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# Living History

A California couple goes back in time to create their chalet-inspired timber home.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEIDI LONG

Although Doreen loves to garden, the Faulls had the property professionally landscaped. The final result: lots of greenery mixed with azaleas, peonies, delphiniums, Siberian irises, daffodils, daisies and lilacs. "We had an incredible landscaper and wanted it to look natural with a little refinement," she says.

The front door features a raised panel and 12 glass windows. It's flanked by a pair of side windows and crowned with an eight-window transom.



The kitchen, featuring rich wood cabinetry and granite slab countertops, was designed to be part of the living area. "I didn't want the kitchen to look industrial," says Doreen. Motorized clerestory windows let in sunlight and help keep the room cool.



TOP LEFT: A dramatic archway looks into the expansive dining room, which can hold up to 30 people when extra seating is brought in. The homeowners frequently entertain and are visited by their daughter and grandchildren several times a year.

TOP RIGHT: A soft champagne shade on the walls adds warmth to the great room. When they have guests over in the winter, the Faulls often find themselves in front of the stone fireplace. The ceiling in the airy great room is about 20 feet high. The 8-inch-wide, long plank flooring is made from solid black walnut.

It's not easy creating a new home that instantly boasts a vintage flair. Timber homes certainly make the chore easier, given their abundance of traditional charm. But "instant classics" are elusive to many homeowners because most modern materials don't always evoke a bygone era. That is, unless historic treasures are in your own backyard to serve as your muse.

Tucked alongside the eastern shore of Montana's Flathead Lake sits Greg and Doreen Faull's exquisite timber home. And less than an hour's drive away, in West Glacier, Montana, you'll find the historic Belton Chalet and Belton Depot, which served as the home's inspiration. "We wanted something that looked like it was a hundred years old, but still was comfortable in a modern way," notes Greg.

Originally from Southern California, the Faulls had frequently traveled through western Montana on their way to the Canadian Rockies, where they vacationed for 22 years. "It was always in the back of our minds to retire here," Greg explains.

When they finally decided to make the

move, they hooked up with a broker and home inspector to look at a few homes that had already been built in the area. From there, the Faulls compiled a list of recommended architects and contractors. Bigfork Builders, run by Andy Fischer and Brad Reedstrom, and Richard Wyman Smith, AIA, who has an architectural practice in Whitefish, Montana, were on the top of that list.

Once the Faulls found out that the two companies had worked together in the past and also had worked with their chosen timber provider, Jake Steck from Wild Mile Woodworks, they decided to meet with the whole group to show them the lot and describe their vision.

### Helping Hands

Upon meeting, it became clear to Greg and Doreen that they had picked the perfect team to work with. "Richard is extraordinarily creative, and they were all familiar with the Belton Chalet, which was a huge help," Greg recalls.

Once the project got underway, Greg, who started woodworking when he remodeled his house in California, put himself to work milling

