

TIMBER HOME

# Pure & Simple

A Vermont timber frame pairs sleek decor with natural hues, creating a home that sits subtly on the land.

BY STACEY FREED | PHOTOS BY JIM WESTPHALEN



**OPEN SEASON.** The kitchen, with its large marble-topped island, makes the most of its central location. The warm Douglas fir wood and custom cabinetry set the tone for the modern-meets-traditional home.



**IN THE MIX.** The homeowners wanted something playful yet well-appointed for their vacation retreat. The open plan helped dictate where to expose the columns and timbers.



The land speaks to us in more ways than we can imagine. And with this Vermont timber frame, the quiet — not to mention gorgeous — site struck a chord with the homeowners and helped drive the simple-yet-stylish design.

With sweeping views of Lake Champlain, the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks, the site is peppered with old maple hardwood growth and farm fields — the perfect setting for a second home for the Washington, D.C.-based homeowners. Architectural designer Cliff Deetjen, manager of design and sales at Peregrine Design/Build in South Burlington, Vermont, worked with the clients (with site planning help from landscape architect Jeff Hodgson of Wagner Hodgson Landscape Designers) to design a home that would preserve as much of the natural landscape as possible while featuring all of the amenities they desired.

“The site is like an inland peninsula, a spit of land that is raised up high around the established farm field,” Cliff says. “We saw the potential for an extended vernacular home with many shapes and sizes on a linear design that could march along the ridgeline, slow-stepping down on the land. There was a nice spine to work with.”

Since the home runs north to south, the homeowners enjoy eastern exposure in the morning and western exposure in the evening. “The homeowners wanted something with a playful architectural sense that was well appointed. Something with Adirondack style,” Cliff says. The answer? A 5,000-square-foot romantic shingle home boasting natural materials, resting on a timber frame.

Although the timbers in the home are structural, the clients didn’t feel the need to show off the full timber bones on the interior, Cliff explains. The open grid floor plan “is a nice way of telling you when to have columns exposed,” he says. The double-sided hearth in the gable end of the open space acts as a fulcrum connecting the living room and the screened porch, which nestles in the trees 12 feet above grade. The first floor is more refined, while the second floor boasts more of the traditional timber frame. “It’s a nice hybrid of the two systems,” Cliff says.

Interior designer Kim Deetjen of TruexCullins in Burlington came on board early on to help with finishes, lighting, plumbing fixtures, colors and countertops. They chose Douglas fir timbers for their warm-hued palette and used salvaged wood and old barn boards (found on the site) for things like custom doors. The floors are wide-board pine sourced locally.

For a bit of bling, Deetjen added accents with LEDs. Since everything is exposed in a timber frame, it’s important to pick the right track lighting. “The lighting here is a contemporary ‘wow,’” Cliff says. The kitchen has clean lines and traditional marble and granite countertops. The lower level space features a true family room with a walk-out to the pool area.

“We knew the house would be built for generations,” Cliff says. “It’s a house to be lived in and not showcased.”



## A CHAT WITH ARCHITECT CLIFF DEETJEN

### **Do you specialize in timber frames or was this a special project for you?**

We do custom wood homes all the time. We're a full design-build company so we do all the architectural design and have several teams in the field. We do one or two custom homes a year and quite a bit of remodeling. While we don't specialize in timber frames, we've probably done five timber homes in the past 25 years.

### **This home showcases a few specialty decor items. Were those picked out before you started on the design?**

Everything was picked out in tandem with designing the space. From day one the homeowner knew she wanted the stove she chose — a beautiful custom-made range from France — so we designed the kitchen around that. We focused on the essence of all the spaces and encouraged furniture layouts early on. The lighting was also added early so we understood the quality of light and where things need to be accented.

### **What's your favorite part of this house?**

The kitchen. It commands such a nice, central location. It's well appointed — not too big or too small — and it has wonderful views from the working areas. The marble island is a great place to congregate, and the 'old world custom range monster' makes you smile.

### **Why do you think people are drawn to wood homes?**

In our area, it's the general warmth of the wood. It's the understanding of the natural beauty of Vermont, and wood accentuates that inherent quality of character. It's the starting point to drive that whole feeling.

### **The mix of modern and traditional in this house is unexpected yet seamless. Why does this combination work so well?**

It starts with the family. They wanted the house to feel like a retreat, but they also wanted to have it feel like a hotel. They love accentuated cathedral ceilings and rooms with no slants or curves — a house with a little sophistication and traditionalism. They're formal people who have young children, and they wanted to explore the blend of contemporary finishes and lighting.

Style  
Study

*To create a minimalistic space that still feels comfortable, opt for warm wood trims and skip the window treatments. Neutral furniture fits perfectly with this aesthetic.*



**EXTERIOR APPEAL.** The extended vernacular structure shows a linear design created of many shapes and sizes that march along a ridgeline, slowly stepping down.



# home details

**SQUARE FOOTAGE:** 5,750

**ARCHITECT; BUILDER:** Peregrine Design/  
Build, 802-383-1808;  
peregrinedesignbuild.com

**DOORS; WINDOW:** Marvin Windows and  
Doors, 888-537-7828; marvin.com

**INTERIOR DECORATOR:** TruexCullins,  
802-658-2775; truexcullins.com

**LANDSCAPE DESIGNER:** Wagner Hodgson,  
802-864-0010; wagnerhodgson.com

**MASONRY:** Top Trowel Masonry, LLC,  
802-363-3210; toptrowelmasonry.com

**ROOFING:** Owens Corning, 800-438-7465;  
owenscorning.com

**TIMBER PROVIDER:** North Woods Joinery,  
802-644-2400; nwjoinery.com



**FINE DINING (far left).** Contemporary LED lighting adds some visual interest overhead, as seen with this curved statement chandelier.

**REAL SIMPLE (left).** The bathrooms all feature the same custom materials found throughout the home. A freestanding tub offers tranquility among the treetops.

**WOOD WONDER (right).** In the second bath, the knotty panels offer a more rustic feel and a nice contrast to the smooth-textured rectangular floating sink.

**SLIDING DOORS (below).** The lower level family room has lots of windows to usher in plenty of natural light. Sliding custom barn doors offer privacy options.

