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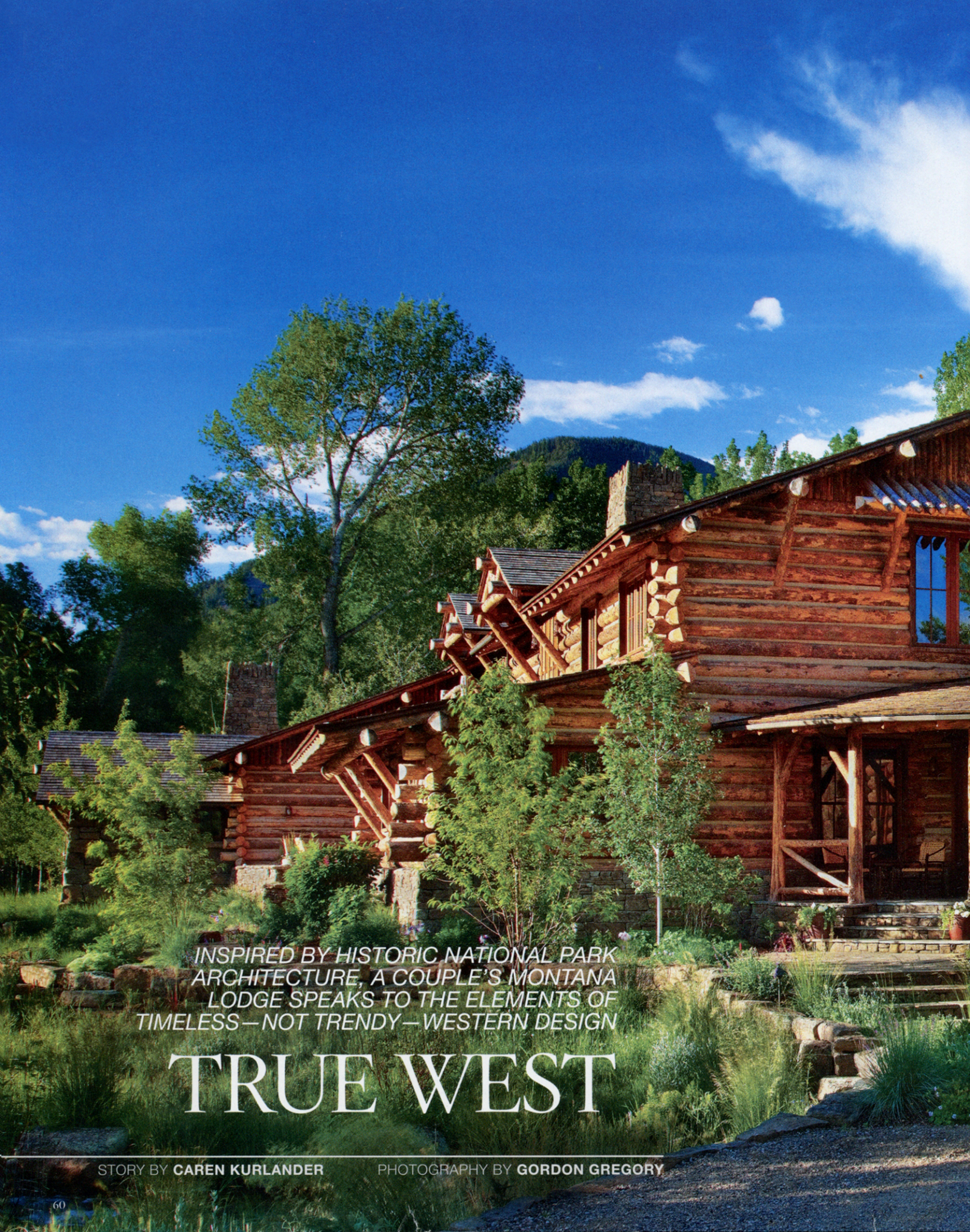


RUSTIC DONE RIGHT

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
AUTHENTIC WESTERN STYLE

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*RUSTIC
DONE RIGHT*



INSPIRED BY HISTORIC NATIONAL PARK
ARCHITECTURE, A COUPLE'S MONTANA
LODGE SPEAKS TO THE ELEMENTS OF
TIMELESS—NOT TRENDY—WESTERN DESIGN

TRUE WEST

STORY BY **CAREN KURLANDER**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **GORDON GREGORY**



Inspired by the national park structures in the area, architect Candace Tillotson-Miller designed this Paradise Valley house to be an authentic reflection of its Montana surroundings. The 7,000-square-foot structure is built mainly from small-scale chinked logs and accented with local Harlowton moss rocks. Large porches connect the home with the land.



