





A Skier's Holiday

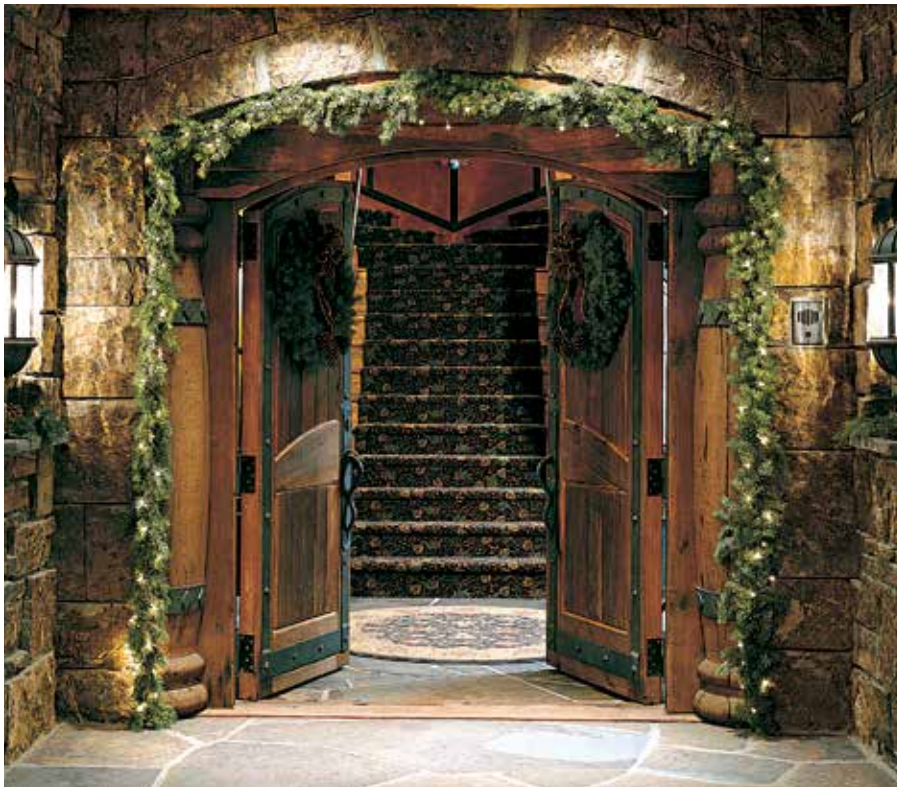
IN THE SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS ABOVE TELLURIDE,
COLORADO, YOU CAN ALWAYS BET ON A WHITE (AND
POWDER-PERFECT) CHRISTMAS.

For Indiana residents Larry and Patty Green, skiing is as much a part of the holidays as eggnog, mistletoe and “It’s a Wonderful Life.”

But it wasn’t always so. There was a time when Patty had to coax her semi-retired husband onto the slopes. “He said the only way he would get out there was if he could walk out the front door to ski,” Patty says. So that’s exactly what they did.

LEFT: The 9,000-square-foot house’s roofline is suspended by log columns, some of which have 30-inch bases. “My hope was that it would make it look like the space on the inside was holding up these columns,” says Telluride-based builder Casey Smith.

STORY BY Margaret Foster • PHOTOGRAPHY BY James Ray Spahn



After admiring Colorado's scenery during frequent visits, the couple bought a lofty perch high amid aspen and firs in Mountain Village, a snowcapped setting that made the decision to build a log home an easy one.

"I always thought I wanted to build a log home, but the site here just demanded it," Larry says. "A log-and-stone home was the only thing that would fit aesthetically."

A real-estate agent introduced them to local builder Casey Smith, who had been in business for more than 25 years. Casey had the experience and easygoing personality the Greens were looking for.

"We were impressed by the homes he'd built, and he was really down to earth," Patty says. "We spent a lot of time getting to know him," Larry adds.

They hit it off so well, in fact, that the Greens trusted Casey to design their custom log home himself, with help from local architect Mark Gawey, giving him almost unheard-of freedom for creativity. "It's not often we get to put some of our soul into it," Casey says. "It was fun."

Casey recommended local hand-crafter Wind River Log Homes, which salvages standing dead Engelmann spruce from the high Rockies, naturally cured for as many as 50 years. Based in Montrose, Colorado, the company pro-

TOP LEFT: From the porte-cochere, stone columns flank the entry doors, which are solid, reclaimed oak with wrought-iron hardware. Beyond the doors, the grand staircase rises 46 feet into the air.

