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Natural Appeal

A slew of organic materials combine with a healthy dose of imagination to create a unique heavy-timber hybrid home.

BY JANICE BREWSTER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSEPH HILLIARD

Wavy cedar siding mixes with stone and board-and-batten on the home's exterior. Poplar bark accents the gable above the garage and on the dormer, while rusted corrugated metal tops the porch roof.



Heavy-timber trusses draw all eyes upward to the great room's cathedral ceiling. The fireplace is two-sided, facing both the great room and the covered porch. Wide open spaces make the home ideal for entertaining groups of friends and family.



To help define the rooms, the floor planks change direction as you move from kitchen to dining area to living space in the great room.



In the kitchen, Crown Point Cabinetry is topped with honed granite countertops. The rustic metal range hood was crafted by Raw Urth Designs. A spacious kitchen island was on Janine Carran's "must have" list for the home, while a fireplace makes the kitchen's "keeping area" cozy (inset).

In the sea of coastal-style houses that dot Annapolis, Maryland, Janine and Vince Carran's mountain-style home stands out. When the niece of the original landowner saw the Carrans' home, she teared up. "She said it looked like someone had planted a seed and the house just grew up out of the ground," Vince says.

Finding their 2-acre wooded building site in the midst of former tobacco fields was the start of the Carrans' journey to a hybrid timber frame home. The farm's 500 acres had been subdivided, but most of the lots are large, giving each residence a secluded feel. "The site seemed perfect for a house like this," Janine says. "It looks like it was always here."

Still, the site posed some challenges: Steep slopes created a narrow building footprint. Fortunately, the Carrans discovered a plan offered by MossCreek of Knoxville, Tennessee, that would fit their available space. The couple took MossCreek's "The Wedge" plan and ran with it. "We do custom designs but we also have a library of plans," explains Allen Halcomb, MossCreek's president. "Almost all of our customers want to modify the plans to suit their needs."



OPPOSITE: The home's unique stair tower is crowned with timber trusses. Heavy Timber Truss & Frame custom crafted the complex wood staircase. Instead of traditional spindles, the Carrans specified heavy-gauge metal fencing for an industrial touch.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Patio doors lead from the master bedroom out to the deck. ■ Sliding barn doors separate the master bath from the bedroom. Janine wanted the custom cabinetry in the master bathroom to have the feel of timeless furniture. Tile is by Atlas Tile. ■ Vermont Plank Flooring provided the random-width hardwood. ■ A custom two-sided hutch by Crown Point Cabinetry separates the kitchen from the dining area. ■ A spacious second-floor landing provides a quiet spot for writing or sketching.

Vince and Janine liked the plan's first-floor master suite but removed a third bedroom from the second floor to create space for the vaulted great room. For their walk-out lower level, they planned a bedroom and recreation space with full-size windows and sliding glass doors.

With the design nailed down, Vince, who works in commercial property development and management, was ready to be the project's general contractor, while Janine would choose and source all of the home's interior and exterior materials, fixtures and finishes.

The Carrans were drawn to the natural look of wood timbers, so Janine's first stop on the quest for their one-of-a-kind home was The Log & Timber Home Show in Pennsylvania. There, she met Bruce Bode and Kevin Perdue of Heavy Timber Truss & Frame based in Elkview, West Virginia. The company provided rough-sawn oak timbers for the great room, kitchen, master suite and stair tower. Timbers on the exterior are cypress. "It's more naturally insect- and rot-resistant than just about any other species," Bruce explains.

