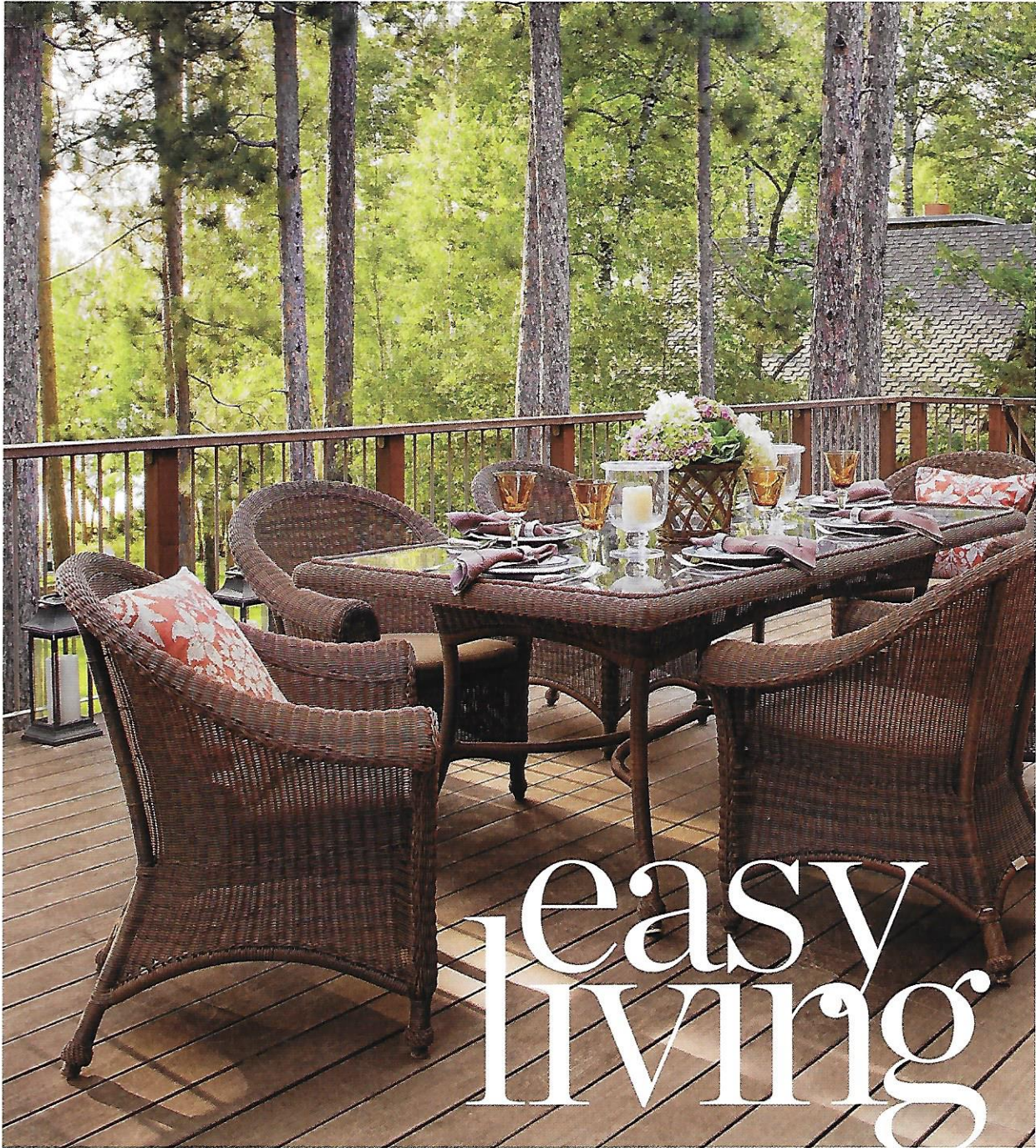


TRADITIONAL
HOME



easy living

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