

ModernCabin



M I C H E L L E K O D I S

The post-and-beam building retained its character even after a meticulous reconstruction that involved adding a cedar shingle roof, wood siding, thick insulation, and ample glazing that acts as a passive-solar device to warm the interiors, particularly important during the region's cold winters. The stained-fir windows also provide cross ventilation when the mercury rises.

new life for a salvaged building

DESIGN: CANDACE TILLOTSON-MILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROGER WADE

LOCATION: SUN VALLEY, IDAHO 900 SQUARE FEET

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erging old with new can be a daunting prospect, but architect Candace Tillotson-Miller was successful in her efforts to transform a dilapidated post-and-beam barn into a habitable, light-filled retreat/art studio for a Sun Valley couple with modern taste and a love for traditional structures.

The nineteenth-century barn was shipped from Vermont under the guidance of a cabin broker and then rebuilt according to a design by Tillotson-Miller. Her challenge, she reveals, was to reinvent the building while staying true to its original framework and without sacrificing its authenticity. Also key was orienting the house to capture as much natural light as possible—important to one of the owners, an artist—and maximizing the views in all directions while ensuring privacy. Although the setting appears to be acres of open, rolling hills, its location is a subdivision peppered with neighboring houses.

"We kept the building understated but gave it a degree of elegance and refinement that we knew wouldn't overwhelm its simplicity," the architect says. "Barns tend to be large in terms of their massing, and while it's true that living in a barn is appealing to many people, you have to be careful to maintain the proper scale, otherwise it just won't feel right."





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SPECIAL FEATURES FOR THIS PLAN

- OLD POST-AND-BEAM BARN TRANSFORMED INTO A RETREAT/ART STUDIO WITH CLEAN LINES AND STRONG TIES TO THE PAST
- RESEMBLES A RURAL FARM BUILDING BUT IN REALITY IS LOCATED IN AN ACTIVE SUBDIVISION



1 The 900-square-foot barn efficiently combines living space with a storage room, located behind a set of wood doors.

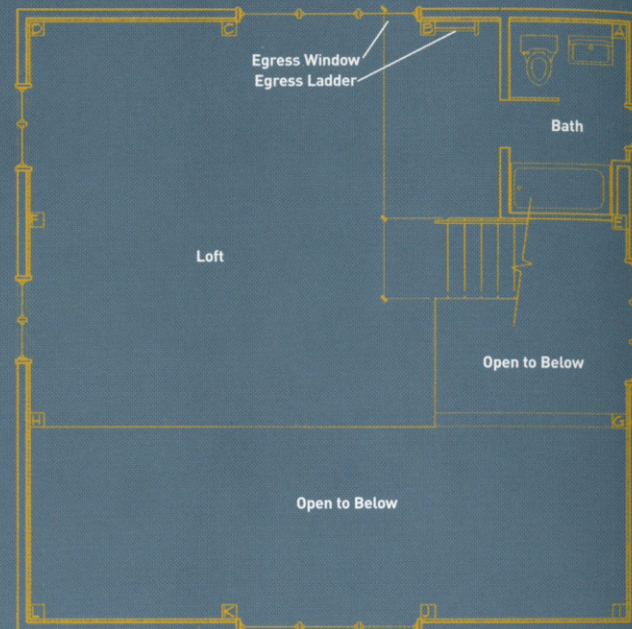
2 The ladder leading to the loft was part of the

salvaged barn; the architect cleaned it up and incorporated it into the new design. The windows frame the pastoral views and in some places can be opened to ventilate the rooms.

3 The minimalist kitchen features custom fir cabinetry, a soapstone sink and counters, and contemporary light fixtures.

At 900 square feet, this retreat does feel intimate and comfortable but ample windows, which open the interior to the landscape and fill the rooms with light, create the illusion of a larger space. The windows, in fact, became integral to the design, Tillotson-Miller explains, pointing out that they were “placed in a way that showed respect for the building—it was all about honoring the old barn. We didn’t want to forget that during the process.”

