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INSPIRING DESIGNS

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20 HIGH-TECH TREATS

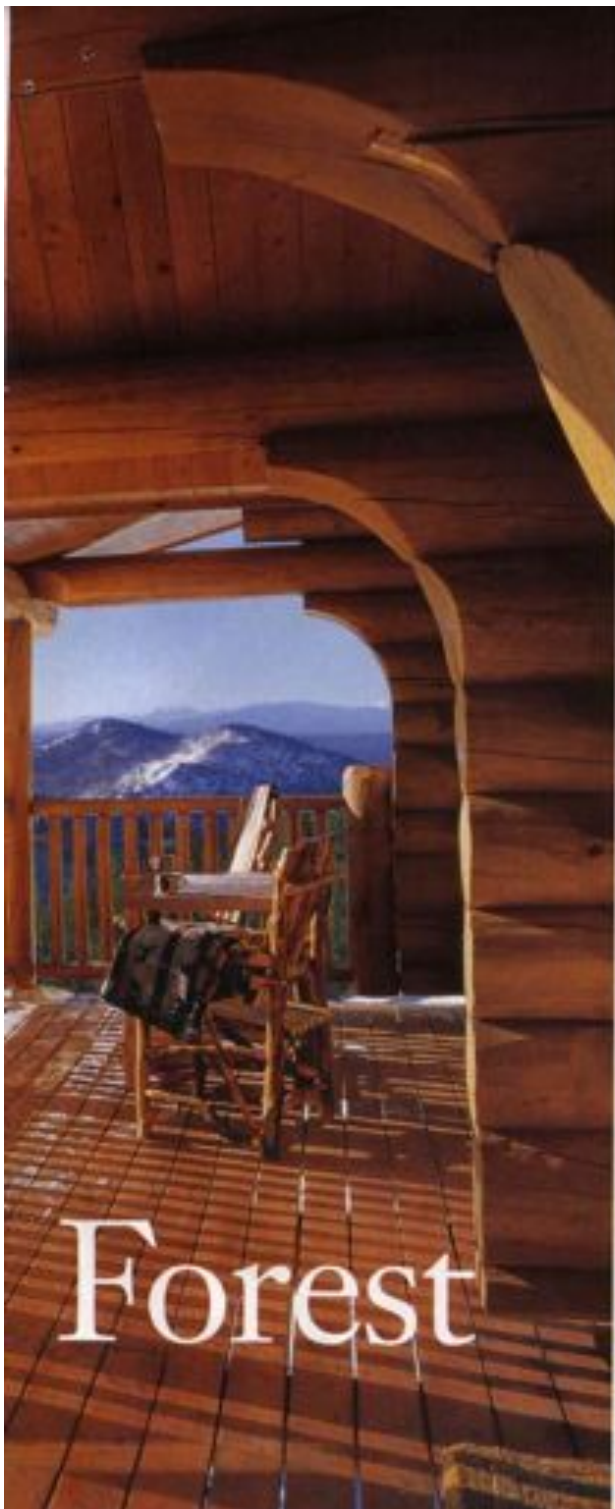
SPECIAL
PULL-OUT!

HOW TO FINANCE YOUR NEW LOG HOME



BELOW AND OPPOSITE: From atop their perch on Eagle's Peak, the owners of this dramatic log home enjoy a spectacular view of the Continental Divide and the pines of the Roosevelt National Forest.

At Home in the



A COLORADO CABIN IS FUELED BY SUNSHINE AND INDEPENDENT LIVING.

For two years, Gregg and Genie Burch have watched herds of stately elk shed their antlers in the meadow just below their log home and spied golden eagles soaring overhead. But what thrills them most is knowing that they've barely disturbed the pristine land upon which they've built.

Most of the energy used to heat, cool and operate their 3,500-square-foot home in Colorado comes from the sun. Every piece of paper, each tin can and plastic bottle—in fact, nearly every item they bring in—is recycled. The granite moss rock used to accent the fireplace and foundation walls was carefully picked from the 40 acres surrounding them, and only native plants were used to landscape.

STORY BY Lore Postman
PHOTOGRAPHY BY James Ray Spahn

At the heart of the great room lies a three-level moss rock fireplace. The impressive stones were carefully selected from the home owners' property and require regular misting to keep the live moss's delicate color.





ABOVE: An extra-large stainless steel refrigerator provides a hefty amount of storage space, reducing the need for owners Gregg and Genie Burch (right) to trek down the mountain to stock up on supplies.

Avid conservationists, the only significant change they made to their property was to remove roughly 200 nearby trees to increase their odds of surviving a forest fire. "We even hated to do that, but it was necessary," says Genie.

Deep in the Woods

Dubbed "Eagle Peak," this small slice of utopia is home to the Burches for six months out of the year. They spend the rest of their time traveling and residing in their long-time home in Atlanta, where they are surrounded by family

and friends. "We absolutely love it out here, but we needed to keep our roots, too," Gregg explains.

