

A Smaller Scale

A Colorado homeowner proves that bigger isn't always better

Building a new house in a resort town populated by log homes can be quite a challenge. Many homeowners opt to conform to the standards that are set, adding their own extravagant log dwelling to fit the vernacular.

Others strive to be different. Take Peter Welles. When the Minnesota resident decided to build a vacation home in Telluride, Colorado, he aimed to create something a little out of the ordinary.

"I wanted something a little more interesting," says Peter. "I've always like the look of timber frame. Most of the homes in the area are over 5,000 square feet and I wanted to make a statement that you can do something that's really nice on a different scale. I wanted a smaller scale with a high level of finish."

After coming up with some basic ideas, Peter turned to

Although it's half the size of many homes in Telluride, Peter's timber-frame beauty is just as striking. Nestled in the mountains at an elevation of 9,630 feet, the home provides panoramic views of the Sneffles Range and Dallas Peak.

One Architects of Telluride. The architectural firm helped Peter translate his concepts into a workable floor plan. The basic layout called for approximately 3,000 square feet—about half the size of the average home in the neighborhood.

"The scale of the home is really unique," says Peter, explaining that the calculated square footage includes the garage. "We still have vaulted, soaring space yet the overall feeling is intimate and cozy. To create a sense of intimacy, we dropped the ceilings over the kitchen, dining room and window seat area."

Opposite: Despite its modest size, the home still enjoys a soaring living room ceiling. Peter had a tough time filling the odd-size space above the mantel. Local photographer Eileen Benjamin came up with two great images that create a sense of "ying" and "yang." Note how the room is open to a loft overhead.

Story by Stacy Durr Albert • Photos by Roger Wade • Styling by Debra Grahl







Following a friend's recommendation, Peter commissioned Town & Country Cedar Homes of Petoskey, Michigan, to design and build the timber frame. The company, which specializes in custom homes crafted of natural woods, created a white pine frame that combines drama and intimacy. The clean lines of the frame suggest a Shaker or Mission style.

"We wanted to keep a clean look," says Peter. "Though the outside of the home is geared to the

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old mining town vernacular of Telluride, the inside is purely Shaker or Mission. The furnishings also promote this decorative style."

The layout of the home is as practical as its furnishings. The main level houses the living room, kitchen, dining room, master suite, breakfast nook and a powder room. The lower level features two bedrooms, two baths, a laundry area, a mud room and the garage. The upper level offers attic space as well as an open loft with an office and television area. Expansive decks offer additional living space; the larger one spans the entire house and includes a soothing Jacuzzi tub. The smaller deck located off the office is a more private area where Peter makes many of his business calls.

Though its primary purpose is functionality, the layout also makes the most of aesthetics. Walking in the front door, guests are treated to a breathtaking vista of Dallas Peak and the Sneffles Range. "The house was very carefully planned and positioned on the lot so that we enjoy

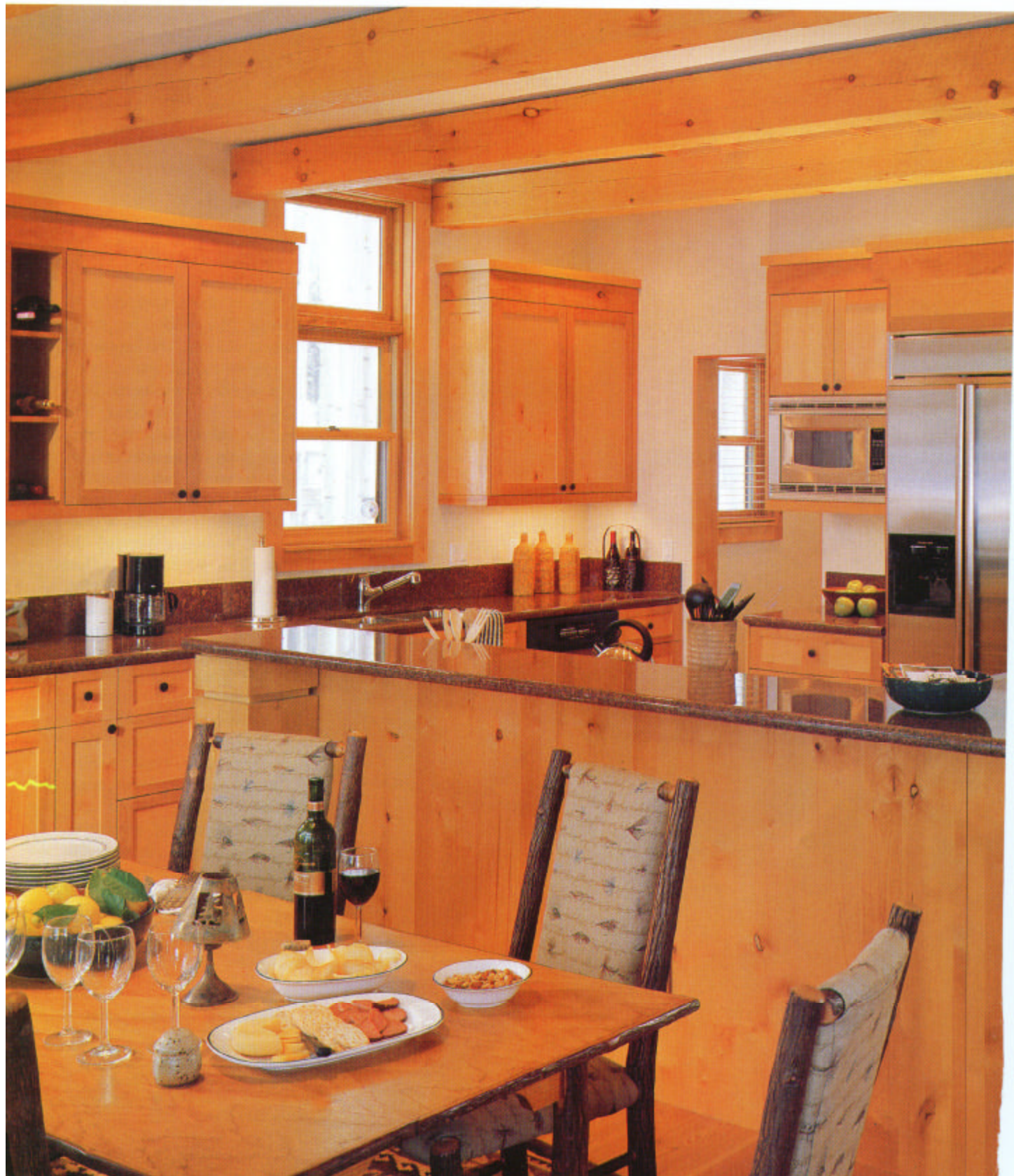
Leather couches and Mission-style furnishings from Old Hickory give the living room a clean look with a Shaker influence. Note how the ceiling is lower over the kitchen in the background to create a more intimate space.