BELOW: "People who come to Montana typically have an interest in the outdoors. I'm just catering to that," Miller says of the structure's many porches. Designer Debra Shull of Haven Interior Design outfitted the dining porch with a table and chairs from AdenWorks Ltd. FACING PAGE: Miller used willow saplings to create intricate decorative elements throughout the house. On a wall in the master bedroom's entry, the saplings embellish built-in shelving and drawers for clothing.



ARCHITECTURE BY **MILLER ARCHITECTS**

INTERIOR DESIGN BY **HAVEN INTERIOR DESIGN**

PEOPLE DON'T COME TO MONTANA TO BUILD A HOUSE, THEY COME TO BUILD A LIFESTYLE.

"People tend to be more playful here," says Candace Tillotson-Miller of Livingston-based Miller Architects. "We're in a second-home market, and our clients really engage with the opportunity to do something that they wouldn't do with a full-time residence." Such was the case for this house Miller designed in Paradise Valley, where her clients wanted to create a retreat to accommodate their far-flung family members. The couple had some ideas about the house's size and functionality, but when it came to aesthetics, there was no wavering. "They wanted log," recalls Miller, who was happy to oblige.

"The log cabin idea comes up quite a bit," she says. "People associate it with the West." For some, designing a log structure could veer into tricky, cliché-laden territory. But Miller, as she does in all of her work, took cues straight from the historic architecture of the area to create a house that is respectful of its setting. Paradise

Valley rests on the edge of Yellowstone National Park, and that landmark gave Miller her starting point. "We referenced park architecture in the design," says the architect, who looked to classic examples like the Old Faithful Inn and pored over Harvey H. Kaiser books for inspiration. "The old traditional structures in the park were largely basic rectangles. They were really understated."

So Miller also kept things simple. "These buildings have a tremendous amount of texture," she notes. "You don't have to overdo it." To build the lodge-like structure, she used smaller-scale, 8- to 10-inch-diameter standing-dead fir logs for the interior and exterior cladding, the exposed rafters and the numerous porches, which extend the living space at almost every turn. "The house is meant to resemble something that was built at the turn of the century," Miller explains. "Typically the scale of the logs was much smaller then because logging was done with horses and the logs were handled by the workers, not machines." >>

BELOW, LEFT: Shull mixed antique reproductions with reclaimed materials and rustic touches in the breakfast area for a collected look. A chandelier from Fish's Antler Art hangs above a custom Harvest table, with an old pine top and painted base, by Bradshaw Designs. The painted cupboard, custom made by Rocky Mountain Furniture, was designed to resemble an antique. BELOW, RIGHT: Inspired by Adirondack architecture, Miller highlighted the staircase with willow saplings. FACING PAGE: "March Moonrise, East Gallatin River" by Lee Stroncek hangs above the fireplace in the living room, where two custom sofas are covered with Moore & Giles leather. Pillow fabric by Donghia adds punch.



WESTERN TOUCHSTONES "I'm a fourth-generation Montanan," says designer Debra Shull, principal of Haven Interior Design, "so I feel like I have a strong sense of what Montana is." She also knows what it isn't. Here she offers thoughts on how to reign in the kitsch and create an authentic Western design.

STAY AWAY FROM THEMES "The homeowner is an avid fisherman, so I knew he would have thought it ridiculous to use old fishing poles as decorations," Shull says. "If it feels contrived, it shouldn't be there."

THINK LIKE A PIONEER "When I design houses like this, I consider what would have been brought here 100 years ago on the wagon trains," the designer says. "What they brought is all they had, and those things had to be incredibly precious."

PAY ATTENTION TO SCALE "If you want something to look old, you need to keep the scale in check," Shull says. "Antiques are small."

