

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO DREAM WOOD HOMES

# TIMBER HOME LIVING

## The Perfect Floorplan

Large or small, design  
rooms just right for you

### How to Choose:

Hardwood floors,  
entry doors, stone accents

Create a  
Comfortable,  
Inviting Home

### Dine-In Kitchens

No-fail tips  
for every  
space

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# Matter of Time

**Something old becomes new again when longtime Carolinians build a traditional timber home to replace their beloved summerhouse.**

STORY BRIDGET MCCREA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES RAY SPAHN

STYLING BY COLLEEN MACOMBER

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**OPPOSITE:** Surrounded by trees that were planted in the 1950s, the timber home's many windows and double-decker porch exude a southern flair that owners Bill and Joellyn Gibbons strove for when building their house.

**THIS PAGE:** A long, landscaped driveway is bordered by a natural wall made from local stones.



**ABOVE:** A wood-burning fireplace made from native flagstone warms the living room, where exposed ceiling trusses have a natural, knotty appearance.

**OPPOSITE:** Wall-to-wall windows provide a clear view in the dining room, which includes a stone fireplace and traditional furniture.

**IT'S** a feat many homeowners have tried to achieve—to create a traditional home that's at once inspired by history and modern in its craftsmanship and amenities. It's a challenging project to take on, but deciding to build a timber home definitely makes the task easier.

Just ask Bill and Joellyn Gibbons. Their timber home, which is situated on almost an acre of land in Blowing Rock, North Carolina, was constructed on the site where a hotel was built in the 1880s, but later torn down in 1942. The Gibbons eventually bought the property

and built a summerhouse, which was destroyed in an electrical fire in 2003. Yet, from the tragedy came the opportunity to build the home of their dreams.

And that's exactly what they did, all the while leaving certain elements of their previous home intact, such as the original hedges in the front and side yards that were planted 50 years earlier. "We wanted the home and its furnishings to look like a home that was built in the 1920s," explains Bill, who is semi-retired from the furniture textile industry.

To achieve that goal, the couple worked with an architect who

suggested a timber-frame structure. Made from a hand-hewn, distressed white oak framing package from Boone, North Carolina-based Harmony Timberworks (previously Harmony Exchange), the home required quite a bit of custom craftsmanship, particularly for the curved ends on the outside rafter extensions, rafter tails and beam extensions. Bill and Joellyn helped their architect design the home, which was built by Rattlesnake Mountain Construction. "The architect gave us six different rough design scenarios, and we picked the one that would work best," recalls





**ABOVE:** On the wall of the great room a tapestry rug found in a Blowing Rock antique shop serves as the focal point. The mix-and-match furniture is from Hickory Chair Co.

**OPPOSITE:** The home's kitchen features Sheldon slate countertops and custom cabinets made from Birds Eye Cypress salvaged from the Gibbons' previous home.

Jim Kanagy, sales representative for Harmony Timberworks.

The Gibbons, who broke ground on their four-bedroom home in 2003 and moved in less than two years later, say outdoor living space was one of their top priorities, as evidenced by the 14-by-48-foot double-decker porch and two outdoor fireplaces. "We did a lot of living on our previous home's porch," says Bill. "Now we have 1,300 square feet of space and an amazing view."

Designed in an L-shape, the home also sits on an angle, specifically chosen to capture natural light. "Our home never gets direct sunshine," says Joellyn. "The sun comes up in one corner of the lot and sets in the other,

so we wanted lots of doors and windows to usher in plenty of light."

For the kitchen, the Gibbons salvaged cypress siding from their previous home's exterior and used it for paneling, while yellow pine was used for the floors. The rest of the home features a mix of stone flooring, complemented by knotty white oak, which creates abundant rustic charm. The home's five interior, wood-burning fireplaces are crafted from local stone cultivated from the region.

The Gibbons worked closely with a local interior designer to create an Old English aesthetic. "It's a mix of new and old," says Joellyn, who spent two years collecting an-

tiques, furniture and decorations while the home was being built. "We were always on the hunt. It was a lot of fun."

These days, the Gibbons are enjoying sharing their timber home with family, friends and the local community. "It's the perfect house for entertaining," they say, recalling a recent holiday that found them hosting a party for 200 guests. Reactions to the house are always positive, says Joellyn, who especially enjoys the home's well-lit, open floorplan. "Everyone seems to love our home because it's so casual. It's calm, serene and comfortable," she says. "It's the perfect tribute to our beloved vacation home, but with a whole new feel." ■





ABOVE: The Gibbons' "gathering room" features white oak flooring, a stone fireplace and built-in entertainment center and display cabinets.  
BOTTOM LEFT: Barley Twist furniture from E.J. Victor of North Carolina, white oak flooring and white paint create a light and bright master bedroom.  
BOTTOM RIGHT: The master bathroom includes a stand-alone air Jacuzzi tub, stone flooring and plantation shutters on the windows.



Crafted from local stone, the home's seven masonry fireplaces are all wood burning. This one heats the Gibbons' outside porch on cool spring and fall evenings.

## Home Details

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,800

TIMBER PRODUCER: Harmony Timberworks

