

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

## Winter Magic

High style in ski country



# Here & There

DESIGN DISCOVERIES FROM AROUND NEW ENGLAND

## *EASTERN IMPORT*

Japan meets New England in this tranquil Vermont home where pine makes a big impact.

BY KATHRYN O'SHEA-EVANS

Ceilings in the primary living spaces peak at fifteen feet. "We didn't want it to feel overwhelming," says architect Elizabeth Herrmann. "It's pretty easy to make spaces that are too lofty." A Noguchi Akari pendant adds a warm and serene touch of Japan in the living room.



T

he mountains of Japan are dotted with treasures: serene *ryokan* (inns) here, steamy *onsen* (hot springs) there. Vermont may be nearly 7,000 miles away, but it shares a certain magic with the land of the rising sun. Why not combine the best of both worlds? That's exactly what these California transplants—she's originally from Vermont, he's from Hawaii and has Japanese ancestry—asked for when it came to their new primary residence in the verdant Champlain Valley. "When they came to me, they said, 'Can you do a Japan-meets-Vermont





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—Architect Elizabeth Herrmann



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:**

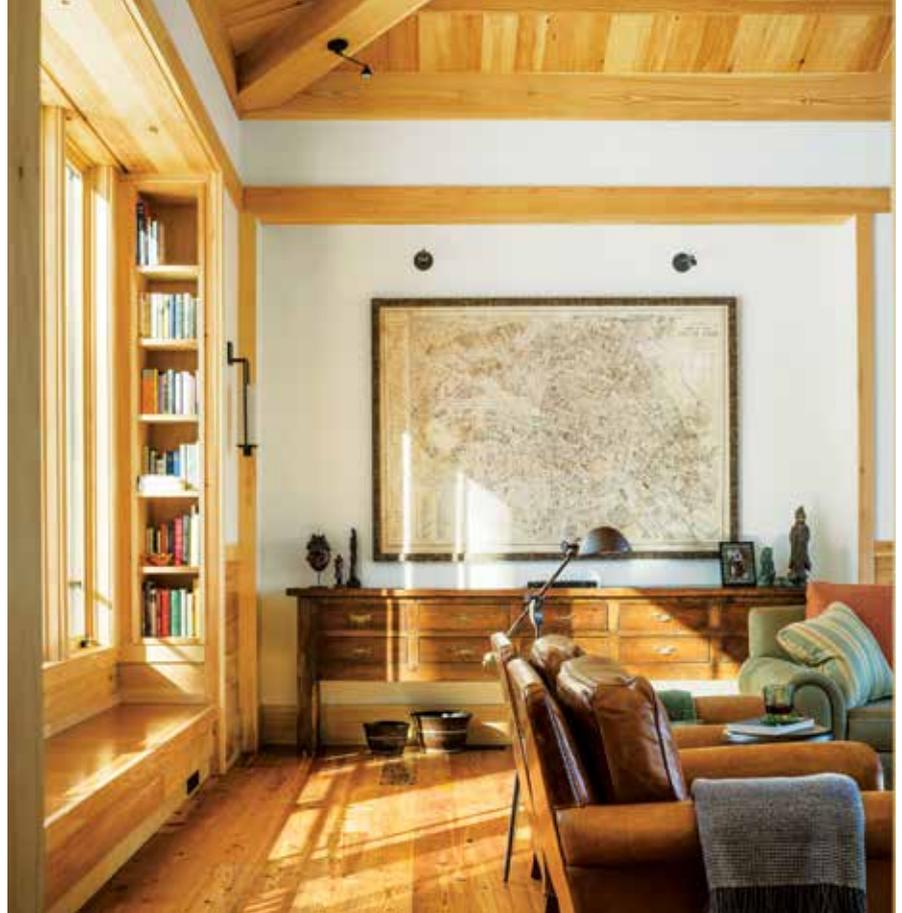
The home's pigmented concrete walkway leads to a showstopping front door, created from one of the property's spalted-maple trees. Multiple outdoor gathering spaces allow guests to take in the landscape from all angles. "It was really important to these clients that the home settled naturally into the woods," Quinn says of the house that's surrounded by maple, hemlock, and white birch trees.



house?” recalls architect Elizabeth Herrmann. “I don’t think any of us quite knew what that meant.” But the design team nailed it.

“We pulled from Japanese influences, like an affinity for the land and trying to get the house to really fit on site and integrate nicely with the landscape,” Herrmann says. Deep overhangs, hipped roofs, and *shou sugi ban*—an ancient Japanese charring technique that has a no-maintenance, natural finish—cypress siding add to the effect. “We were careful to preserve as many trees as we could and work with the natural ledge outcroppings,” says builder Chris Quinn of Red House.

Inside, salvaged heart-pine flooring with plentiful patina and locally sourced pine millwork create an enveloping woody feel. “Pine is not considered a fancy material, but the flooring was extremely well crafted—and locally harvested,” Quinn says. “We also used a custom pine veneer on the Topakustik



ceilings, a sound-absorbing wood out of Switzerland.” The latter helps create a quiet environment in a home with a lot of hard surfaces—and it actually works. “It’s not a gimmick. We’ve used it in a

**ABOVE:** Built-in bookshelves can be found in a few spots throughout the home. “My clients really wanted to integrate books into their house,” Herrmann says, “so we created these little shelves where someone could easily grab a book.”

**BELOW:** In the kitchen, the silver-gray countertops feature the same stone as the fireplace mantel and surround. “It has a nice leathery finish, so it feels really great on the hand,” says Herrmann.



The dining room protrudes out into the land further than any other space in the house, offering up unobstructed views of the mountains to the east. A trio of pendant lights casts a welcoming glow over the custom table, which comfortably seats ten.



*“THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO HAVE DINNER PARTIES, SO IT’S IMPORTANT TO BE COGNIZANT OF HOW THE HOUSE IS GOING TO PERFORM.”—Builder Chris Quinn*

*SALVAGED HEART-PINE FLOORING WITH PLENTIFUL PATINA CREATES AN ENVELOPING WOODSY FEEL.*



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** The stairwell lets filtered western light down to the windowless lower level. "I don't normally put pine and cherry together, but the old growth and cherry worked well," Herrmann says of mixing woods in places like this breakfast room located off the kitchen. Even in the three bedrooms, like the primary on the first floor, expansive windows allow light to flow.

number of projects, and it's extremely effective," Quinn notes. "These are people who like to have dinner parties routinely, so it's important to be cognizant of how the house is going to perform."

One of the home's most unforgettable touches is the front door—the definition of making an entrance. Custom fabricated at a local workshop, Stark Mountain Woodworking, it was made from one of the property's felled spalted-maple trees. Call it a warm welcome...in any country.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN:** Elizabeth Herrmann Architecture + Design  
**BUILDER:** Red House  
**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Rocky Dale Gardens