KEEP COLORS MUTED "We're really drawn to fabric that feels kind of muddy and to linens that look like they've been washed," Shull says. "It imparts a sense of age and timelessness."

USE WESTERN PIECES, BUT WISELY If it "speaks the language of Western," Shull says of items like antler chandeliers or Navajo rugs, "use them sparingly to really make a statement."

A detailed photograph of a rustic log cabin interior. The room features a large stone fireplace with a fire burning inside. Above the fireplace is a framed picture of a snowy landscape. To the left, a large antler chandelier hangs from the ceiling. In the center, a leather sofa with red cushions is positioned in front of a large window that looks out onto a porch. A round wooden coffee table in the foreground holds a vase of sunflowers, some fruit, and a small dog figurine. The walls are made of horizontal log beams, and the floor is dark wood. A colorful patterned rug is on the floor. In the background, a striped tapestry hangs on the wall, and a small framed picture is visible on the right wall.

"I REALLY RAIL AGAINST KITSCH.
IF WE HAVE COWBOY HATS,
IT'S BECAUSE WE USE THEM."

CANDACE MILLER

A rustic log cabin bathroom with a clawfoot bathtub, a large window, and a wooden vanity. The room features thick log walls and a ceiling with exposed wooden beams. A chandelier with four yellow shades hangs from the ceiling. A large window with a wooden frame looks out onto a green landscape. A white clawfoot bathtub is positioned in front of the window. To the right, a wooden vanity with a mirror and a small lamp is visible. A patterned rug is on the floor.

“IF YOU KEEP THINGS SIMPLE,
THE HOUSE WILL AGE MUCH BETTER.”

CANDACE MILLER

BELOW, LEFT: "The color palette in the master bedroom is a little lighter and softer than the rest of the home," says Shull, who chose an F. Schumacher & Co. textile for the coverlet. The light fixture is from Originals 22, and the leather club chair is from Jean de Merry. BELOW, RIGHT: "In these rural settings, I like to create outdoor environments," Miller says. "All around the building there are partially covered spaces that lead to patios." Linda Iverson designed the property's landscaping. FACING PAGE: Kohler's Iron Works Historic tub stands next to a Turkish kilim in the master bath.



THE SMALLER LOGS LEND AN AUTHENTIC FEEL, as does the interior detailing. "The wife wanted decorative touches," says Miller, who gleaned inspiration from Adirondack architecture and old Montana lodges when creating ornamental elements from willow saplings. The twig-like branches accent the ceilings to define spaces, embellish the stairway balusters and line the bar in the kitchen. Although these materials recall the past, the floor plan facilitates modern-day living. "Older buildings are a bit more compartmentalized," Miller says. "This home is open, making for easy transitions from one space to another."

The interior design enhances those seamless transitions. "There's a romantic quality to the architecture, and I wanted that to be what you notice," says designer Debra Shull of Bozeman-based Haven Interior Design, who worked with partner Phoebe McEldowney on the project. "The furniture has to blend, to feel like it belongs." To achieve that, Shull kept her design influences local. "We stayed away from anything that has a kitschy look," she explains. "No moose fabrics. We wanted the interiors to have a classic, timeless feel with a strong sense of place." Following that directive, the designers established the tone by hanging paintings by local Montana artists on the walls, and pulling the

color palette from the trees, creek and mountains outside.

In choosing the furnishings, the designers layered antiques and reproductions with vintage rugs for a "collected-over-time feel that's rooted in Western tradition," Shull says. Two leather sofas in the living room face a low table made from reclaimed chestnut, and reproduction ladder-back chairs stand on a vintage Turkish rug in the dining room. In the breakfast area, Shull had a painted cupboard custom made so it would just squeeze into place. "I wanted it to look like it was an antique piece that barely fit," explains the designer, who picked the clawfoot tub in the master bath for a similar reason. "We chose the white finish because when plumbing was first installed in houses way back when, it came in white and only white," she says.

Though the furnishings all seem perfectly suited to their rustic environment, they aren't overtly Western in style. Except for the antler chandeliers. "For us, antler chandeliers are similar to logs; they are decidedly Western, and they create a mood that is authentic and true," Shull says. "But we have one in the living room and one in the kitchen, and that's enough. The things that really speak the Western language should be used sparingly and treated like pieces of art." ◊