



MODERN farmhouse style

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Spring 2024

LOGGING OUT



THIS NORTH CAROLINA CABIN INVITES ITS OWNERS TO RELAX, UNPLUG, AND ENJOY THE SCENERY FROM THEIR MOUNTAINTOP PERCH.

WRITER CATHY STILL MCGOWIN PHOTOGRAPHER BRIE WILLIAMS STYLIST ELLE ROPER



“There’s very little stained furniture in the house besides the custom dining table,” Cialone says. “Mostly, we opted for painted pieces to balance the walls’ wood tones.” The Visual Comfort iron fixture above the table offers mood lighting. Beams hide new, recessed lights.



IT WAS POURING
RAIN WHEN
THE OWNERS
OF THIS NORTH
CAROLINA LOG
CABIN FIRST SAW
THEIR FUTURE
VACATION HOME.

The view was obscured by the darkness, but on their second visit, the sun was shining and they were hooked. They immediately called their designer to inquire about the project.

That designer, John Cialone with Tom Stringer Design Partners, was eager to jump in. "I love log cabins. This one is particularly special because it was built authentically. It looks like it could be 100 years old," he says. Built in 1999, the house obscures its young age thanks to the hand-hewn logs of white pine and fir harvested from western North Carolina. The dovetail beam notch is true to Appalachian-style cabins, and the stones used inside and out are from a quarry in nearby Haywood County. Despite its newness, it still needed updates and an infusion of light-

something that would require Cialone's deft hand and a very conscientious architect and builder.

"We didn't have much to work with other than a very simple drawing," says architect Emily Clark who partnered with husband and contractor Lewis Clark. "We couldn't find the original architect, so we had to remeasure the entire cabin and examine every inch to see how it was put together," she says. "Only then could we determine what was possible."

After a precise evaluation, the team added windows and dormers, removed part of a wall between the kitchen and dining area, and, most significantly, installed a 20-foot folding glass door system to bring in the glorious view.

With light flooding in, Cialone modernized the interiors, adding industrial-style elements including new surfaces and fixtures. Fresh furnishings in a predominantly blue palette balance the rustic country style. "The logs are very orange, so I used blue, orange's complementary color, to calm them down," he says. Now, the owners enjoys the view, no matter the weather.

ABOVE LEFT A painted chest in the main cabin's front entry offers plentiful storage for hiking essentials along with a hint of teal blue. A cognac leather-framed mirror opens up the narrow space. *ABOVE RIGHT* Working within the existing footprint, Cialone elevated finishes by painting cabinets Sherwin-Williams Copen Blue and added a leathered Taj Mahal quartzite countertop, cast-iron hardware, and a pot rack light fixture from Paul Ferrante.



• LESSON 3 •
farm made
MODERN

To keep a log cabin from skewing too country, skip the primitive antiques and bring in clean-lined furniture and industrial fixtures. Painted furniture introduces color and helps silhouettes stand out.



“When designing a space, you have to consider how life moves through a house. Where would you enjoy coffee? What’s the perfect spot for curling up with a book? Where can you sit to enjoy a cocktail at sunset?”

— DESIGNER JOHN CIALONE

To amplify the screen porch, the architects vaulted the ceiling. “Now, it matches the peaks of the mountains,” Cialone says. Large enough for a small dining table and sitting area, this space is suited for quiet evenings or larger get-togethers.



“This guest bedroom shares the same views as the porch,” Cialone says. “It’s the room you would want to stay in if you are here for a week.” Bull’s-eye mirrors strike a dramatic note above the antique Asian chest. *OPPOSITE* The guest bath received a makeover with new stone and tile. The custom wood mirrors above the sinks were designed to match the window frame.



**Fit for
MODERN
LIFE**

The design team approached the main cabin with caution, seeking to modernize the interior without compromising the log construction.

**CONSIDER
CABINERY**

Instead of adding built-ins that would require shaping around the curve of logs, the designers opted for roomy chests such as the one in the entry intended to hold flashlights, baseball hats, dog leashes, and bear spray.

**FIND
SUPPORT**

The team called in a structural engineer before installing the folding glass door system that connects the living room and screen porch.

**MATCH
FINISHES**

To replicate the indigenous materials, the team selected North Carolina timbers and hewed them on site to fill in as necessary. Stain was applied to match the aged patina of existing logs.

**EMBRACE
TECH**

Log houses have very few places to add wiring without it showing. Take advantage of wireless smart technology when it comes to systems and appliances.



“When our clients first asked us to look at the log cabin, I imagined a kit house. When I saw it in person, I thought, *Oh! OK! I get it!*”

—ARCHITECT EMILY CLARK

The barn-turned-guesthouse offers extended privacy from the main house. “It was previously home to donkeys and chickens,” architect Emily Clark says. “Now, it offers two bedrooms and three baths.” This room exudes charm with wood paneled walls and a reproduction Jenny Lind bed topped with a vintage quilt.



ABOVE LEFT A picket fence and garden create an inviting entry to the guesthouse. *ABOVE RIGHT* A pair of rocking chairs invite leisurely afternoons on the main house's front porch. *BELOW* Exterior renovations to the log cabin were minimal. The architects considered replacing the cedar shake roof with metal because of the maintenance but decided to keep the original material, instead just adding new windows and doors.



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