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THE HOUSE OF GLASS AND TREES

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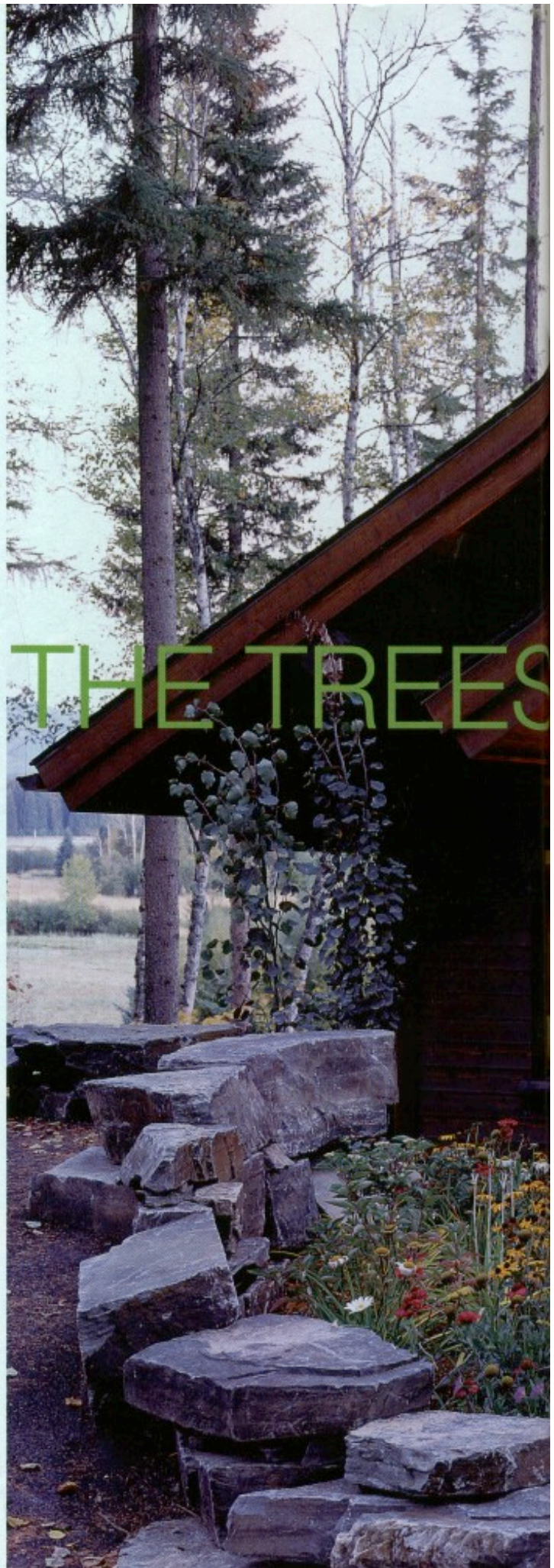
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THROUGH THE TREES

It was during a local weekend home tour—when 3,000 visitors shuffled through his new lakefront home—that Walt Landi realized just how successfully he had fulfilled his vision of bringing the outside in. Two visitors stood in the living room and marveled at the incredible views. “But what will happen when winter comes?” one asked with concern. The other said, “I was worrying about that, too. How will you possibly keep the snow out?”

Sparkling windows and the unexpected expanse of landscape may cause visitors to feel like they’re looking directly outside, and that’s exactly what Landi had in mind when he conceived the plans for the 4,800-square-foot home, located on the banks of Whitefish Lake in Montana. “I walked the lot, which is one of the few places on Whitefish Lake where you can see both the lake and the mountains at the same time,” Landi explains. “I thought to myself, I’m going to design something where people can’t even tell where the inside stops and the outside starts. My goal from the very beginning was to build a beautiful structure that would keep the outdoors as the primary focus.”

Landi, owner of High Country Builders in Whitefish since 1990, has designed plenty of stunning homes in the area, but he wanted this house to be a little different. As he grew familiar with the land at the home site, he



A photograph of a rustic lakeside home. The house features a prominent stone fireplace on the left, a central wooden door with a glass panel, and a stone wall on the right. The roof is made of dark wood with exposed rafters and decorative circular wooden elements. A stone patio leads to the entrance, and a wooden rocking chair is placed on the porch. The surrounding landscape includes trees and a garden with yellow flowers.