spectacular views," says Peter. "When you enter, you see clear through the house."

Careful planning produced many of the home's best features. For example, when they designed the cozy window seat in the living room, they incorporated strategically placed sconces for reading. "We literally sat up there with books to try to figure out exactly where to place the lights,

to see where the light would hit the pages," recalls Peter.

Another area that required careful planning was decorating the tricky space above the fireplace mantel. Since the space is such an odd size—20 inches high by 11 feet wide—finding a painting or wall hanging to fill it seemed impossible. Peter commissioned local photographer Eileen Benjamin to come up with a solution. "It was a unique chal-



Below: Alder cabinets crafted by local carpenter Brad Beyers are a nice complement to the oak beams overhead in the kitchen. The sleek, clean lines found throughout the room offer a high level of finish.

Right: Located just off the kitchen, the breakfast nook offers an intimate space for enjoying meals.



lenge for her," says Peter. "She never had to work with a space like this before. She came up with the idea of using two images instead of one. One is kind of a jagged mountain scene; the other is forested. It's sort of a "ying-yang" effect with opposing seasons. When we hung them up, we kept switching them back and forth. And I'll probably switch them again someday!"

The flooring in the home is also noteworthy—it is made of tamarack, a type of larch that is the only deciduous conifer (needle-losing tree) in the country. The pre-finished floor was actually imported from Europe through Edelweiss Flooring of Telluride. Treated with linseed oil and a beeswax finish, it is specially designed to go over the radiant floor heating in Peter's home.

The alder cabinetry crafted by local carpenter Brad Beyers is another distinctive feature. A perfect complement to the oak frame, the alder

accents appear in nearly every room of the house, not only in the form of cabinetry, but also as handmade doors, trim and window casing.

Just as the furnishings inside the house maintain Peter's desire for something different, so does the home's exterior site. Located on one-third of an

acre at an elevation of 9,630 feet, the house offers a close glimpse of wildlife, including elk and black bear. "We're always very careful around garbage day," says Peter, laughing.

Joking aside, Peter is very happy with his retreat in Telluride. The resort town, which is located next to a historic mining village, has proved to be an ideal location. Peter enjoys spending time skiing, hiking, mountain biking and fly fishing in the area. In addition, he appreciates the convenience of living two minutes away from a gondola that runs year-round. "I can be down in the historic town in 11 minutes," he says.

The clean lines of the white pine frame suggest a Shaker influence.





Mission-style furniture from Old Hickory adds a traditional flavor to the dining room. Double-hung windows enhance the look. The dining room opens up to a large deck that spans the entire house.

Above: The loft area overlooks the living room and offers spectacular views of the nearby mountains.

Right: A small balcony just outside the loft office provides the perfect spot for Peter to make his business calls.

"That's how I get down to go out to dinner."

Looking back on the project, Peter realizes how important careful planning and research can be. "If you're planning to build a timber home, get input from a number of different timber framers," he advises. "Work with an architect who has experience with timber framing since it's a unique type of construction."

The positive influence that Peter's home has on his guests suggests that timber framing may not be a "unique" form of construction for much longer. **THI**







The loft office area offers ample privacy and light. Its uncluttered decor continues the Shaker theme found throughout the home.



The master bedroom is simple yet elegant. Instead of adding an "unnecessary" sitting area, Peter opted to furnish the room with just the essentials—a bed and nightstand. "I wanted to make a statement that you can do something that's really nice on a different scale," says Peter.

Sleek tile in the master bath continues the clean lines that are found throughout the home. The alder doors and cabinetry were crafted by local carpenter Brad Beyers.

