

## Mountain Majesty

A weekend home situated in Idaho's West Mountains is designed to enjoy the breathtaking setting year-round.

STORY BY WHITNEY RICHARDSON | PHOTOS BY HEIDI LONG

IOWA natives Kelly and Marie Pillard has a lifelong dream of living in a custom wood home. Upon moving to the outskirts of Boise, Idaho, where such homes are a natural fit, it became increasingly hard to suppress the desire to build one.

"It certainly fits out here," Kelly says. "There are a lot more builders that do that sort of thing."

"We always said we wanted a log cabin in the mountains," Marie adds. "With logs, there's a lot more maintenance involved, so we looked at timber frames and we liked the look – you could make them rustic and weathered. That's kind of where we ended up."

After obtaining the perfect mountain property for recreational activities near Payette National Forest only a couple hours from their primary home, the couple sought to find someone who had produced the style home they were looking for – namely, a rustic family retreat – which they found in nearby Meridian-based MTN Design and PrecisionCraft Log & Timber Homes.

Outside of a basic number of bedrooms to include, the Pillards did not necessarily have a room layout or planned square footage in mind; rather, they wanted a home that befitted the lot they had purchased because of the views that it provided. "We've got a massive mountain view that's absolutely drop-dead gorgeous, so we wanted to see it from whatever room you are in," Kelly states.

**A deck spanning the length of the rear exterior was essential to take advantage of the great mountain views and to enjoy the outdoors. "I thought that any of the outdoor spaces were almost as important as the indoor ones when it came to public spaces," notes designer Tim Brock of MTN Design.**

He and Marie settled on the Laurette Chateau plan after flipping through the company plan book. They made small changes to the outdoor spaces to increase usability, such as a roof over the deck off the kitchen so that they could use the outdoor fireplace and grill year-round. "That was probably one of the best decisions we made," Kelly says.

"Idaho is very conducive to being outdoors a lot," Marie explains. "Even though we're in the mountains, there's not a lot of inclement weather. We wanted a place to hang out outside, just kind of converse and sit around the fire. We like to entertain people, and we'd rather be outside than inside."

**ABOVE: The owners wanted an oversized kitchen to handle a number of guests. A tiered island provides space for food prep as well as an eat-at bar for casual dining.**

**OPPOSITE: "The home feels so warm and cozy and inviting – it just feels like it's been here forever," states Marie. "Those deeper, darker, warm colors make it feel that way."**

The Pillards also wanted a walkout basement so that the mountain view would be accessible even on the lowest level. Although the steep lot did require some tweaking in terms of entry points and driveway access, it did not impede the ability to include this feature; thankfully, there was enough height in the slope to not only permit it but also to expand upon it. Instead of the simple recreation

room called for in the original plan, Kelly and Marie were able to turn a basic crawl space adjacent to the rec room and wet bar into an extra bedroom, an exercise room, a home theater and a wine cellar, with some extra storage to boot, helping them to satisfy their desire to create an ideal family retreat in the mountains that they could open up to family and friends.

“We wanted a place where our kids would want to come, and bring their families, and have those memories of the holidays and being together – something we can pass down to them in the future,” Marie states. “Hopefully, this will be around for years and years,”

### **SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE**

**Get everyone involved as early as possible. She’s in love with her house, but there’s one thing Marie Pillard would change about her home’s construction. “I would have pulled our builder in at the very beginning of the design process,” she says. In this case, the builder’s knowledge of the area helped with possible weight support issues.**

### **LET IT SNOW**

In a mountainous region such as the Pillard home site, snowfall and its relation to the site should be a major point of consideration at the onset of the design process.

“A lot of people try to take a plan and just put it on the site, instead of making adjustments. You end up having a lot of water issues in the home or drainage around the home,” builder Beau Value says, noting that, in recent years, his company has spent considerable time each spring repairing improperly sited homes that are now subject to mold and water leakage in the basement. “You need to figure out how you’re going to address issues of drainage, whether from snow melting and coming down the hill, or coming off the roof and draining around the home.”

Snowloads are also a factor for many mountain homes, especially in relation to the home’s access points. “You’ve always got to consider where the snow is going to drop,” designer Tim Brock explains. “You want to allow access into the doors, so you don’t want the snow to impede that.” Provisions were put in place on the Pillards’ deck as well to withstand the area’s 120-pound snowload.

Proper roof insulation will also assist in dealing with the extreme mountain climate, Value notes.

**Upon entering the home, visitors are able to look straight out to the scenic views beyond the great room. “There’s a lot of romance to log and timber homes,” Kelly states. “You go into the great room, and just go, ‘Wow.’”**

**TOP: Dark woods, rich leathers and heavy metals in the dining room complement the rustic tone set by the home’s distressed posts and beams. “I tell people that we use every single room here,” Marie states. “There’s no specific favorite room. It just depends on the time of year and time of day.”**

**ABOVE: The wine cellar’s underground placement and high-density foam insulation negate the need for a cooling system.**

**ABOVE: The wet bar provides the perfect gathering spot. “In the winter, I love being downstairs in the home theater and bar area, and just hanging out downstairs,” Marie states. The bar is crafted from reclaimed wood to resemble an old Western saloon.**

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The theater's barn door allows flexibility in use. "If a ball game is on, [it can slide open and] the whole room could see it, or you have privacy to watch a movie," the designer explains.

**HOME DETAILS**

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,618

ARCHITECT: MTN Design

TIMBER PROVIDER: PrecisionCraft Log & Timber Homes

SEE "FIND IT HERE" ON PAGE 69 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

*\*Changes were made in the foundation, allowing the Pillards to expand on the original lower-level design.*