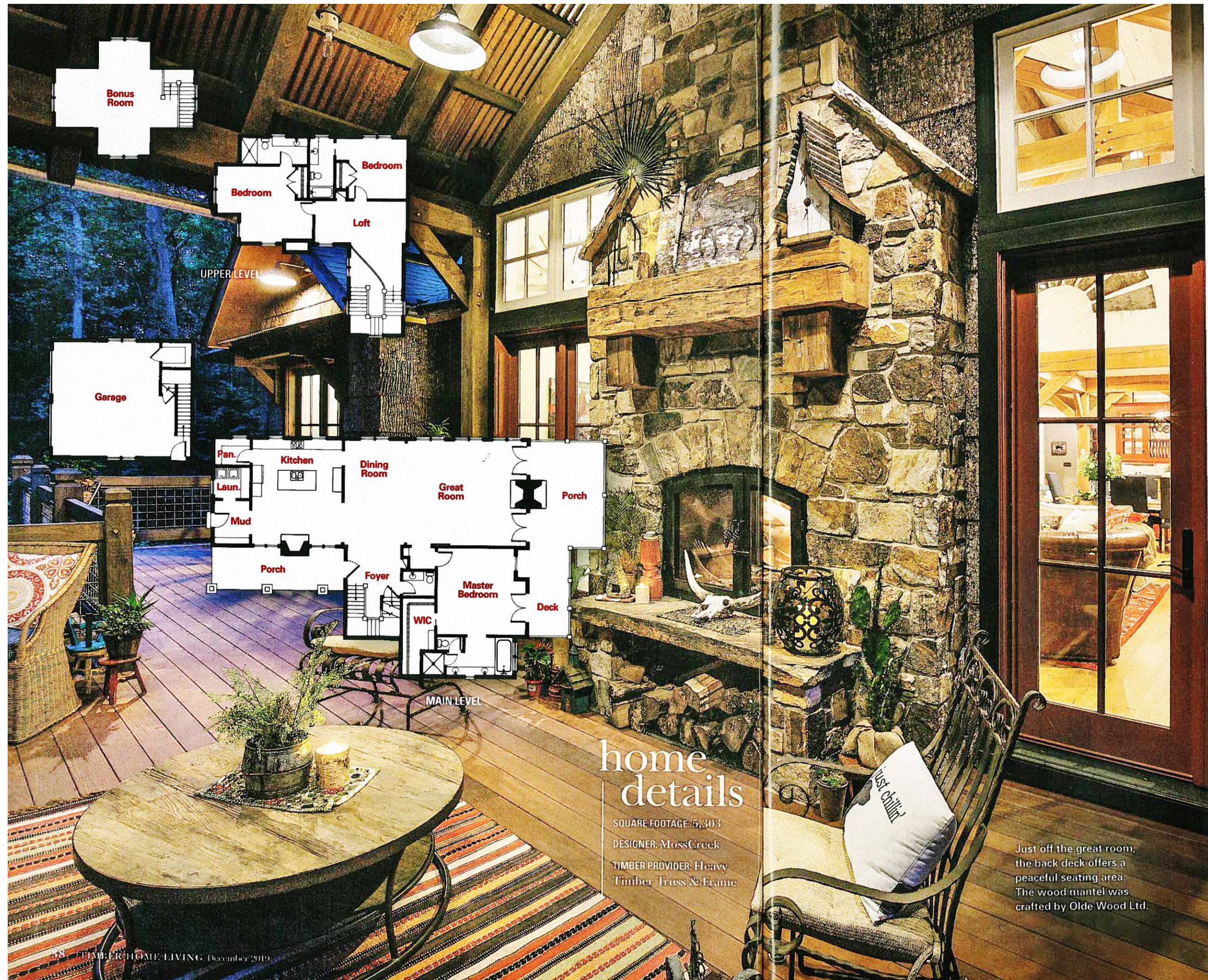
Next, Janine attended one of Heavy Timber Truss & Frame's workshops to learn more about the process of building a timber style home and really loved the onsite expert guidance the company could provide once construction began.

In terms of design, to keep their home's interior bright and fresh, the Carrans limited the use of wood tones in other areas. Painted walls and whitewashed tongue-and-groove ceilings showcase the timber trusses and beams. "We're glad we chose the lighter ceilings as it really shows off the beams and brightens up the place," Janine says.

For added interest, the couple mixed the plank widths of the wood floors. Some measure 6 inches wide, some as many as 11 inches. They also varied the direction of the planks to define the living, dining and kitchen spaces of the open floor plan.

For the kitchen, Janine tapped the tal-





home details

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,303
DESIGNER: MossCreek
TIMBER PROVIDER: Heavy Timber Truss & Frame

Just off the great room, the back deck offers a peaceful seating area. The wood mantel was crafted by Olde Wood Ltd.

ents of Crown Point Cabinetry. Most of the cabinets have a light finish, but she chose a darker wood hue for the island. "There was so much white," she says, "so I put a stain on that." Dark granite countertops mimic soapstone — with easier upkeep. "I like the contrast with the creamy cabinets," she says.

MossCreek's original plan included a wall between the kitchen and the dining room, which the Carrans decided to remove to better showcase the beams outlining the dining room. "We wanted to see the beams but add some separation between the two rooms, so we came up with the idea of a two-sided hutch," Janine said. She asked Crown Point to give that piece a rusty, barn-red red finish for a bit of "farm charm."

But for all its inner beauty, one of the couple's favorite spots in the home is the covered deck that sits up high on the back of the house. "We kept the trees that were close to the house, so it's like being in a tree house," Vince says. "It's so peaceful on a stormy evening. We just sit out there and listen to the rain." An outdoor fireplace makes the space cozy even when temperatures drop.

Janine took great care when plotting special touches, like the custom vanity in the master bath. "I sat many nights with graph paper and drew things to size," Janine says. She envisioned bathroom cabinetry that looked like furniture to give the new home a sense of age. Mantels for the three fireplaces created "another graph paper night," Janine says. She drew out the fireplace surrounds to decide on the perfect mantel size — finally realizing that hefty 12-inch mantels would better complement the heavy-timber framework than a dainty 8- or 10-inch size.

Now complete, the home is everything the couple hoped for. "It's my Zen," Janine says. She shares that peaceful feeling, as she and Vince frequently host gatherings of family and friends. At their first fall get-together, everyone was amazed at the home the couple had created. "They all wanted to stay for the weekend," he laughs.