NATURAL LOGS FRAME PANORAMIC VIEWS
IN THIS LAKESIDE HOME



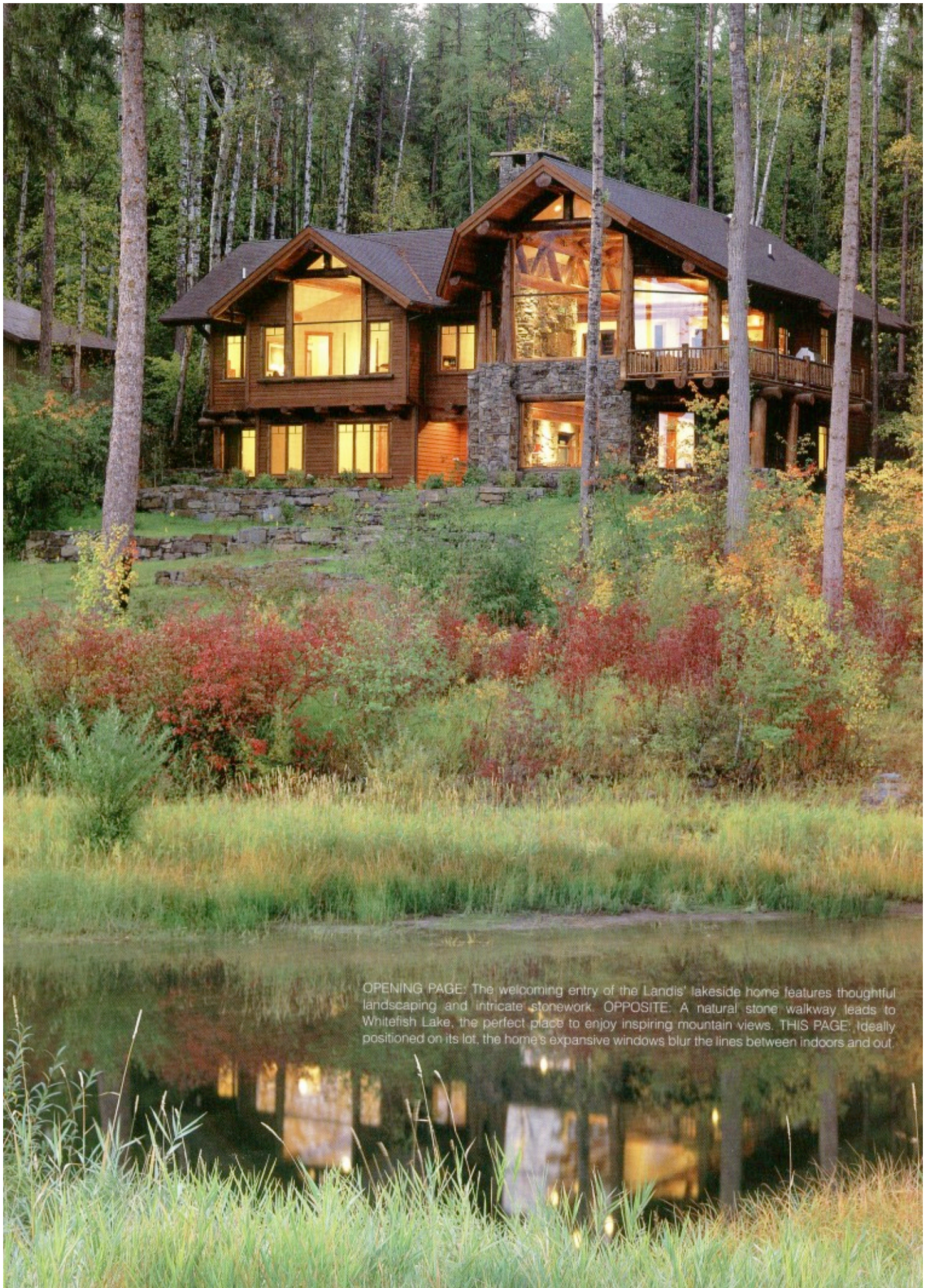
"YOU CAN SEE BOTH THE LAKE AND THE MOUNTAINS AT THE SAME TIME."

mentally mapped out where the great room would go to take full advantage of the views. He envisioned a massive rock wall with a fireplace that would separate the living area from the master suite, an area he also wanted to face the lake. Back at his drafting table, he developed what he describes as a hybrid design, combining features of both a traditional frame and log structure. Non-settling frame walls with log detailing allow for plenty of large windows, while the roof system gets its necessary support from massive log girder trusses.

Landi collaborated with Brian Shafer at Edgewood Log Structures in Whitefish to develop the plan for how the logs would be incorporated into the home. "Walt

had a good idea of what he was looking for with respect to the floor plan," Shafer says. "He wanted some really unique log features, and that's one of the things we specialize in." Edgewood also has a reputation for thoughtful business practices. The firm participates in the Idaho Small Timber Salvage Program, which promotes the careful harvesting of diseased and dead standing trees, forsaking healthy green trees. A portion of the proceeds benefit the state's public education program.