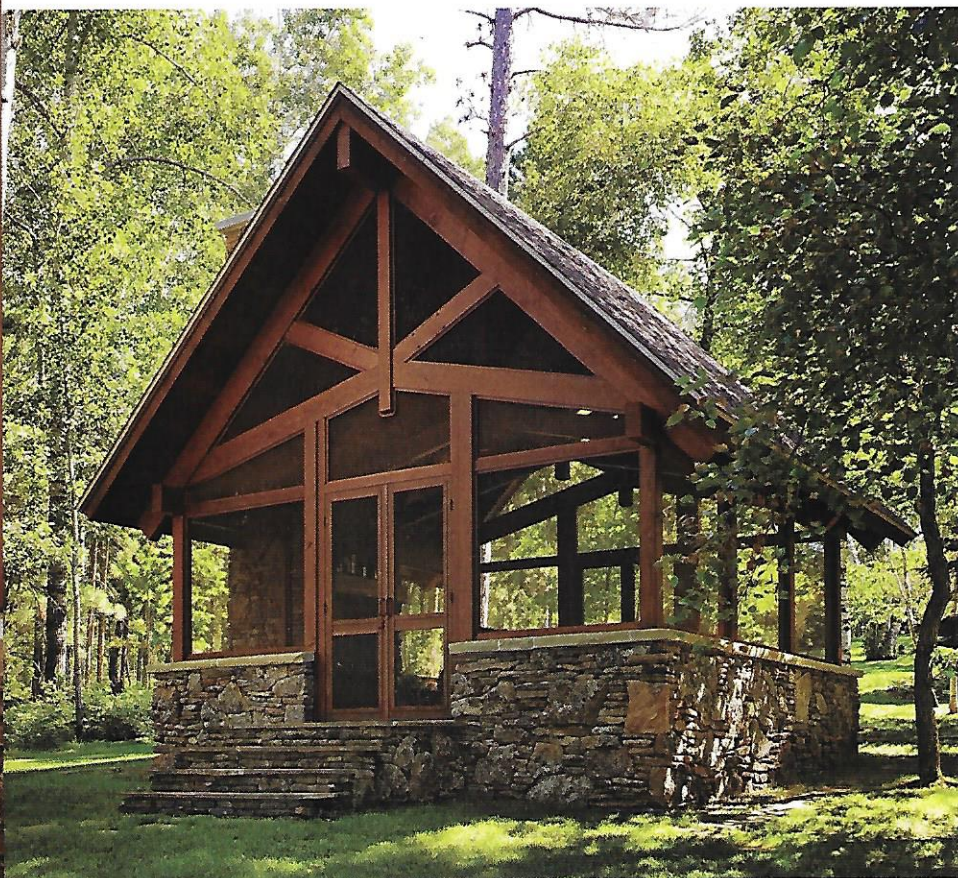
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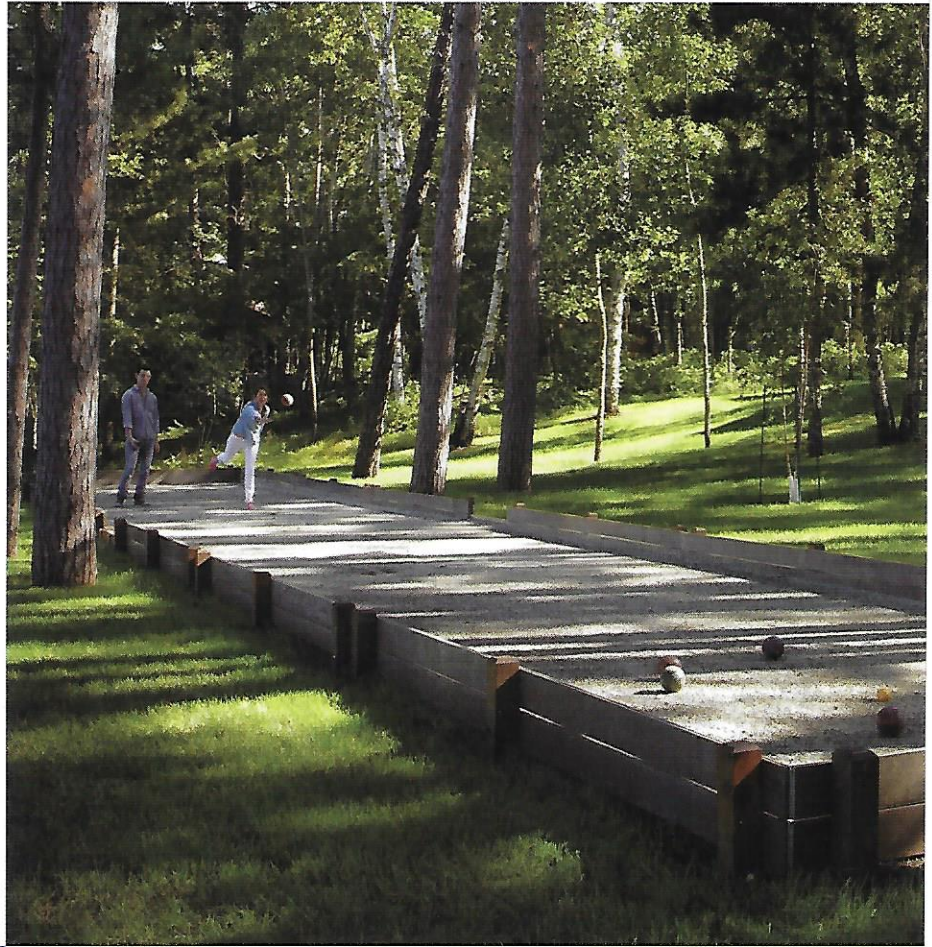
true north



