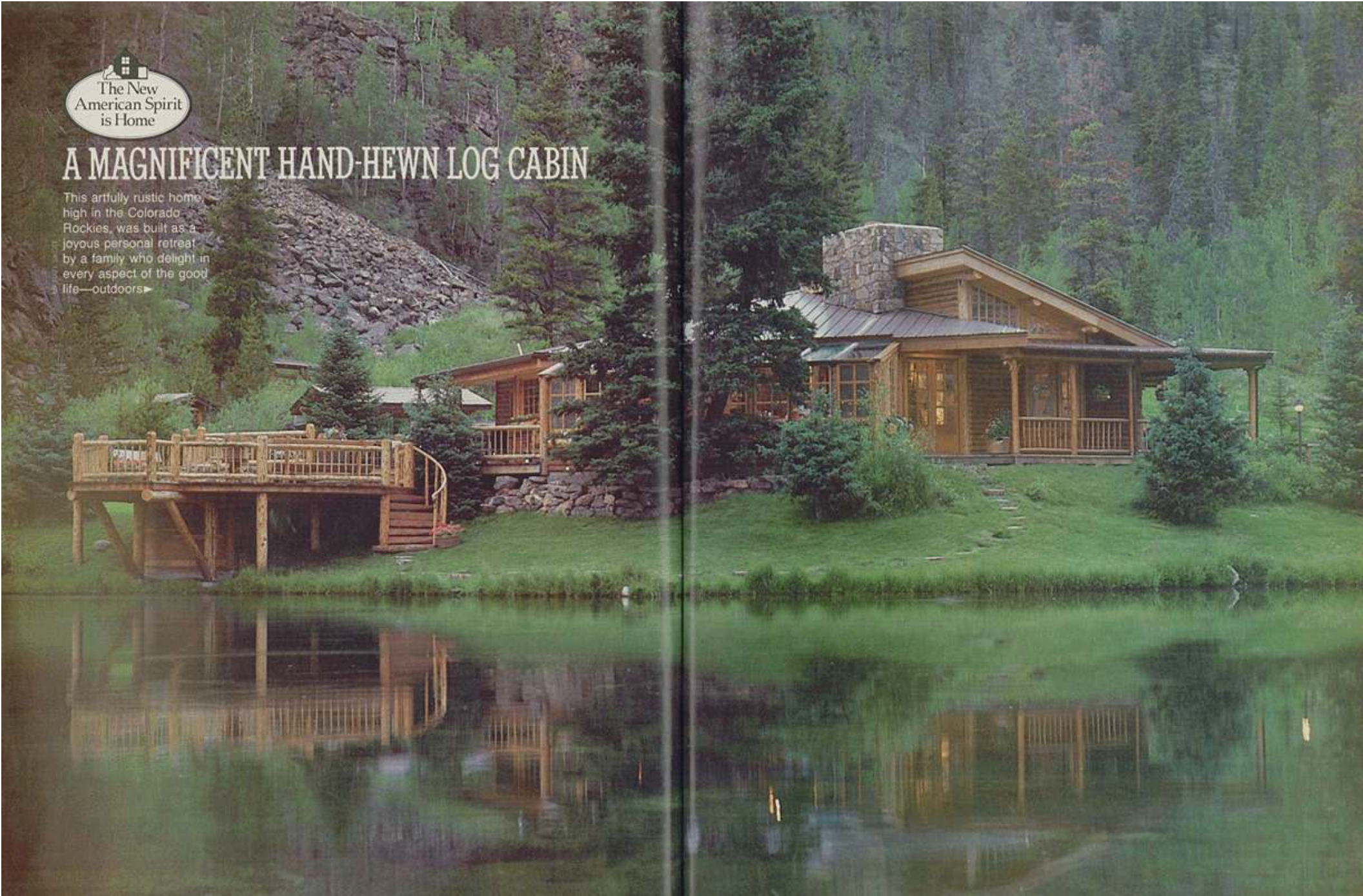


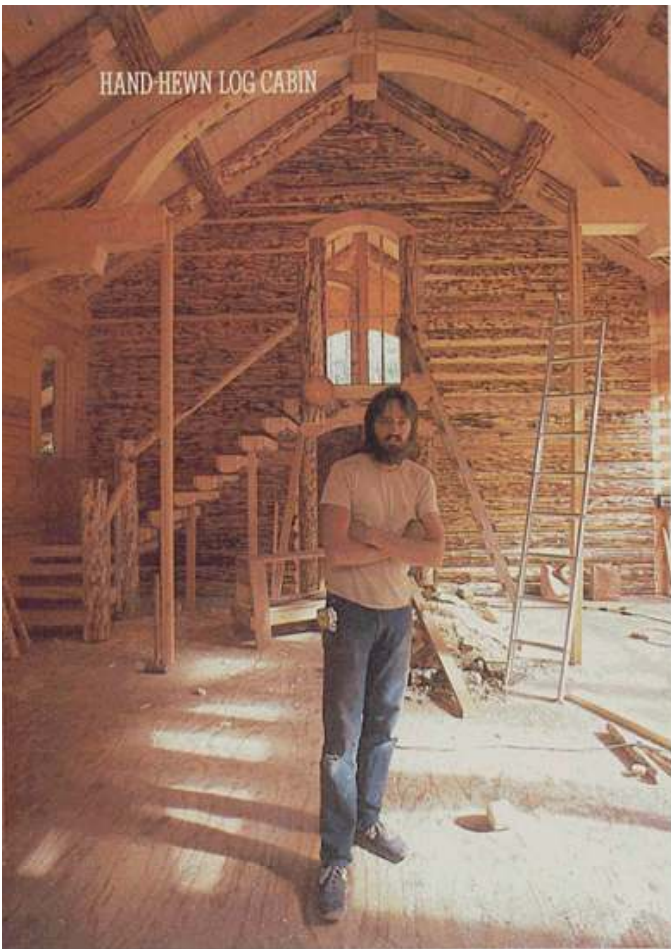


## A MAGNIFICENT HAND-HEWN LOG CABIN

This artfully rustic home, high in the Colorado Rockies, was built as a joyous personal retreat by a family who delight in every aspect of the good life—outdoors▶