The focal point in the house—the great room, with its 160-degree view and bay front expanse of glass—posed challenges that Shafer had tackled before. "We call it the glass forest window wall, and it's one of our

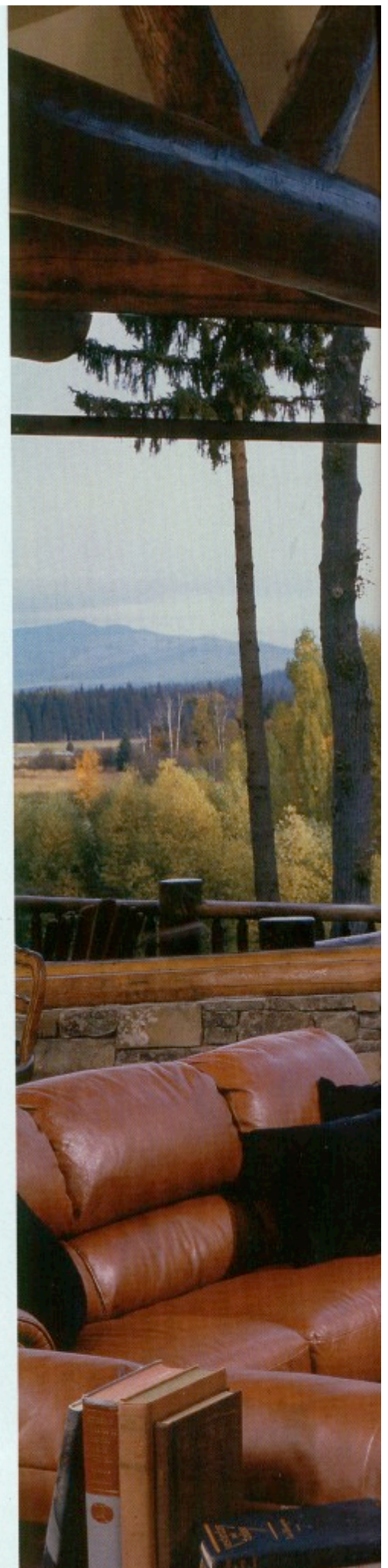


OPENING PAGE: The welcoming entry of the Landis' lakeside home features thoughtful landscaping and intricate stonework. OPPOSITE: A natural stone walkway leads to Whitefish Lake, the perfect place to enjoy inspiring mountain views. THIS PAGE: Ideally positioned on its lot, the home's expansive windows blur the lines between indoors and out.

trademarks," he says. The logs, with their naturally flared bottoms, are hand-stripped cedar trees that the company carefully excavates, cuts and transports to preserve the root base. The bark is stripped by hand, and the logs are covered and naturally dried before they are ready for construction.

As the vision for the home began to take shape, interior designer Hunter Dominick of Hunter & Co. Interior Design, Whitefish, joined the collaborative team. She developed an overall interior plan for the home, selecting a color palette of what she calls "environmental colors," with an emphasis on greens, browns and sages. "We used a lot of different materials and textures to complement this home's special character," explains Dominick. "The challenge was to take materials like concrete and glass that are typically somewhat contemporary, and meld them together in a fresh way for a more rustic—yet warm and inviting—feel." She specified interior finishes and fixtures, the flooring, tile, hard surfaces, plumbing fixtures, and appliances, plus numerous small details like the forged iron door hardware and the animal footprints sandblasted in the laundry room countertops.

