

Classic shingle-style mountain home offers to-die-for views

SKI-IN, SKI-OUT





THIS THREE-STORY, FIVE-BEDROOM Adirondack-style home at Spruce Peak in Stowe was designed to take full advantage of its dramatic views of Mount Mansfield and its ski runs. Below: The home's interior, but especially this stunning great room, employs a variety of natural materials, such as stone and wood to reflect the owner's wish to "bring the outside in."

As he sits at his custom-made, hexagonal, birch-trimmed kitchen table and sips a cup of strong, black coffee, the homeowner looks out his expansive bay window and explains, "That view! It's a killer!" He pauses, takes another sip and adds, "I can never get enough of it. It's breathtaking. Isn't it?"

He's right. It is.

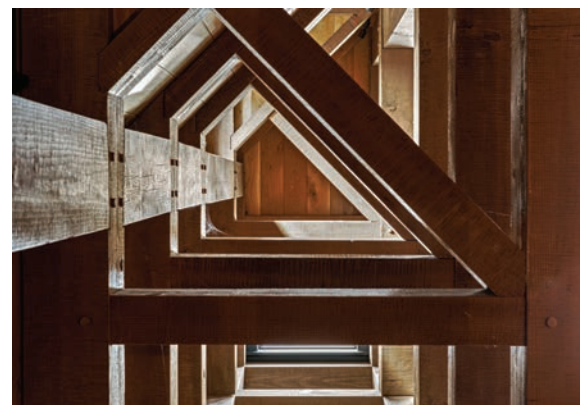
The views from this classic shingle-style, five-bedroom, 7,500-square foot, ski-in, ski-out mountain lodge at Spruce Peak are some of the best in Stowe. There are views of the ski mountain's famous Front Four ski trails—National, Goat, Starr, and Lifline—as well as a panorama of picture-postcard scenes from Mount Mansfield almost to Camel's Hump and, closer to home, The Lodge and the ever-expanding Spruce Peak village.

While the views from the three-story home are knockout, its design and craftsmanship have also won rave reviews, described by one visitor as "nothing short of a masterpiece." Although the owner, a Massachusetts-based private equity manager, is quick to praise the collaborative efforts of his design and construction team, it's clear that he has played a major role in the home's creation. "I own several houses and I really get a kick out of being involved in design and watching a vision take shape," he explains.

He purchased the lot on the side of Spruce Peak in 2006, but wasn't ready to build until 2018. "That gave me plenty of time to think about what I wanted in the house and how I wanted it to look," says the owner, a skier and avid snowboarder. He explains that he wanted a home that fit in with the area's other mountain cabins and that he favors an Adirondack or Rocky Mountain style. "Think of a house that Ralph Lauren would like to live in," he says. "That's my aesthetic."