BOTTOM LEFT: The den is an intimate space perfect for reading in front of the fire or watching the big game.

OPPOSITE: The 11-foot-long mantel inset in the great room's immense fireplace weighs 6,500 pounds and sets an impressive stage for holiday decor. The house has eight fireplaces, one in almost every room. "We like the coziness of a roaring fire," Patty explains.

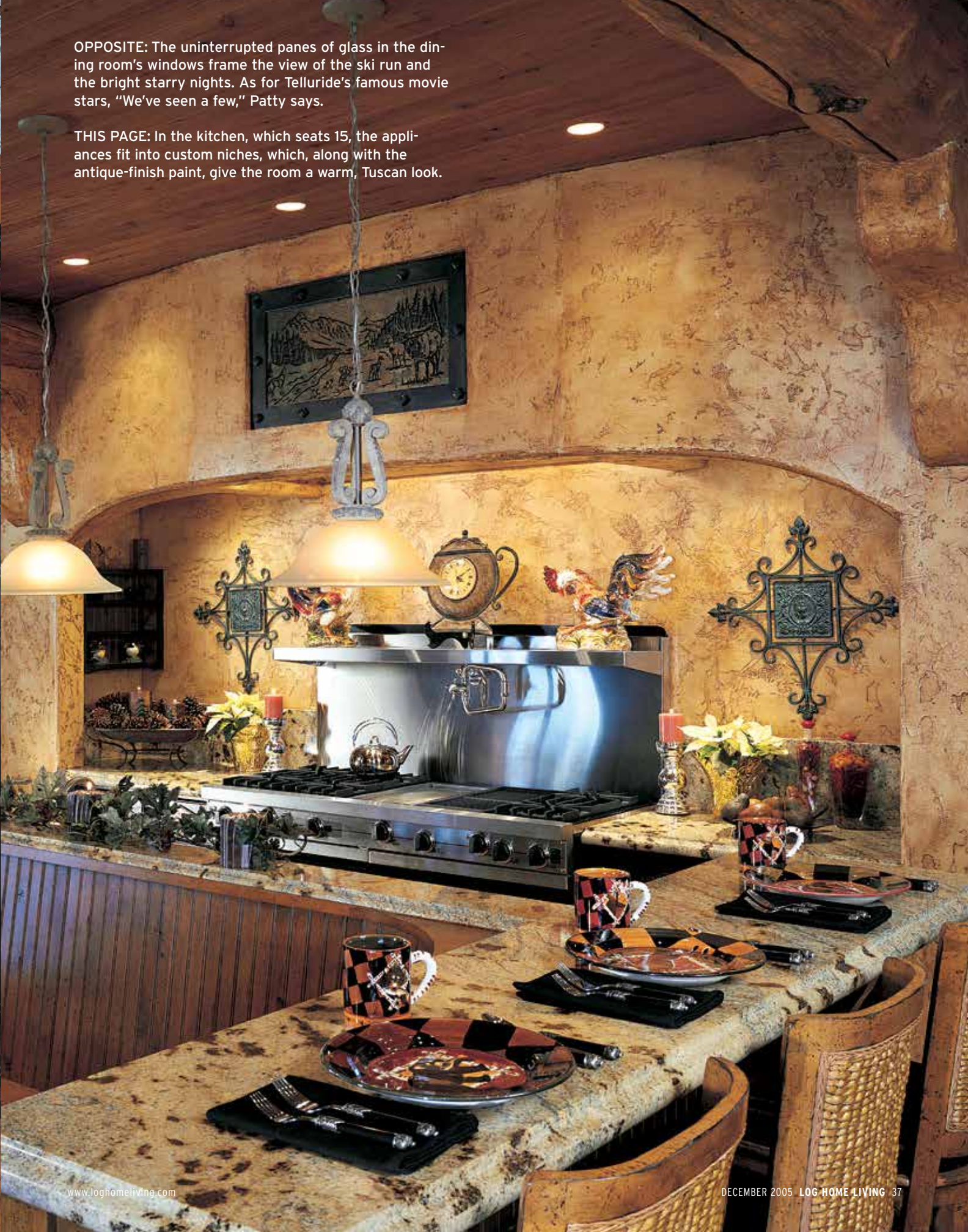






OPPOSITE: The uninterrupted panes of glass in the dining room's windows frame the view of the ski run and the bright starry nights. As for Telluride's famous movie stars, "We've seen a few," Patty says.