THE FOCAL POINT OF THE HOUSE IS THE
GREAT ROOM, WITH ITS 160-DEGREE VIEW
AND BAY FRONT EXPANSE OF GLASS

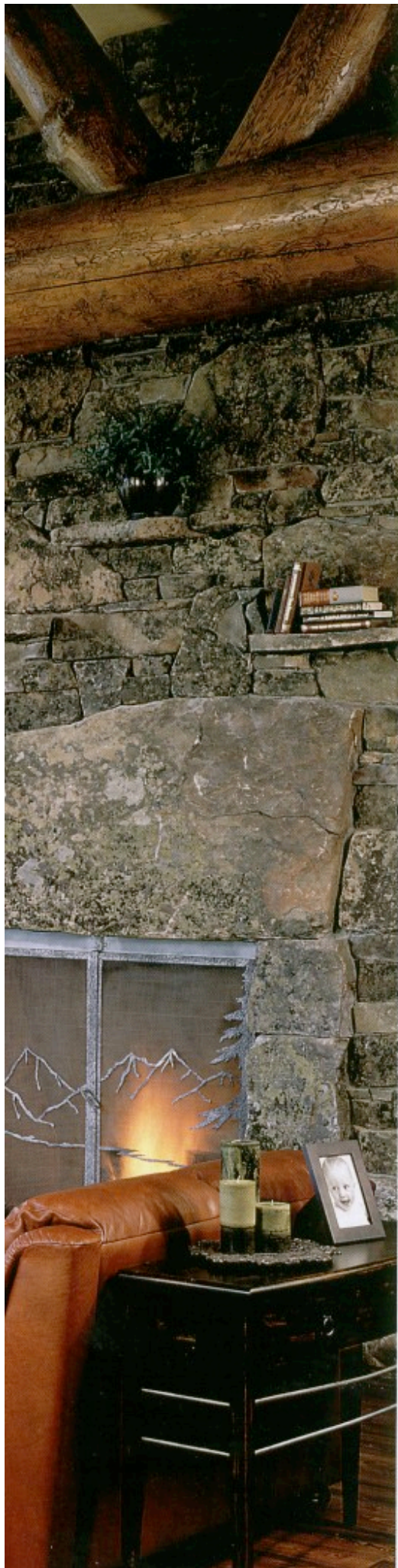




OPPOSITE: Numerous details, such as the natural twig stair rail, fill the home.
THIS PAGE: Interior designer Hunter Dominick selected a color palette of what she calls "environmental colors," with an emphasis on greens, browns and sages. Hunter Dominick, Hunter & Co. Interior Design, (406) 862-1402.



A massive stone fireplace anchors the great room and separates the living area from the master suite. RIGHT: The kitchen is a beautiful blend of warm and functional, with dark, rustic cabinetry and high-end stainless-steel appliances. Walt Landi, High Country Builders, (406) 863-9511.



In the spacious kitchen, chisel-edged Uba Tuba granite countertops are set off by a backsplash accented with handmade glass mosaic tiles and rustic slate. The bar area countertop is chiseled Indian Juparana Gold granite, which contrasts with a hammered copper-covered bar top. To allow for ventilation in the glassware cabinetry, old-fashioned chicken wire is set in the distressed cabinet doors.

The main floor master suite shares the same stunning northwest views as the great room, and the furnishings are kept purposely spare to focus the emphasis on the outside setting. The adjoining master bathroom has compound-edge countertops of dark brown Emperador travertine, and the unique floor design features concrete "pickets" with inset travertine tiles. "The floor design helps to break up the room so it doesn't seem so large," Dominick explains. A 12-inch rain shower in the master bathroom "makes you feel like you're camping out," Landi says, "but in total luxury."

A trio of bedrooms—each with its own bathroom—and a comfortable family room occupy the lower level, where Landi says, "Every room has a view, yet each space has a feeling of privacy at the same time."

Windows are trimmed with full log buck detailing, a feature that Edgewood Logs uses to maximize utilization of the logs. "A log may have an imperfection on one side, but by splitting it we can use the other side as trim," Brian Shafer explains.



Bob Cuffe of Glacier Excavation & Rock provided the natural landscaping around the house. Building the rock retaining walls stone by stone, he painstakingly leveled each rock throughout the building process to keep everything straight. Clearly passionate about his craft, Cuffe, who also specializes in stream restoration, says simply, "It's great work."

The Landis, including their two children, have settled comfortably in the home, where bald eagles soar overhead and deer wander through the nearby woods. The sunsets are spectacular, but Landi says one of his favorite vistas is the nighttime view from the master bedroom. "You can see the moon reflecting off the water, and you can practically reach out and touch

the stars," he says. Although the stunning panorama might be confusing for the occasional home tour visitor, that's exactly the way he likes it. ■


THE DETAILS

BUILDER Walt Landi, High Country Builders, Whitefish, MT (406) 863-9511, www.highcountrybuilders.com

LOG SUPPLIER Brian Shafer, Edgewood Log Structures Coeur D'Alene, ID, (208) 676-0422, www.edgewoodlog.com

INTERIOR DESIGN Hunter Dominick, Hunter & Co. Interior Design, Whitefish, MT, (406) 862-1402 www.hunterandcodesign.com

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The image shows the interior of a log cabin. The walls are made of large, natural cedar logs, and the ceiling features exposed wooden beams. A large window wall, described as a "glass forest window wall," provides a view of a forest. In the foreground, there is a wooden floor with a patterned rug. In the background, a dining table with chairs is visible, and a door leads to a balcony with a wooden railing. The overall atmosphere is warm and rustic.

OPPOSITE: Achieving the natural look of the cedar trees is a painstaking process, but results in a "glass forest window wall," a trademark of Edgewood Log Structures. (edgewoodlog.com). THIS PAGE: Landi describes his home as a hybrid design, combining features of both a traditional frame and log structure.