren—come over for dinner. "We wanted it big enough to accommodate all of us when we're together," Judy says.

Judy loves the spacious kitchen with its knotty alder cabinets and breakfast-bar area lined with manufactured river rock, but her favorite spot is the little turret sitting room where she goes to read or just relax. The design has been such a huge hit that Snake River developed floorplans from Judy and Bill's house, the Lakeside series, in four different versions. Rick Berry, president of Snake River, says the front prow is a popular feature, especially with people who have views.

If they had to design and build the home all over again, says Bill, the master bedroom would go on the main floor. Fortunately, they did get another crack at it recently when they built a log cabin, albeit on a smaller scale, in Idaho's Centennial Mountains. And yes, the master bedroom is on the main floor. Bill says his days of building log homes are over but admits, "It's satisfying to see the result of all your hard work."

Especially if your impeccably designed home is filled with family and friends. ■

## HOME DETAILS

■ **Square footage:** 4,200

■ **Package price:** \$150,000

■ **General contractor:** Bing Roberts Construction

■ **Log producer:** Snake River Log Homes

For more information, see Resources on page 121.