## HAND-HEWN LOG CABIN



It isn't the sticks and stones, but the special, handcrafted warmth they exude that makes these interiors so special

**L**ife, it seems, is best savored by those who live it robustly, even if only a little at a time. Such is the operating principle of the ebullient family that took a small cabin with few redeeming virtues and transformed it into what must be the most convivial of summer houses in the Colorado Rockies.

Imagine a place where an underwater bell summons all the pot trout in your pond to the dock for their daily lunch. Or where chipmunks scamper on a window-mounted treadmill to snatch marshmallows. Or where the resident carpenter is kept busy year-round building satel-

lite cabins, not to mention a "country store," for a growing number of family guests.

Fort Worth designer Joe Minton relates the tale of his clients' desire to live life robustly and of how the subsequent remodeling of an ordinary cabin ignited a wondrous burst of creative energy. "What we did," says Mr. Minton "was gut the existing structure, then add approximately one and a half times more space to it. Instead of a cabin with two bedrooms and a bath, the new one has one bedroom and two baths—plus an enormous entertainment center." Guests converge from their own



Master carpenter Steve Cappellucci, a family friend as well as full-time builder, pauses on work site of guest cabin (opposite), which is similar in materials and rustic ingenuity to the family's living room (above). He also roams the bookcases that flank the bay window.

cabins to enjoy the pleasures of the palate prepared by either the host ("a soup man"), the hostess or sometimes by both in a kitchen that has two of everything.

It is a toss-up which is more intriguing—the cabin's artfully naive architecture or its reason for being. Clearly, it required uncommon skill to design such a charming house of such rudimentary materials—logs for all structural needs, pine slabs for trim finishes, slender poles for window mullions, twisted branches for drawer pulls, native stone for the fireplace—all painstakingly selected from the family's surrounding forest land. It also required

a kind of communal beachcombing instinct especially adapted to a Rocky Mountain setting. As Mr. Minton explains, "The design of the cabin and its construction went more or less hand in hand. All of us—Steve, the carpenter; the family and friends who dropped by—were continually on the lookout for just the right branch, log or stone. And now that this haphazard system has been refined, we find it works for all of the other buildings going up here." What makes the whole endeavor so gratifying is the end result—a highly appealing design statement of a family's personal values. ▶

## HAND-HEWN LOG CABIN



Color-splashed calico and patchwork play against the textures of lodgepole pine to further the coziness of interior spaces

**E**verywhere you look there is color," recalls a recent visitor to the Colorado site. "This family has done a wonderful job making a mountain cabin look undecorated through their great concern for fine materials and craftsmanship." The designer, Joe Minton, assembled country pieces, mostly from England and France, with an eye toward an easy compatibility with colorful collons, quilts and architectural rusticity. To all who think rustic invariably means crude, this cabin is a revelation for its subtle decorating touches. But it requires an open mind and a keen eye to see how skillfully dissimilar elements were orchestrated with uncommon sophistication. Looking beyond the many cheerful fabrics and textures, for example, one may admire the meticulous wood details for being exactly right. ▶

The woods just beyond the bathroom's generous windows (above) are adroitly echoed in the rustic split-pole trim. Wainscoting agreeably encloses a modern tub. The mirror framed in pine trim creates the illusion of a bay window.

The master bedroom (right) awash with color, owes its true design distinction to the fineness of lodgepole detailing.





**M**ost of the cabin is dedicated to unstinting hospitality, with up to a dozen dinner guests predictably on hand for summer evenings—and the fun spills over to the spectacular outdoor setting. Not one but two gazebos have been built—one for major cookouts, the other strictly for cleaning fish. This last item is indispensable for a family that lives on one of the best trout streams in the West—one of the main reasons for inviting guests for “fishing weekends.” Picnics take place on the broad sun deck, with the finger foods packaged in ribbioned brown paper bags. And beyond the main cabin, scattered for miles upland along a fast-flowing river, are components of the family’s “compound”—a dairy barn tiled in blue and white where they produce butter and cream from a private herd of cattle, a carpentry shop, guest cabins and, coming soon, a still larger cabin for entertaining. ■ —WILLIAM HOUSEMAN Editor KATRIN TOLLESON

“If it weren’t for all the kids and animals, this would be the perfect summer camp for adults”



With its sweeping deck, its sunny views, the whole house is dedicated to the



HAND-HEWN LOG CABIN

The cabin’s elegant rusticity carries over to an atrium dining room (above), which is visually linked through a long window wall to the sun deck (with built-in barbecue pit that doubles as a place for guests to warm themselves on cold nights) just beyond it. The center of social operations is a great hit-and-bers kitchen (opposite top) where professional equipment and two pantries enable both husband and wife to cook simultaneously while remaining visually in touch with guests in an adjacent sitting area.



simple pleasures of relaxing and enjoying the bounty of nature’s wonders