THIS PAGE: In the kitchen, which seats 15, the appliances fit into custom niches, which, along with the antique-finish paint, give the room a warm, Tuscan look.





WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM

In a unique Western twist, Larry and Patty Green's great room—along with their majestic staircase—is wrapped in buffalo hide. "That was my husband's idea," Patty says. "He loves leather, and he wanted something really warm." It suits the Rocky Mountain state, where some towns, like Greeley, were founded in the 19th century on the buffalo tanning industry. The cozy look comes in handy during chilly Colorado winters, Larry says. "A log home allows you to have a lot of volume and height and still gives you that warm feeling."

vides handcrafted logs in a variety of styles and profiles. Patty and Larry selected hand-hewn rectangular logs with dovetail corners highlighted by full-round posts and beams.

Making a Grand Entrance

With five bedrooms, five bathrooms and eight fireplaces, the house doesn't lack drama. But for all its firepower, perhaps its most theatrical feature is its stairs, which Casey calls the "Scarlett O'Hara staircase," a 46-foot-high wrought-iron creation positioned immediately beyond the home's impressive double front doors. "I felt like we really needed to have an exciting entrance," Larry explains. Patty agrees. "It's just awesome," she says

Again, the home's location played a role, but this time, it was a logistical challenge. It slopes down, away from the ski run, so it was impossible to enter on the same floor as the great room, as many designs allow. For skiers, it's easy to get in and out of, but when it came to design, it called for some extra creativity. "That's what predicated this amazing stairway," according to Casey.

To create the masterpiece, a local blacksmith set up shop in the Greens' house, planting his forge in the living room and venting it out a window. It took eight months to complete the work. "I'd never done anything like that before," says Tom Bennett of Bennett Forgeworks in Rico, Colorado. "We put more than 5,000 hours into that staircase."

If the stairs call to mind "Gone With the Wind," then what hovers above them is straight out of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." Suspended far above the great room is a catwalk, a whimsical invention with a steel structure, maple joists and walnut spacers. "Ten years ago in Telluride, I'd seen a house with a catwalk," Casey says. "We designed it like a steel grate so the light would go down through it. Larry wanted to be able to walk out into that big volume of space." Building the catwalk was tricky. Casey first tested a prototype by driving over it with a pickup truck. "It did-



ABOVE: For the house's five bedrooms, Patty chose wool plaid curtains, accenting them with coordinating pillows and upholstery.

RIGHT: In the master bathroom, Iron Mountain stone lines the bathtub, which is warmed by a gas fireplace against a log backdrop.

n't fail," he says. Still, the high-altitude walk isn't for the faint-hearted. "You wouldn't want to wear high heels on it," Patty says with a laugh.

Rocks in a Hard Place

In another daring feat, Casey's crew hauled a 6,500-pound, 11-foot-long mantel into the great room by removing some windows to fit their crane inside. "We did the Egyptian method of rolling it across the floor," Casey remembers. A sandstone called Farmer's Rock covers the home's foundation, and the interior stonework in the patio, master bathroom,



and entryway is Iron Mountain stone, a Montana flagstone that Patty selected.