DESIGNER KARA ADAM PUTS
FAMILY FIRST IN A SOPHISTICATED
NORTH WOODS RETREAT

Great room To balance the great room's soaring proportions, furnishings had to be the proper scale. Large pieces—a pair of custom sofas covered in a herringbone fabric from Ralph Lauren, a vintage glass-topped coffee table, and leather wing chairs from Thomas Jolly Antiques—hold their own here. Designer Kara Adam spotted the 1950s fireplace screen at The Mews in Dallas. **Preceding pages** Though it's a separate structure, the screened porch's style is consistent with that of the main house. Fir beams, flagstone floors, and a stone fireplace feel as inviting here as they do in the big house.





Bocce court A lakeside bocce court was a must-have for the family. **Designer** Kara Adam designed the family getaway in Bemidji, Minnesota. **Exterior** Kara describes the home's style as "sophisticated Adirondack."

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or a true-blue Texan, Dallas-based interior designer Kara Adam has a deep loyalty to the North Woods. In fact, having spent many childhood summers with her parents and sister in Bemidji, Minnesota, she feels at home in this piney, lake-spangled setting. "It's so different up here," Kara says. "So relaxing and secluded. You can escape and forget about all the worries of the world."

Perhaps that's what continues to draw her here. Or perhaps it's the family retreat—a sophisticated version of a classic log cabin where she and her extended family gather each summer to enjoy the slower pace these deep woods have to offer.

Cloistered among towering pines on the shore of Big Bass Lake, the new cabin-style second home has a streamlined Adirondack look, with unembellished furnishings and a straightforward palette that complements lofty fir beams and 8-inch plank floors.

"It started out as a simple log cabin and evolved from there," says Kara, who was enlisted by her family to design the home. "It became a clean-lined, updated version of that log cabin, but it still feels like it belongs in the woods. It's like living in a very sophisticated tree house."

Together-time in the North Woods includes not just Kara, her husband, Austin, and their two daughters, Bryn, 4, and Kylie, 1, but



Dining room Indigenous materials such as the dry-stacked Eagle Moss Rock were used to inject authenticity into the home. A subtly hued Oushak rug offers a dash of elegance to the otherwise rustic space.

Kitchen Black-painted cabinets with a hint of red rub-through complement the custom glazed tile. Open plate racks add a less formal, help-yourself appeal.

Wine room "This space is so cozy and intimate," Kara says. "We sit down here for hours after we put the kids to bed—eating dinner, drinking good wine, and chatting." A chandelier made from a vintage wine basket hangs from the groin-vaulted ceiling and illuminates a table from Carl Moore Antiques.