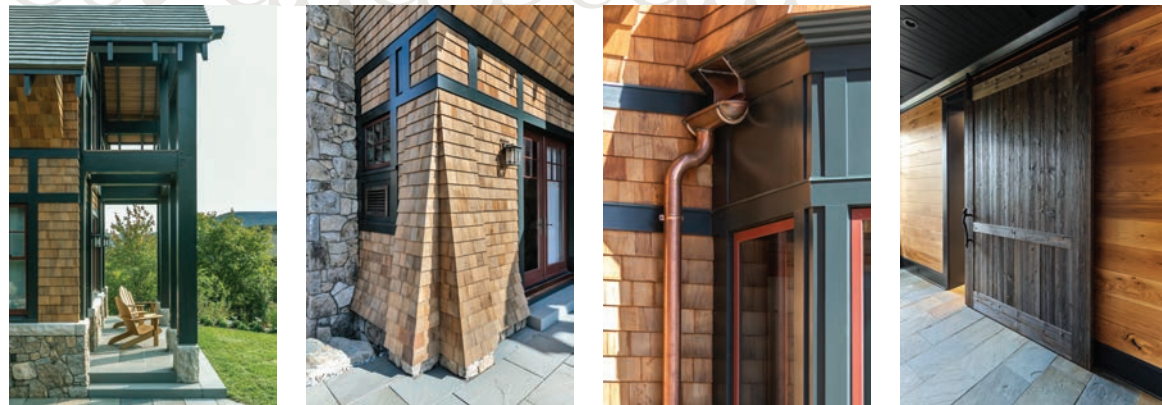
ALL PHOTOS: KATE CARTER; POOLROOM: ERICA ALLEN



THE HOME'S CLASSIC SHINGLE-STYLE EXTERIOR includes such architectural details as curved soffits and pilasters and copper gutters, while the white oak-paneled, Douglas fir, post-and-beam-style great room (at right) features banks of windows that frame both the Spruce Peak village as well as more distant ski runs.



post and beam



PREVIOUS PAGE: KATE CARTER; THIS PAGE: ERICA ALLEN



shingled

On his must-have list: five bedrooms, a great room, a game room, an eat-in kitchen, and a garage. He wanted to take full advantage of the relatively small, half-acre sloping lot and planned on building a three-level home. “The size of the home was limited to 7,500 square feet and I wanted to build every square foot I could to maximize the value of the property,” he says.

He discovered the Connecticut-based architectural firm of Shope Reno Wharton and fell in love with their classic, shingle-style aesthetic. Stowe’s Sisler Builders came on board, as did the Burlington-based landscape architecture firm of Wagner Hodgson. Interior design duties went to Martha Vineyard’s Tracker Home Decor, who the owner has worked with before on several other homes.

The small, sloping lot presented challenges to the design team. “When we visited the location, we immediately saw that the best views would come from the great room and kitchen and the bedrooms on the upper floors,” remembers architect John Gassett. “So we drew up a plan that made the most of those incredible views.”

p.196 >>

THE HOME’S THREE-SEASON porch includes a granite fireplace and was finished with the same curved shingle elements found on the exterior, to make it feel as if it were “added on.” The chandeliers, like the five others throughout the house, were created from naturally shed antlers by Ken Kenia at Waitsfield’s Mad River Antler.

set the table

KATE CARTER



ERICA ALLEN; INSET: KATE CARTER



THE HIGH-CEILINGED, wood-paneled combination dining room/great room, with its 11-inch by 11-inch Douglas fir posts, features a custom-built, 12-person dining table. The chairs are covered in a Ralph Lauren-inspired pattern, a favorite designer of the owner. The great room's stone-clad fireplace includes a rough-hewn—its drill holes are still visible—granite slab that was mined in Barre, Vermont.

break bread



LIKE MOST OF THE HOME, the kitchen features custom-made touches, such as doors and cabinets crafted by Sisler Builders. A marble island is topped by three pendant lights and includes a wine cooler as well as a trio of custom-made cedar log chairs from Minnesota-based Fireside Lodge. A nearby breakfast nook boasts some of the home's best views.





TOP PHOTOS & INSET: KATE CARTER; BOTTOM: ERICA ALLEN



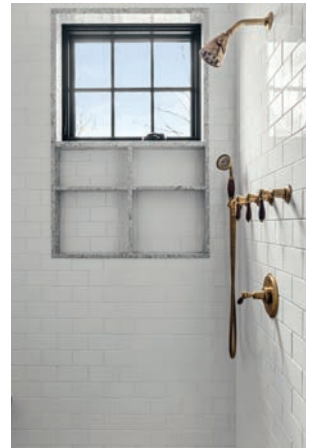
sleep envy

EACH OF THE HOME'S FIVE BEDROOMS includes the attention to detail that made the owner say, "the level of quality from the craftsmen never failed to amaze me." For example, in the master bedroom (top, left) artisans spent weeks mitering the angles of the wooden eaves and corners and painstakingly matching the grains of the custom-milled white oak paneling. Each of the guest bedrooms features different wall and ceiling coverings, as well as reclaimed wood floors. Indeed, the owner is so fond of wood, that there is no drywall in the entire 7,500-square-foot house.

