

BACK TO THE CABIN

more inspiration for the classic american getaway



DALE MULFINGER author of *The Cabin* | photographs by CHERYL KORALIK



The porch overlooks the lake with both screened and unscreened sections. The tail ends of ridge logs decorate the gable end of the cabin.

“Where better place to tell a tall fishing tale than in a century-old log lodge?”

WE TOOK TO THE WOODS

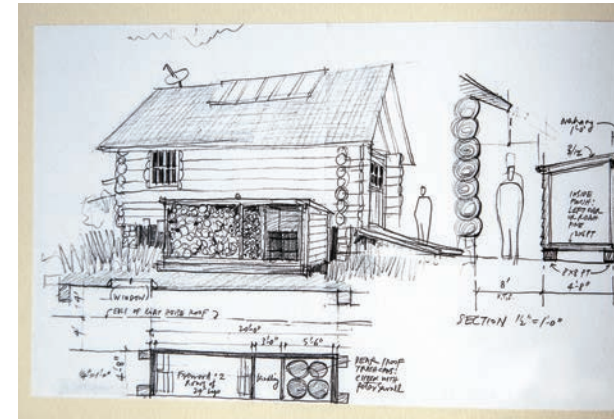
Fishing camps are part of the rich legacy of Maine’s north woods, where wild brook trout, lake trout, and inland salmon are prized catches, whatever your method of hooking them might be. Not surprisingly, this area has an abundance of fishing camps, some of which date back to the 1800s, when trains made traveling to the region more feasible for the urban populations of Portland, Portsmouth, Boston, and beyond.

The older camps are revered for their history, lore, and nostalgia. Where better place to tell a tall fishing tale than in a century-old log lodge? New additions are planned with great care so as to blend in with the spirit of the old camp.

Architect Sam Van Dam of Portland, Maine, was asked to add a new residence to a classic fishing camp deep in the Maine back country. The owner wanted to include a bathroom and a modest kitchen, along with sitting areas both inside and out. He also asked that the structure be able to sleep up to eight fishermen. Because of the cabin’s location deep in the woods, the client wanted a soaring interior space that was open to light, in contrast to the small dark spaces usually found in older camps in the region.



OPPOSITE Sam Van Dam's sketches for this cabin are worthy of framing.



Van Dam designed a 20-ft.-tall living room with a loft overlook above. Two bedroom wings flank the central space on the main floor and two bunk alcoves were created in the loft. The natural taper of the cedar columns creates a Gothic cathedral-like experience. The fireplace, built from local split stone, rises high into the space. Van Dam decided to use Western red cedar logs, known for their durability, for the addition. The logs were cut, notched, and assembled in British Columbia, and then numbered, dismantled, and shipped to Maine for reassembly.

Van Dam describes the design as a "throwback to an earlier era, completely one with its surroundings." To sit on the porch, gazing across the meadow while tying a fly, is a timeless experience in any century.



ABOVE The stair to the sleeping lofts rises behind the fireplace.

LEFT AND OPPOSITE A cathedral-like space awaits cabin goers in the living room. The tree trunks were handpicked for their vertical lines. Local stones were used to build the fireplace.



First floor



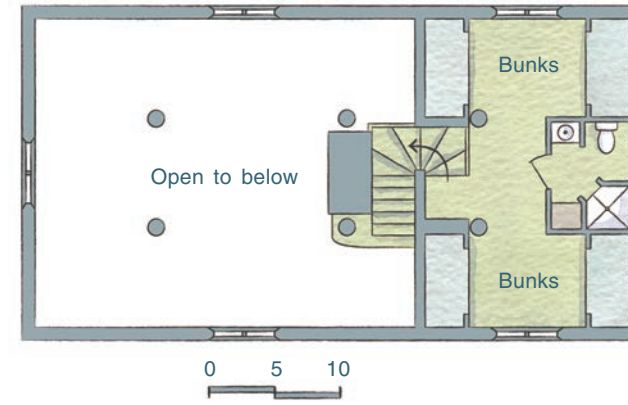


ABOVE The Western red cedar beam and post are beautifully joined at the porch. Local artist John Bryan carved the god of wind, Aeolus, flushing up some fowl, into the end of the beam.

RIGHT The porch was designed to give floor-to-ceiling views to the lake.



Loft



ABOVE The loft bed is nestled in under the roof. A window opens up the snug space and allows for welcome breezes and morning light.

LEFT An antique desk awaits letter writers and map readers seeking that special fishing hole.



LOG SHRINKAGE

When trees are cut and moisture begins to evaporate, the trunks shrink in diameter but not in length. Log-house designs often call for the logs to be laid horizontally in perimeter walls and vertically as interior or porch roof supports. In such cases, the differential settlement between the shrinkage in the walls and no shrinkage of the columns requires the installation of column jacks. In the early years of the structure, the columns can be jacked down as needed to maintain a level roof. After a decade, the settlement is relatively complete and the jacks can be removed.