History Repeating

The demolition of a century-old barn leads to the creation of a modern-day mountain cabin. Photos by Roger Wade > Styling by Debra Gohl

When a pioneer farmer built his humble barn in 1910, it seemed unlikely that the structure would one day become the inspiration for a beautiful, luxury log cabin. After all, the barn was simply made from local wood species, particularly larch, and at the time, who could imagine that there would be so much focus on recycling materials at the turn of the next century?

Although the barn's roof began to deteriorate over time, necessitating demolition, the majority of the century-old barn's bones were still in extraordinarily good condition, and there was a particular project that could showcase just what could be done with the reclaimed wood. The Homestead, a new, high-end development outside Whitefish, Montana, took a thoughtful approach and decided to use the materials to build two hybrid cabins, one primarily from log and the other from timber.

The 2,200-square-foot log home was dubbed the Lewis cabin, in honor of Lewis & Clark, whose exploratory trek from St. Louis to Montana had been the subject of a recent bicentennial celebration. Although nearly all the wood used for the project was in surprisingly good shape, the best logs—12 to 16 inches in diameter—were used as theusses and rafters. The remaining wood was milled into 3-inch-thick log siding, which was then mounted over R-21 insulation to ensure comfortable winter nights. The stone used in the exterior is native to Montana and comes from three different quarries to create the matched appearance of stacked stone that hides the mortar. The site, which offers views of
The cabin (above) is essentially one story, but there is a loft above the kitchen, accessible from the great room by way of a rustic-style ladder. The cozy seating area features the interior side of the stacked-stone fireplace.

Built-in cubbyholes (right) surround a bench in the foyer, perfect for storing winter gear. The cubbies were constructed of native cedar with antique tin inserts.

Flanking the great room fireplace are drylends (far right) and beneath them are pull-out trundle beds. Not even counting the room for sleeping bags in the loft, the cabin can sleep 10 very comfortably.

All of the accessories in the home were selected to show appreciation for Western memorabilia. A copper-framed mirror (left) pays homage to the area where mining was once king. The baseboard throughout the home was harvested from an old corral. In fact, the distressed finish comes from horses having chewed on the wood in its original use.

All the cabinetry by Old World Cabinetry Company (center) features locally harvested red willow dogwood, surrounded by slates. Even the refrigerator, on the left, has been covered with the attractive, yet rustic, finish. The backsplash behind the stove is native stone, milled to 1-inch thickness and sealed to protect and provide for easy cleanup. The blown-glass and wrought-iron chandelier adds a striking note of color.
the Big Mountain ski slopes, was carefully prepared, curing
a minimal number of trees for the footprint.
Although the home won't be a permanent abode for a
family to live in, it's frequently filled with the laughter and
pleasure one would expect in such lovely surroundings.
People building homes in the development can stay in
the cabin while they're supervising their own project. Or
prospective homeowners can vacation there and discover
the cozy, enveloping nature of a reclaimed log home. "We
designed the cabin to be a reflection of how comfortable
and functional this style home can be," says High (Country
Builder's Wall Landis, and it shows. "I think that pioneer
farmer undoubtedly would be proud to see what's become
of his humble barn." DELH

In one of the two bathrooms (right), a copper trough basin
accommodates up to three people at once. Because the
shower and water closet can be closed off separately, the
whole household can speed up the process of getting ready
for another day in the great outdoors.

The cabin's interior walls (below) are rough-finished plaster,
for the most part, but because of the plentiful wood available
from the old barn, some trimwork and paneling was available
for the home.

The outdoor fireplace backs up to the one in the great room,
shaping a massive chimney faced with native stone. The out-
door deck features support timbers and overhanging log rafters
from the original 1908-built barn that supplied much of the
wood in the home, while the flooring is native fir. There are
outdoor decks off both bedrooms.

RESOURCES:
Square footage: 2,200
# Bedrooms: 2
# Bathrooms: 2
Architect, builder: High Country Builders,
Whitefish, MT
Cabinetry: Old World Cabinetry Company
Interior designer: Hunter & Company
Lighting: Ros Corbett

For more on the Homestead Lewis cabin, and for information on The
Homestead at Whitefish, log on to www.homesteadatwhitefish.com.