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taking the hybrid approach

A Wisconsin home blends logs, timber, and shake for a cutting-edge look in log homes

By Ronda Mollica - Photography by Roger Wade - Styling by Debra Grahl

RIGHT: The great room opens to a rear deck and side sun porch through glass doors. A Quadra-Fire fireplace insert, selected for its energy efficiency, is able to heat much of the home. Eldorado architectural stone was used on the fireplace and around various places inside and outside the home. Skylights in several rooms provide a soft natural light through the cathedral ceilings.

BELOW: "About 10 years ago I helped build a custom log home for the first time, and I was hooked," says Cal Weber, pictured below with his wife Kathy.



Sn increasingly popular style of log home is the hybrid. Hybrid construction is essentially a blend of structural log and/or timber and conventional stick-built framing. Virtually any material can be used to clad the conventional framing: cedar shake shingles, stucco, natural or cultured stone, half-log siding, and bark.

In fact, of the roughly 15,000 log homes built each year, about a third of them can be considered hybrid.

Given the different building styles involved, building a hybrid can occasionally be complex. Hammering out a workable floor plan, bidding out the materials, and coordinating different crews can be daunting.

For one couple, the complexity of log-home was made simple with the help of a well-established log home company. The hybrid construction experience was so remarkably easy, in fact, the family went on to become dealers for the company.

"I've been in the construction business for over 20 years, and about 10 years ago I helped build a custom log home for the first time," says Cal Weber. "From then on, I was hooked. I love the creativity and the unique look of logs and wood."

Over the years he has built a variety of log homes, but when he and his wife Kathy decided to build one of their own in Delavan, Wisconsin (about 50 miles away from Milwaukee), they chose Tomahawk Log and Country Homes. The Webers



ABOVE: The Weber home in southeast Wisconsin features a dramatic two-story foyer with chinked log walls. The arched window located in the peak brings light to the space, preventing the ceiling from looking too dark and cavernous. The wood veneer steel door has etched glass, sidelights, and an arched transom. The Webers experimented with different styles of lighting throughout the home, including an antler chandelier from Cast Horn Designs.

met with Tomahawk Vice-President Ron Volz and were attracted to Tomahawk's log wall system: Basic 2x6 wall construction covered with draw-knifed half-logs inside and out. The indistinguishable log-look is astonishing and the insulation factor is an impressive R-38.

During the effortless planning process that even took the Webers by surprise, they decided to become dealers for Tomahawk, using their home as a one-of-a-kind model. In addition to a tailor-made floor plan, they selected an array of woods and materials to use throughout the home to demonstrate the endless of ways in which a log (or hybrid) home could be designed.

Cal believes that this is the perfect complement to his construction business and is positive he made the right move. "In the past, I was unhappy with way dealers put together a package and then went to the builder to see if it could be done. This wasted time and was very dissatisfying to the customer. I thought I would offer my customers a better process. I could help them design, get creative and build a home they would be happy with. I can easily guide them from point A to point B."

In their home, the Webers experimented with an open floor plan concept. "No matter where you are on the main floor, you can still be a part of what's happening," says Cal. "But we



The bright and cheery kitchen is a wonderful mixture of woods, plaster, granite, tile, and stone. The breakfast bar is antiqued bead board. Open soffits, lighted glass cabinets, and spacious countertops are the perfect places for adding decorative accents into the space. The room also boasts a powerful king truss and stonework above the stove that creates a faux chimney look.

RIGHT: The dining room is paneled with reclaimed barnboards on three-quarters of the wall, which gives the room rich texture and differentiates the space from the foyer. The dining table is made of highly polished barnboard that contrast with black bow-back chairs.



Corner styles

The Weber home features two different corner exterior styles: an interlocking style, in which the logs "lock" together at a half-log height differential, and a corner post style, in which the intersecting log ends are covered by a vertical length of log.

The five basic log corner styles are:
Butt-and-Pass. One of the most popular corner systems of all time, the logs of adjoining walls in this style appear to be at the same level. At one course, one log extends beyond the corner and the meeting log butts into it. On the next level up, the opposite log is longer and the adjoining log abuts it.

Interlocking. Unlike the butt-and-pass system, there is no gap between the logs beyond the corner (alternating courses); instead, the log ends appear without interruption because each is notched and half the bulk removed. The logs appear to "nestle" into each other.

Dovetail. Stylized to pay homage to the pioneer cabin, dovetail features beveled cuts top and bottom on a log, with the logs slipping into place. This style is normally used with square or rectangular cut logs, and is particularly appropriate for chinked homes.

Saddle-notch. Similar to interlocking, the saddle notch is usually less intricate. Each log has a half-circle cut at the bottom so that it can fit snugly to the course below. Saddle-notch is used in conjunction with the Swedish cope finish to the logs.

Corner post. The logs meet in a corner post that provides a squared corner with no extension. This system is often found in dormers or second story log siding when used in concert with other corner styles, and is also popular in hybrid construction, as seen in the Weber home.



also made an effort to delineate each room with the use of railings and a variety of flooring and wall materials: reclaimed barnwood, pine bead board, half logs, gypsum, and even thin plaster board walls.

