

# New England HOME

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## High Style

*FOR THE NEW YEAR*



# Happy Place

A FAMILY ESCHEWS THE TRADITIONAL LOG CABIN AESTHETIC FOR AN ELEGANT VERMONT RETREAT.

Text by ROBERT KIENER | Photography by JOHN BESSLER  
Produced by KARIN LIDBECK BRENT

As in the rest of the home, the kitchen features natural materials, such as quarter-sawn oak floors and a granite island and countertop. A classic red Lacanche Citeaux range, Tabarka Studio's Palio 1 tile backsplash, a steel-and-brass hood designed by Lisa Hilderbrand, and black-and-white photographs by Keith Dotson complete the space.



A vintage woven side table and a daybed topped with embroidered Coral & Tusk pillows offer a cozy spot to read in the great room. **FACING PAGE:** Annie Selke's Masinissa wool rug and a pair of Wesley Hall Furniture leather swivel chairs anchor the soaring great room. Robert Ogden Studio crafted the forty-eight-inch mirrored pendant that fills the large room with reflected light.



“We call it our ski house, but it’s so much more than that,” says Kristie Smith as she explains how she and her husband, Kevin, decided to build a three-story timber-frame home in Wilmington, Vermont. “It’s really our second home. Our retreat. Or, as we often say, our ‘happy place.’”





The timber-frame house is nestled snugly into the sloping lot; the basement level is clad with stone veneer. **FACING PAGE:** A game room, the children's favorite space, in the ten-foot-high basement features a counter-height bar table surrounded by Wisteria barstools with a Currey & Company Fainlight chandelier above. The designer sourced the vintage iron-framed mirror from Stamford, Connecticut's Avery & Dash Collections to give the space a classic touch.



The New Canaan, Connecticut, couple and their five children fell in love with this ski and recreational area in the southern part of the state during regular pilgrimages and finally decided to take the next step. “We didn’t want a condo,” says Kristie. “We wanted something more permanent and hoped to feel part of a neighborhood.”

With the aid of local builder Ryan Holton, the Smiths found a tucked-away, gently sloping, two-and-a-half-acre lot that

even boasted a small river running through it. Holton, owner of Moosehead Cedar Log Homes and RH Log Works, also helped them customize the six-bedroom, log-cabin-style house that blends nicely with the heavily wooded lot.

“Ryan was an excellent collaborator,” says Kristie. “He and Kevin worked together to tweak the design until we got everything we were hoping for.” Changes included extra and enlarged windows to take full

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—HOMEOWNER KRISTIE SMITH







advantage of the lot's views, a ten-foot-high, light-filled basement level, and an enlarged kitchen. "We reconfigured the layout to give the Smiths more kitchen space, so they were able to add an oversized island," says Holton.

New Canaan-based interior designer Lisa Hilderbrand joined the team just as the home was being framed and helped Kristie create the interior. "Both Kristie and Kevin told me they didn't want the typical yellowish log cabin tone inside the home," she recalls. The couple wanted something warmer—more restful—that would not compete with the views outdoors. Adds Hilderbrand, "We worked together, with very patient painters, to come up with just the right color—not too light, not too dark of a stain—for the oak logs in the great room. Upstairs, we whitewashed the [main] bedroom walls. Others were wallpapered."

Hilderbrand selected a color palette for the interior that complemented the views outside. "We went with a lot of neutral colors such as ivory, gray, khaki, and black



**ABOVE:** A guest bedroom features a leather basket-weave headboard from Wisteria and Phillip Jeffries St. Barts Serenity whitewashed wallpaper. **LEFT:** The bunkroom includes two double beds topped by a pair of single beds. **FACING PAGE:** Kravet's Mansk dining table, which has gold trim at its base, and a Circa Lighting floor lamp allow the family to relax with books while taking advantage of the views.



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—INTERIOR DESIGNER  
LISA HILDERBRAND





and white," she explains. "I also chose texture more than a lot of bold patterns, but nothing too precious. Again, we were going for a cozy, calm, welcoming look—one that didn't clash with the beautiful woodland views." Floors are radiant heated and comprised of quarter-sawn, random-width oak.

The aforementioned kitchen, which now opens to the rest of the main floor, has become the heart of the home. "The owners can be working in the kitchen and still be part of the action," says Hilderbrand. The focal point of the space is a five-foot-long, eight-burner, red-enamelled Lacanche gas range from France. "We dubbed it 'the Ferrari,'" says the designer. Kevin was so taken with it that he asked Hilderbrand to custom design a burnished-steel and rubbed-brass hood to complement his new toy.

Kristie confesses that the most frequent comment she hears from guests is, "We see why you love it up here." She explains, "We got exactly the home we were hoping for. It is as cozy as it is comfortable."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**ABOVE:** An upstairs cement-tiled bathroom showcases a double vanity paired with Soho mirrors from Ballard Designs and a trio of Hudson Valley Lighting Cortland sconces. **RIGHT:** The light-filled main bedroom features whitewashed walls and a modern washed-oak four-poster bed from cFc. **FACING PAGE:** Hilderbrand added an antique English mahogany chest and armchair to, as she explains, "add a lived-in, cozy feel to the [main] bedroom."



**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Lisa Hilderbrand, Hilderbrand Interiors  
**BUILDER:** Ryan Holton, Moosehead Cedar Log Homes and RH Log Works