The couple first fell for the beauty of Colorado decades earlier when, as newlyweds, they traveled the Rockies for 10 weeks. For years after that trip, their jobs, the births of two children and the duties of everyday life kept them busy in Georgia, yet they longed to return West. Vacations pacified their desires until eventually, in June 1999, they bought a nondescript home on a hill with great views. They finally had a home near the





ABOVE: Buffed to a high gloss, the granite countertops reflect the overhead light afforded by rows of track lighting. The alder wood Colonial cabinets were treated with a natural finish. RIGHT: From the dining room's wall of windows, the owners enjoy their natural surroundings without interruption.



top of a Colorado mountain, but they longed for more.

The nature-loving Burches wanted to be surrounded by, well, nature, not by street-lined homes in a subdivision. And they pined for log walls. Just a few months after they purchased their first Colorado home, they found what they really wanted: a 40-acre plot surrounded on three sides by the Roosevelt National Forest.

"We plowed through a foot of snow to get out there to view the property, spent 30 minutes on it and fell in love," Gregg recalls. "It just felt right."

The previous owner had spent 10 years planning his own dream home and had even graded a road, installed a well and dug the foundation for his home and garage before deciding to sell.

Form and Function

The Burches chose Timberline Builders of Nederland, Colorado, to build their dream home. The company, which specializes in log homes, created a four-bedroom, four-bathroom home of handcrafted Engelmann spruce imported from Canada. The logs are scribed on the bottom to fit snugly atop one

another without requiring chinking.

At the urging of Mark Van Eversen, Timberline's owner and president, the Burches chose unusual windows that add to the home's one-of-a-kind appeal. The windows are a tilt-and-turn style more common in Europe than the United States. Turn the handle one way, and the top of each window tilts about 5 inches for ventilation without fear of a sudden soaking during rainy days. Turn the handle the other way and the window swings in (the opposite of a casement window) for easy cleaning.

Fearing that the log walls would ab-



soak much of the light and make the home feel dark, the Burches added extra windows. "In fact, whenever we had a blank wall on the plans, Gregg said 'Let's add another window,'" notes Genie. "He felt that you couldn't have too many."

A dramatic three-story fireplace constructed from granite moss rock attracts attention near the center of the house. It opens to each level—with a wood-burning stove in the daylight basement, a wood-burning firebox on the main floor and a gas-powered hearth in the office loft so the Burches don't have to carry wood to the top floor. The moss rock, complete with



SOLAR SYSTEM

Since Gregg and Genie Burch's home is located at a mountain's summit 3 miles from the nearest power line, they knew they'd have to be creative in providing power. Basically, they had two choices: Either bulldoze trees to make room for power lines or, as environmentalists say, live completely "off the grid"—a term referring to homes or buildings not connected to public utility lines.

"Bringing in power lines would have made a mess out of the property," Gregg explains. "The visibility of the lines and the loss of the trees would have been terrible."

Instead, for roughly the same price as connecting to public utilities, the couple hired Altair Energy in Golden, Colorado, to install a solar energy system with a backup generator. Designing a solar energy system for a new home is difficult, since it's hard to know how much electricity home owners will need, explains Rick Holz, Altair's chief engineer. "We make an estimate based on the information they give us. The trick is to design the system with enough power, but not too much. Over-designing is very expensive," Rick says.

The system Rick designed for the Burches includes 48 solar panels fastened atop the shingles on the garage roof. The panels are connected by cable to a room in the garage, which houses a bank of 32 batteries, circuit breakers and other switches and inverters that convert the energy from DC battery electricity to the 120/240 volt AC electricity required to run common household appliances.

Solar energy was the most efficient and environmentally friendly choice for the Burches' house, according to Rick. "It's beautiful where they are. It would have been a shame to run a generator all the time," he says. "Generators are noisy and dirty and they take a lot of maintenance and fuel."

Relying on solar energy has taken some getting used to, but solar power hasn't made the Burches' home primitive. "I have a dishwasher and a washer and dryer, but I try not to use them on cloudy days, because they take a lot of energy to operate," says Genie. "But when it's sunny, I'll do three loads." The couple's mantra is to do chores when the sun is generating energy; that means no chores at night.



TOP: To capture as much sunlight as possible, windows are tucked into every corner. A handmade quilt adds an old-time touch to the master bedroom of this very modern home. **LEFT:** The serene loft is the ideal spot to work at the computer or relax with a good book. **ABOVE:** Black and white tile gives the master bath a sleek, streamlined appearance.

live lichens, requires regular misting to keep its unique look and color.

Fighting Fire in the Deep Forest

Since the home is located high on a mountain and is surrounded by forest, local fire officials said it fit in a "no-hope zone." In other words, if a wildfire swept through the area, firefighters would not work to save their home because the risk was too great.

So Gregg and Genie did everything in their power to protect their house themselves. In addition to cutting back the forest, they increased their odds of beating a blaze by hiring a landscape architect to design a fire mitigation plan. They also installed a system called Inteligard, which, in the event of an approaching fire, can cover the house and nearby vegetation with flame-retardant biodegradable foam.

