


Great Escape

An angled layout lets this California retreat take full advantage of its woodland surroundings.

PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE





Surrounded by redwood trees beside the Stanislaus River in northern California, this handcrafted log home makes dramatic use of windows to capture the view and lighten the look of the large Engelmann spruce logs. The deck spanning the rear overlooks the river and adds outdoor living space.





Californians who own second homes tend to build them in neighboring states to enjoy a change of scenery. This weekend getaway, however, is set in the tranquil forestland of northern California's Sierra Mountains, allowing its owners easy, year-round access from their main home in the Bay Area. Its large, hand-peeled logs fit right in among the towering redwoods. The home is located on the bank of the Stanislaus River, which enhances the solitude that the owners crave.

The home features scribe-fit construction because the owners didn't want chinking between the logs. Instead, the stacked, full-round,

foot-thick Engelmann spruce wall logs fully express the character of the wood. Larger log posts and beams supplement the wall logs, adding even more wood.

The furnishings soften the big logs and hard slate floor and add comfort. Shunning convention, the homeowners deliberately chose furniture they describe as "less lodgey" than customary log-cabin decor. Liberal use of color warms the wood.

The floor plan features a central great room that widens toward the rear windows and is flanked by two angled wings that expand the view from inside the home. Based on a standard plan offered by The Log Connection, a British

ABOVE: The great room is furnished with comfortable upholstered pieces, punctuated with brightly colored accessories such as the bold striped pillows on the sectional sofa.

OPPOSITE: Tucked among hand-peeled Engelmann spruce logs, the spacious dining area features a hand-made wooden table and eight chairs from a company that specializes in custom furnishings constructed from recycled timber. The dining room adjoins the rear deck.

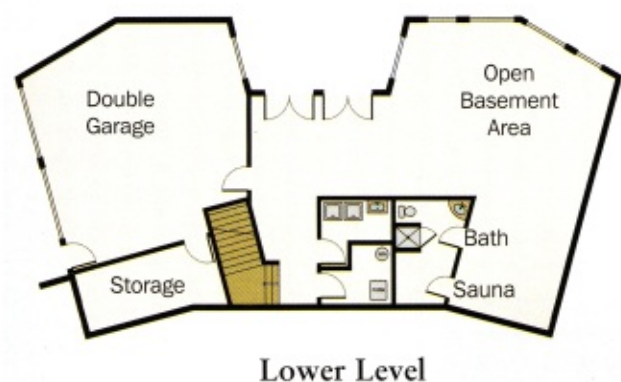
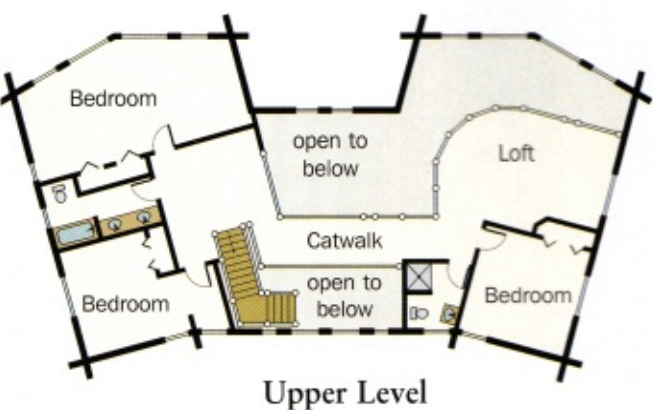


home details

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,400

LOG PROVIDER: The Log Connection

BUILDER: Ron Jensen Construction



LEFT: The kitchen cabinets are stained a deep, earthy red and feature glass upper doors to make them stand out from the big logs overhead. Granite countertops harmonize with the back-splash tiles throughout the kitchen, as well as the flagstone floors.

ABOVE RIGHT: A whirlpool tub fills the corner of the spacious master bathroom. Cabinets and the tub surround are painted forest green to provide a cool complement to the warm wood.

Columbia handcrafters, this home features additional bedrooms and bathrooms and adds doghouse dormers to create headroom in the upstairs bedrooms. The finished basement accommodates a spacious home theater, a large bar and an open area for entertaining. A wide catwalk connects the two upstairs wings and provides the perfect vantage point to enjoy the great room logs or the view of the river

and woods through the expansive windows.

The home took 18 months to build and wound up "slightly over budget," according to the homeowner, who declares the extra money was well spent. "In the winter, we keep cozy and warm inside our home," the homeowner says, "but the summer is truly glorious with the gurgling of the river always in the background."