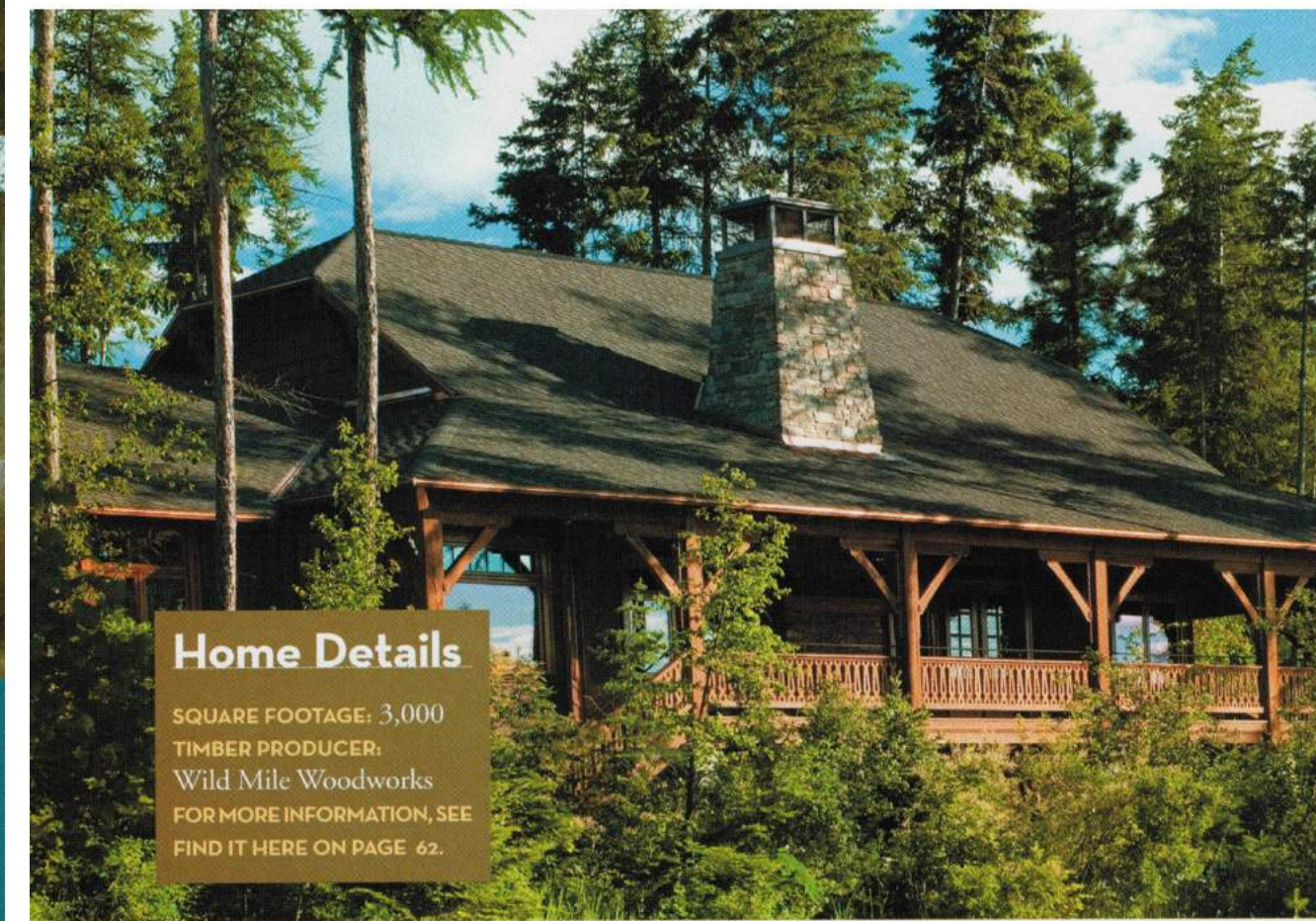


**TOP LEFT:** The bedroom has an old-fashioned ambiance, and features a mahogany four-poster bed and chest made by Greg. Pocket doors with elegant handles can be closed to separate the space from the attached office/sitting room.

**TOP RIGHT:** Surrounded by windows, the bathroom features a jetted acrylic tub, honed marble flooring and a wide walk-in shower.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Doreen enjoys relaxing on the deck and admiring the stately Grand fir, Ponderosa pine and Tamarack trees that surround the house.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** The dining-room table is set with many cherished pieces, including an Amari bowl filled with flowers that are native to the area.



## Home Details

**SQUARE FOOTAGE:** 3,000  
**TIMBER PRODUCER:**  
 Wild Mile Woodworks  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE  
 FIND IT HERE ON PAGE 62.**

wood to be used for the wainscoting, baseboards and door and window trim. Looking back on his work, Greg recalls, "Brad and Andy kept me tucked away in the garage for the better part of a month on this milling project!"

It was that dedicated work ethic shared by everyone involved that made the project a true collaboration. "It takes a strong team to get a project together like this and have it be successful," Richard says. "Greg and Doreen had definite design ideas. Their input, along with the competency of the Bigfork Builders and Wild Mile Woodworks, made this a stand-out project."

## History Repeats

The finished home features a mix of timber frame and conventional construction. Vertical grain fir enhances the exterior door and window casings. Reclaimed and standing dead larch timbers were used to create the great-room trusses, covered

deck and the roof structure of the entry patio and garage apron. The interior doors, wainscoting, finish trim and cabinetry were crafted from select alder.

The home—all on one level—has about 3,000 square feet of interior space, plus a 1,300-square-foot covered deck that overlooks the 28-mile-long Flathead Lake and grand Mission Mountain Range. It's here where the chalet-style is most apparent. "Many of the rooms at the Belton Chalet open onto a wide wooden deck with mountain views," Greg says. "We wanted to incorporate a deck of similar proportion."

Overall, the home captures the romance the Faulls were looking to create. "The home really took on the character of a turn-of-the-century chalet," explains Richard. "When you drive up to the house, it has the look and feel of place that's been here for ages."

In short, a perfect place for Greg and Doreen to make their own history. ■



## Swiss Bliss

While it's no longer novel to travel by railroad to the West, it was a different story when the Belton Chalet was built in the early 1900s.

The historic structure, located near Glacier National Park in West Glacier, Montana, was the first hotel to be operated by the Great Northern Railway. The nearby Historic Belton Depot was once one of the main Great Northern Railway Stations.

"After decades of being abandoned, the Belton Chalet was faithfully restored around 1996," explains Greg. "That restoration provided a guide for a style of interior detailing appropriate for this period of Glacier Park construction."

Everyone involved with the Faulls' project spent a lot of time examining the two buildings. "Many details were inspired by the Belton Chalet and Depot. We took our cameras and spent hours photographing elements that Greg and Doreen wanted to incorporate into their timber home," Brad notes.

The Faulls' deck best reflects the architectural spirit of the Belton Chalet. Borrowing from the handrail design at the chalet, Greg used his woodworking skills to make all 270 of the handrail pickets. The steel rail across the top of the deck lines up with the edge of the water for an uninterrupted view of the lake.

The Belton Depot also had a huge influence on the project: the hip roof, exterior siding and knee braces supporting the large roof overhang on the home are all elements taken from the historic railroad station. — C.W.V.