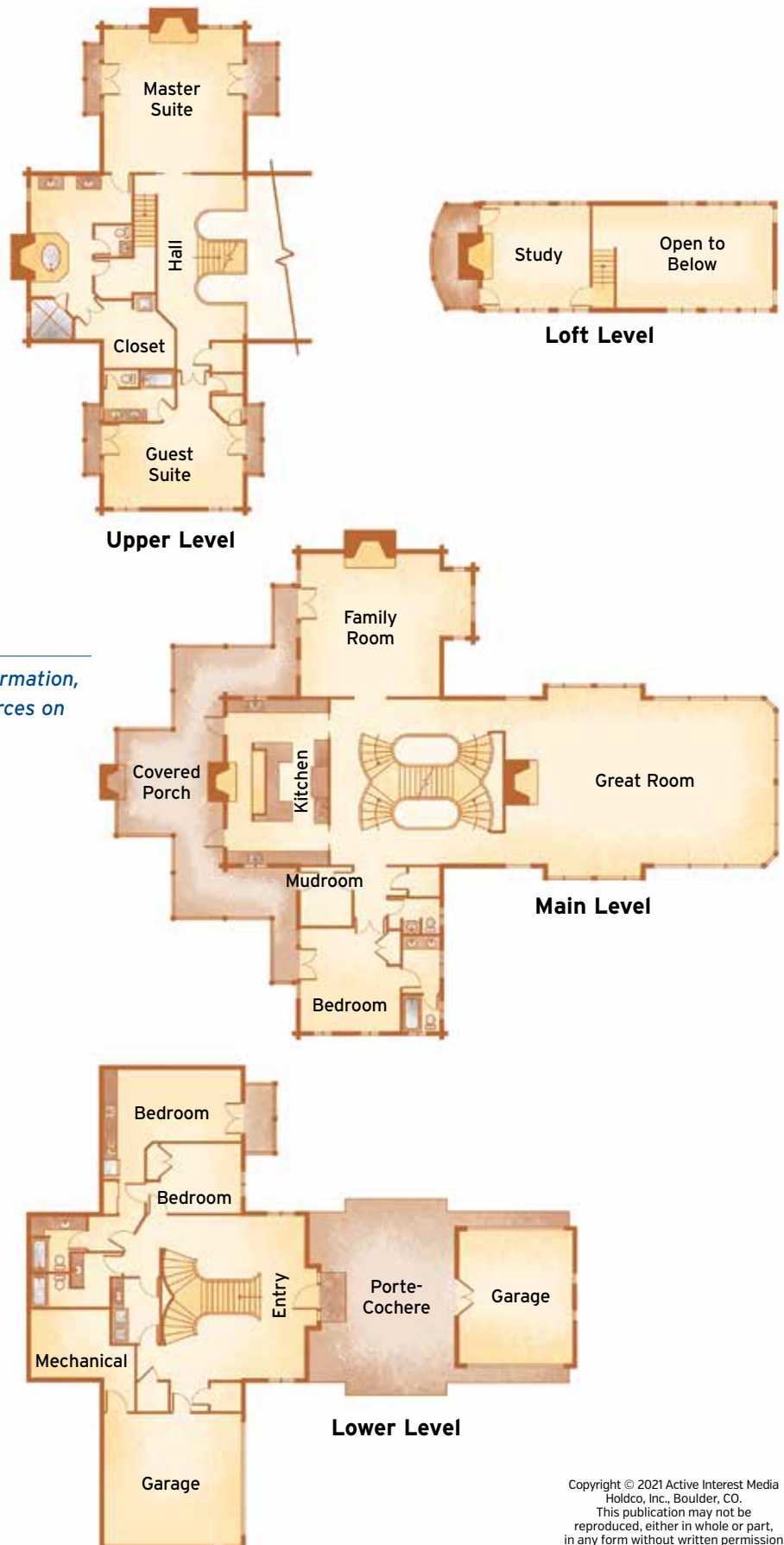
Grand fireplaces, catwalks and staircases notwithstanding, for Patty, the kitchen is the epicenter of the Green household. Overlooking the ski run, the 450-square-foot space has a fireplace, granite countertops, heart-pine floors, two bars and a banquette that allows 15 people to dine. “We changed it so we could see the view and the fireplace at the same time,” Patty says. “It’s big, but we wanted it to be homey.” Casey designed the maple cabinets, which have detailed latticework, hardware and copper inlays. To achieve a hammered-copper effect, he pounded the wood and covered it with copper leaf. Patty loves the results: “The cabinetry is more like furniture than kitchen cabinetry,” she says.

HOME DETAILS

- **Square footage:** 9,000 *For more information,*
- **Log Supplier:** *see Resources on*
Wind River Log Homes *page 96.*
- **Builder:** Casey Smith
& Co. Custom Builders

Patty stepped forward as the interior decorator, selecting Woolrich wool plaid for most of the curtains and upholstery. “I basically found fabrics I liked and went from there,” she explains. The end result pulls the wool over the experts’ eyes: When Casey showed off the house to an interior designer, Casey says, “she couldn’t believe it wasn’t decorated by a professional. Patty had a feel for what she wanted, and she pulled it off.”

This December marks the Greens’ fourth holiday, and the beginning of new traditions, in their ski-lodge home. “We ski in the morning and celebrate Christmas late in the day,” Patty says. “The first Christmas was really exciting because we settled on our place on Christmas Eve. Our builder had the house all decorated, complete with a big tree,” Patty remembers. “There wasn’t a stick of furniture here yet, but Christmas had already come.” ■



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When you wake up to a home this beautiful,
every morning feels like Christmas.