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Contemporary Traditional

*A lakeside cabin in Wisconsin boldly
blends modern lines and rustic design.*

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH HILLIARD

The front of the cabin emphasizes rustic lines by showcasing the distinctive western red cedar logs. The deck takes advantage of the sloping site to provide a blissful view of the lake below. Landscaping remains as natural and low-maintenance as possible.



A cozy cabin in the woods is an appealing image — except to people who favor contemporary styling. Such was the case with the Milwaukee couple who bought 3.5 acres on St. John’s Lake, about 230 miles north. He’s an architect, she’s an interior designer, and they agreed they wanted their second home to have a “modern aesthetic.” Once they recognized the dramatic potential of large logs, however, they welcomed the opportunity to try a new take on the vernacular cabin form.

The western red cedar logs dominate the look. Artfully adding stone, glass and

stainless steel creates an exterior profile that corresponds to the sloping lakeside site and surrounding woods. The main level appears almost to float among the trees, whereas the walkout lower level grounds the cabin’s vertical thrust. As you approach the home from the front, away from the lake, it seems pretty low and understated. When you step through the front door, however, it really opens up.

Inside, the 3,200-square-foot home connects the interior space and nature. The open layout unites the kitchen, dining and living spaces, and large windows blur the inside-outside distinction. As for

ABOVE: Butcher block and soapstone make up the kitchen island and breakfast bar. The cabinets, fashioned from hickory, are stained deep red to add contemporary color. The cabinet panels, faced in mossy yellow birch bark, add a textural element to the otherwise sleek surface.

RIGHT: Flared log ends enclose the great room, which uses bold colors to stand up to the scale of the walls. An antler chandelier hanging over the upper-level seating area takes a modern twist as it draws the eye toward the sloping ceiling. Artisans created the custom chandelier and replaced typical open bulbs with glass cylinders, creating clean lines and a more modern effect.





furnishings, aware of the log-cabin clichés, the homeowners exercised restraint. Even so, the cabin features a ceiling-to-floor fireplace and an antler chandelier, although the antlers are resin.

The cabin is also eco-friendly, starting with the hand-peeled, sustainably harvested logs. The homeowners also installed cork flooring on the upper level and recycled metal on the exterior. The wraparound deck uses ipe, a sustainably harvested tropical hardwood. Much of the furniture is made from bamboo or other earth-friendly materials. The large windows flood the interior with natural light, reducing the need for electrical lighting.

The homeowners, who visit their cabin at least twice a month, are thrilled with their nouveau-rustic retreat. It was especially fun, they agree, to bring together ideas they'd wanted to use for clients but finally were able to use for a design that's totally their own. 🏡



OPPOSITE: The sunroom provides a cheery retreat off the great room in the open floor plan. Large windows merge indoors and outdoors, the latter being represented not just by the view, but also by the rugged logs. Cushioned rattan furniture bolsters the informality, and a wool rug adds a welcome splash of color.

ABOVE: Logs create character in the corners of the sunroom. Cedar logs are especially dramatic because they have a pronounced natural flare at the base. Most loggers might consider that a waste, but cutting the trees down right at ground level heightens the impact.

See more of this home on our website: loghome.com/cozy-wisconsin-lakeside-cabin/