water closet



AT TOP & BOTTOM LEFT: ERICA ALLEN; OTHER PHOTOS: KATE CARTER



THE BATHROOMS prove the home's architect, John Gassett from Shope Reno Wharton, right when he says, "There's no bad view in the entire house." The master bathroom (top) boasts big bay windows and features twin vanities as well as a freestanding bronze tub. The powder room (above, left) and other bathrooms each feature their own nearby and distant views and exquisite detail and craftsmanship.



flight path



AMONG THE HOME'S many impressive examples of hand-made craftsmanship is the interior custom-made staircase that includes an uninterrupted 60-foot-long handrail spanning two flights of stairs. Crafted by Stowe-based Sterling Staircase and Handrail Company, the stairs are made from reclaimed oak barn wood and the balusters are regionally sourced birch branches.

THE HOMEOWNER'S insistence on using as much locally available natural elements is clear in this peek of the front of the home that includes a cobblestone driveway, a granite foundation, and custom-crafted garage doors.



<< 183

“We wanted visitors to turn the corner into the high-ceilinged great room and be surprised—bowed over—by the spectacular ski slope views,” says Gassett. “We hoped it would be an aha moment that blew people’s minds.”

Says the owner, “The most frequent comment I hear from visitors when they first enter the great room and see the view is ‘Oh my god! What a view!’”

Visitors also invariably comment on the liberal use of wood throughout the home’s interior. “The owner wanted the home’s interior to reflect the exterior,” says Gassett. “He wanted wood, wood, and more wood.”

The designers delivered. Indeed, there is no drywall or plaster anywhere in the house. Explains interior designer John Murphy, “The owner is allergic to drywall!”

The floors are reclaimed “original face antique oak,” salvaged and restored from beams in a 140-year old Pennsylvania barn. Much of the wall and black-painted ceiling paneling is white oak and 11-inch-square timbers in the great room are Douglas fir. Each of the home’s three floor-to-ceiling fireplaces is crafted with Vermont-sourced Woodbury granite, the same stone that is used to anchor the home’s exterior to the ground.

“I like using locally-sourced materials,” says

the owner. “I don’t think it makes any sense to build a house in the mountains of Vermont and import granite from Spain.”

Using so much wood in the home’s interior could be dark or forbidding, so designers Murphy and Kalani Gonzalez added red- or neutral-colored curtains and treatments to some windows to “soften and warm up” the rooms. “We were also careful not to compete with the home’s spectacular exterior views,” says Murphy. For example, they chose low-backed sofas that would not block views or used open-legged chairs to preserve a feeling of openness.

Inspired by the owner’s admiration for Ralph Lauren’s timeless design aesthetic, they included several of his furniture pieces and opted for a mix of traditional and modern. “We really took our cue from the vernacular of the house and went with a design palette consisting of rich tones,” explains Gonzalez. Artwork includes paintings and photographs by regional and local artists such as Vermont photographer Jim Westphalen and painter Sheel Anand.

There is plenty of evidence of the attention to detail and craftsmanship throughout this house that make this project so special. The three-story staircase features an uninterrupted 60-foot-long run of handrail and specially-sourced birch balusters.

In the master bedroom and bath Sisler carpenters Bob Schue and Chad Roy spent months intricately mitering wall paneling and matching grains on eaves, angles, and corners. They also created dozens of custom cabinets and doors as well as delicately curved soffits and pilasters on the home’s exterior. The driveway is comprised of reclaimed cobblestone. Even the garage is special. Its doors are custom designed and the floor is comprised of brick inlaid in an elegant herringbone pattern.

“I wanted the garage to be as nice as the rest of the house,” says the owner. “But it’s so nice that I regret every time I have to drive into it.”

The landscapers took their cue from the home’s classic shingle style. “The house has a lot of texture so we wanted our landscape to also have a lot of texture,” explains landscape architect Keith Wagner. “But it also had to be subservient to the house and not look overly ornate or compete with the view.” The landscapers saved some existing mature trees and also added layers of birch, hemlock and dogwood to provide screening and privacy.

How does the owner feel about his mountain home? “Every time I come here I find something new, some detail that excites me,” he says. “I had a great team and they hit it out of the park. I got all that I hoped for, and so much more.” ■