Master bedroom Clancy, the family's Tibetan terrier, surveys the muted palette of the Oushak rug from Interior Resources. The organic, painted design on the headboard was custom designed. The bedside lamps are from Carl Moore Antiques. **Master bath** The palette of soft reds and blues carries into the adjoining bathroom.

Guest room The antique beds—baby blue when Kara found them—were stripped, stained, and upholstered with a fabric panel from Rogers & Goffigon. "I love this room," she says. "I sat on the floor of an antiques store and handpicked each one of those decoys!"



also her parents and her sister's family, along with aunts, uncles, and cousins. So the first objective was to create an open plan that would encourage gatherings and fireside chats and also allow for alone time.

In the great room, that meant generous furnishings centered around the room's focal point—a dramatic fireplace of dry-stacked Eagle Moss Rock (lichen-covered fieldstone) that can't help but draw the eye. Two large-scale sofas dominate the space, multitasking as the perfect perch for me-time or as an evening gathering spot where fishing fables and tales of bocce ball tournaments can be shared.

"We really needed this space to be good for entertaining and still intimate enough for a small group," Kara says. "We didn't want so much furniture that the room felt crowded, so most of the pieces are easily moved. The ottomans can be pulled up for seating. The wing chairs are easily shifted. And we used bolsters between the sofa cushions so they can be used either as four large club chairs or as sofas."

To avoid competing with the stonework, patterns and palettes are kept simple. Natural materials—linen, jute, wool, and leather—prevail. A neutral scheme, only occasionally sparked by hints of terra-cotta (itself almost a neutral here), happily plays second fiddle to the home's more textural elements. Tchotchkes are all but banned.

The great room's pièce de résistance—a 5x7-foot chandelier made from antlers—was chosen for its rustic, woodsy appeal and also for its ability to hold its own against the room's stonework and towering dimensions. In this largely unadorned space, it acts not just as illumination but also as art.

Adjacent to the great room, the open dining room was a labor of love. Eschewing convention, Kara opted for stone walls in what is normally a more formal space. "I wanted it to be cozy and cottagey, yet clean-lined," she says. "We originally planned on using wood plank on the walls, but in the end we decided to use the same stone that we used outside and on the fireplace. It ended up being a home run."

To keep the hard surfaces from appearing cold and unwelcoming, Kara added a warmly hued Oushak rug and draperies in the same terra-cotta fabric as in the great room. Woven shades encourage the room's bring-the-outdoors-in spirit.

In the kitchen, the all-white scheme so sought after in the city was purposefully shunned. Here, the family opted for black cabinets with a subtle red rub-through enhanced by more overtly red backsplash tile. Unexpected elements—flagstone floors and a stainless-steel hood with brass straps—offer respite from the otherwise dark palette.



More than any other element, scale played a major role in the home's design. Open floor plans and lofty, beamed ceilings dictated that when it came to furnishings, bigger was definitely better.

In the master bedroom, a large-scale Oushak rug and a weighty painted bed tame the dark, vaulted ceiling. Cream-colored walls and curtains act as a neutral—balancing floor and ceiling while bouncing light into the dark woodwork above. Serene yet functional.

To accommodate family and friends from near and far, guest rooms (and a guesthouse) offer stylish and ubiquitous sleeping options—each with its own distinct personality. In the guesthouse, snowshoes and a kiva fireplace create a winter wonderland impression. A “bunk room” with curtained sleeping cubbies and trundle beds calls to young and old alike. A guest room with vintage twin beds, a beadboard ceiling, and floating shelves lined with antique bird decoys (handpicked by Kara) charms houseguests.

“This just feels like a family house,” Kara says. “We wanted it to live well and feel cozy. You can walk in, put your feet up, and just take a deep breath.”

Architect Craig Stiteler **Interior designer** Kara Adam

For more information, see sources on page 110

Guesthouse Kara chose a smaller-scale version of the striped rug in the great room for the guesthouse bedroom. A rounded-front kiva fireplace with a flagstone hearth warms a cozy corner nook.

Bunk room Curtained sleeping compartments with trundle beds offer a chic alternative to bunk beds. Mismatched antique mirrors add depth to the space.