The barn arrived in pieces, its posts and beams disassembled and then laid out for reconstruction. Wood from a different barn was used to sheath the exterior and the building received a new cedar shingle roof. Inside, an open floor plan accommodates a great room with a small kitchenette. The building’s twenty-eight-foot ceiling made it possible to add a loft over the main living area; the loft houses a bedroom and bathroom, as well as a small art studio. The interior materials were kept as minimal as possible to allow the natural beauty of wood to take the spotlight, and a concrete floor with radiant in-floor heat keeps the interiors cozy even during the cold mountain winters.





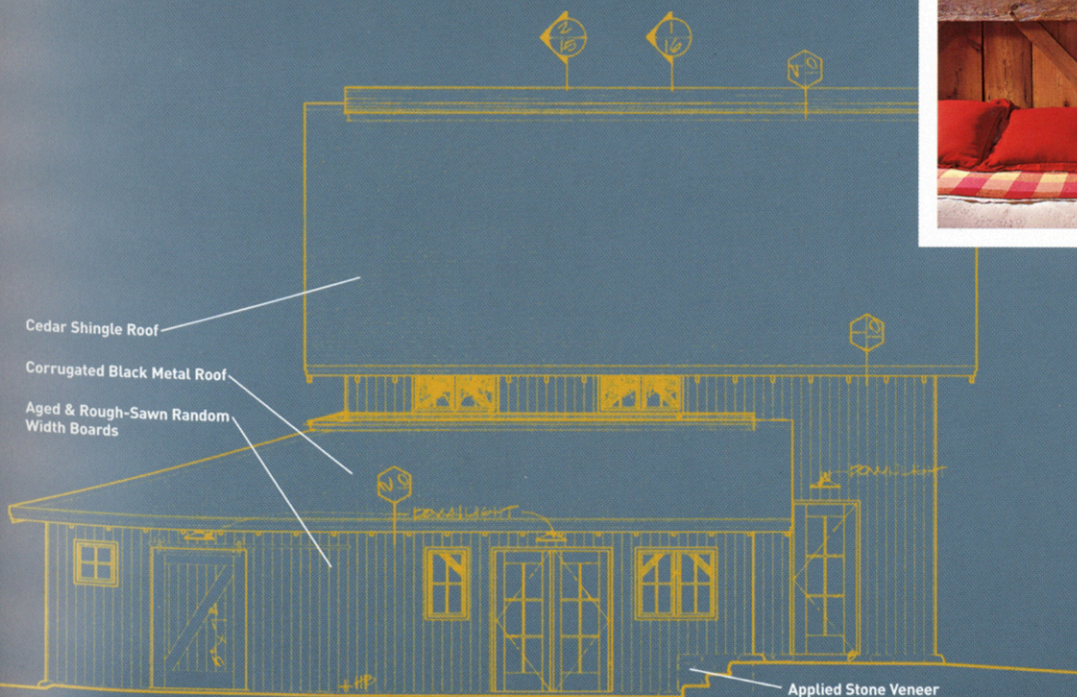
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4 The rusticity of the exterior continues inside, where rough beams and wall boards complement the smooth concrete floor and painted stair. A narrow clerestory window welcomes sunlight.

5 The bathroom is tucked into a corner of the building.

6 The horizontal beam above the bed can be used as a shelf, and the ladder, originally the barn's hayloft access, now serves as a decorative element.



The interior materials were kept as minimal as possible to allow the beauty of the wood to take the spotlight.



7 The owner added a splash of color to the otherwise monochromatic palette by staining a square of the loft floor a cheerful pumpkin and, for contrast, bordering it with a strip of natural fir. The twenty-eight-foot-high ceiling adds drama to the space but careful attention paid to the scaling of the rooms ensured that the living areas would remain intimate.

8 The architect took advantage of the high ceiling to create a light-filled great room that includes a kitchenette and loft. Concrete floors with radiant in-floor heat work in tandem with the windows to keep the rooms at a comfortable temperature.



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