The foam and landscaping plan cost them about \$25,000. "All things considered, it's a small amount to pay for peace of mind," says Genie. Despite the pain of losing trees near the house, the plan brought unintended benefits. "It has really enhanced the view, and we are now surrounded by beautiful wildflowers that never got enough sunlight to thrive before."

The Mountain Life

Now settled in their mountaintop home, the Burches have found life at 9,000 feet to be inspiring. The wildlife, the trees and the views of the Continental Divide all give them a feeling that they made the right choice in building this out-of-the-way home.

Their friends agree. During summertime weekends and throughout winter skiing season, the Burches find themselves hosting visitors who have become as enchanted with mountain living as they have. "We are remote and secluded, but just 45 minutes away from Boulder, with its wonderful restaurants and shows," says Genie. "We have the best of both worlds here." ■

HOME DETAILS

- Square footage: 3,500
- Package price: \$95,000
- Builder: Timberline Builders
- Designer: Pencil Points Design and Drafting

- Log producer: M&H Wood Specialties Limited
- For more information, see Resources on page 107.



Upper Level



Main Level



Lower Level

RESOURCES

A Home in the Forest

Pages 42-49

Bear vase in kitchen: Anteks Home Furnishings, 3112 Piedmont Road N.E., Atlanta GA 30305; 404-233-6675; www.antekshome.com

Builder: Timberline Builders, 435 Mountain View Drive, Rollinsville CO 80474; 303-258-1887; www.tbilloghomes.com

Designer: Pencil Points Design and Drafting, 10612 172nd St., Edmonton AB T5S 1H8, Canada; 780-483-5748

Kitchen cabinets: Crestwood, 601 E. Water Well Road, Salina KS 67401; 785-823-5617; www.crestwood-inc.com

Kitchen stools: The Great Indoors, 3333 Beverly Road, Hoffman Estates IL 60179; 888-511-1155; www.thegreatindoors.com

Landscape designer: Ecoscape Environmental Design, P.O. Box 704, Boulder CO 80306; 303-447-2282; www.ecoscapedesign.com



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Log producer: MSH Wood Specialties Limited, P.O. Box 77027, St. Albert AB T8N 6C1, Canada; 780-459-5700; www.mhwood.com

Masonry: Lyons Construction, P.O. Box 489, Lyons CO 80540; 303-823-0223

Roofing: Malarkey Roofing Products, P.O. Box 17217, Portland OR 97217; 800-545-1191; www.malarkeyrfg.com

Sofas, end table in great room, dining table and chairs: Artesanias, 1468 Pearl St., Boulder CO 80302; 303-442-3777

Stain: Perma-Chink, 17635 N.E. 67th Court, Redmond WA 98052; 800-548-1231; www.permachink.com

Tiling: Atlas Flooring, P.O. Box 931, Boulder CO 80306; 303-442-3221

Twig furniture in loft, dresser, lamp in master bedroom: Nature Lovers, 907 Moraine Ave., Estes Park CO 80517; 970-586-1020; www.natureloversonline.com

Windows and doors: Home Technology International, 216 Sailors Drive Suite 127, Ellijay GA 30540; 866-201-0100; www.hometechnologyinternational.com

Patience Pays Off

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Antler chandelier, antler mirror: Antler Art, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Junction CO 81505; 970-243-5114; www.antlerart.com

Bear chest in dining room: Loyola Designs, P.O. Box 1964, Park City UT 84060; 435-655-0702

Bear tile in master bath: Tile Restoration, 3511 Interlake N., Seattle WA 98103; 206-633-4866; www.tilerestorationcenter.com

Bed in master bedroom, linens in second bedroom, window treatments, living room



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sofas, fabric: Ralph Lauren Home Collection, 650 Madison Ave., New York NY 10022; 800-377-7656; www.rlhome.polo.com

Bench in master bathroom: National Upholstery, P.O. Box 8423, Emeryville CA 94608; 510-653-8915

Coffee table and leather chairs in great room, chair in master bedroom:

Henredon, 400 Henredon Road, Morganton NC 28655; 828-437-5261; www.henredon.com

Exterior stain: Weatherall, 106 Industrial Way, Charlestown IN 47111; 800-367-7068; www.weatherall.com

Floor lamp in great room: L.L. Moses Willard, 1156 U.S. 50, Milford OH 45150; 800-621-8956; www.llmoses.com

Hanging bear light in kitchen: Sisal Lighting, 51 Hudson Ridge, Garrison NY 10524; 845-244-2452; www.sisalnet.com

Hanging light in great room, porch lights: Hammerton, 2149 S. 3540 W., Salt Lake City UT 84119; 801-973-8095; www.hammerton.com

Kitchen cabinets: Vandenhoek Custom Woodworking, 9235 High Mesa Road, Olathe CO 81425; 970-323-8898

Log bed and twig chair in bedroom: La Lune Collection, 930 E. Burleigh St., Milwaukee WI 53212; 414-263-5300; www.lalunecollection.com

Log producer, builder, masonry, front door, stairs: Frontier Log Homes, 60813 Maple Grove Road, Montrose CO 81401; 970-