“I enjoy showing our clients how easily a log home can be decorated and that there are many options to choose from,” says Kathy Weber. “With the tall cathedral ceilings, wide open windows, and lots of wood, decorating can be intimidating. I find that lighting fixtures can play a big role in the personality of each room and I have selected pieces from many companies, again to demonstrate the variety.”

RIGHT: The main function of this lower level is to entertain. From the rustic bar area with stamped tin ceiling to the built-in entertainment shelf and lit woodstove alcove, entertaining family and friends can be done separate from the main part of the home. All the goodies are included: full-size refrigerator, microwave/convection oven, lighted cabinetry, and sinks. The countertop is made from a 2½-inch pine slab of wood with a natural, untrimmed edge.

BELOW: To create the illusion of a separate space, railings, posts and varied ceiling and flooring materials gives each room its own identity.





ABOVE: The open feel of the master bedroom comes from the cathedral ceiling, skylight, and bank of Craftsman-style windows. Note the floral motif found on the comforter, valance, and leafy metal detail on the dresser and bed boards. **ABOVE RIGHT:** A mix of stone, log, and plaster in the master bath add interest. A separate shower and his-and-her vanity (not all shown) complete the ensemble.

Another tip the Webers like to pass along to prospective customers is to use their imagination and to not let the logs limit your design. "The one thing we have learned over the years is that whatever can be done in a conventional home can be done in a Tomahawk log home," says Cal. "With the half-log system, the sky is the limit."

The exterior of the Weber home is also an elegant mixture of materials that include hand-hewn half-logs. This variety adds new textures, colors, and a bit of modern sophistication that works well in their semi-urban location. "The hybrid home allows the homeowner to develop their own look and not just fall back on a safe log look," explains Cal. A combination of 12" Saddle-lok corners, cedar board and batt, hand split cedar shake, and stone can be seen from the front elevation.

This style of home appeals to the high-end market and is easily customized to meet all tastes. A full spectrum of designs, from rustic to luxurious, can be created from the

assortment of materials. Having a hand in this market is important as it is often recession free and keeps experienced builders in business. 🐾

RESOURCES:

Square footage: 4,300

bedrooms: 4

bathrooms: 3.5

Producer: Tomahawk Log and Country Homes, Tomahawk, WI.

Circle 002 on the Reader Service Card between pages 18-19 for free information.

Species of log: White and red pine logs, 12" Saddle-lok

Builder: C. Weber Builders, Delavan, WI

Stone: Eldorado Stone

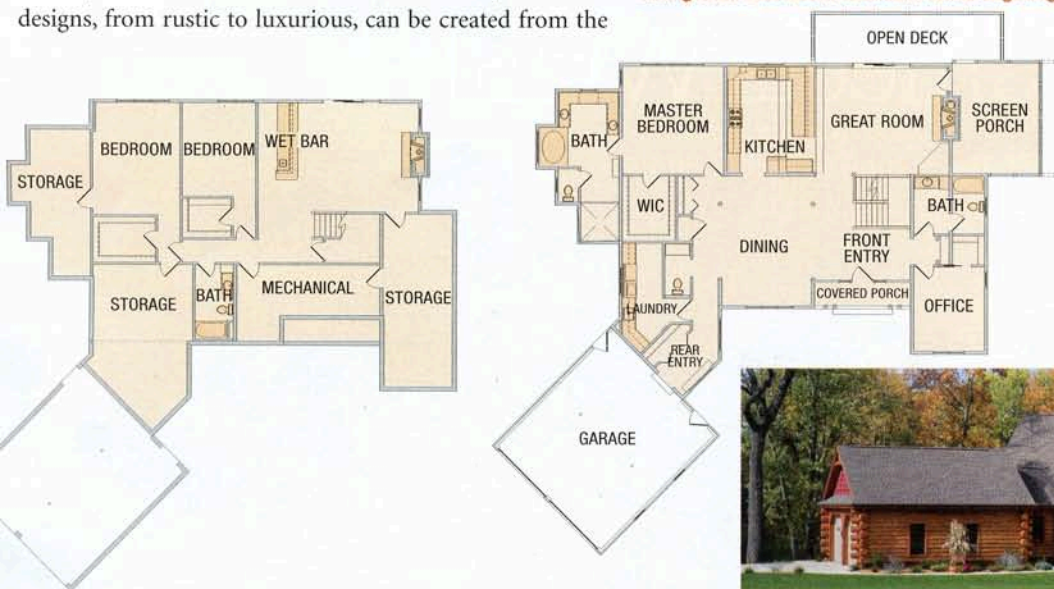
Fireplace: Quadra-Fire, Colville, WA

Antler chandelier in foyer: Cast Horn Designs, Logan, UT

Lantern lights in foyer: Old California Lantern Company, Orange, CA

Sink light in kitchen: Avalanche Ranch Light Company

Living room sconces: Mountain Ranch Lighting, Bellingham, WA



Mixing and layering siding materials such as hand split cedar shake, stone, and 12-inch pine logs on the exterior can add elegance and Old World character. Details such as exposed timber trusses, multiple rooflines, and arched windows give the home a luxurious dressing.



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