



Roots Run Deep

TALENTED ARCHITECTS DESIGN A FARMHOUSE-STYLE RETREAT FOR A COUPLE WHO FOUND THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

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DOUBLE DUTY Illuminated by unadorned, double-hung windows, the entry hall, left, serves as a music room.

AUTHENTIC AMBIENCE Simple materials, from the crisply painted paneled walls to reclaimed pine floors, contribute character. The open plan blurs the distinction between rooms, allowing an easy flow for entertaining.

High on a bluff above Minnesota's Cannon River, architects Christine Albertsson and Todd Hansen faced a test of skill: Execute the perfect retirement home for a couple with deep roots in the area and a desire to maintain a calm, natural environment on the wooded property.

During months of collaboration, the architects and clients hammered out a comfortable, modern version of farmhouse style. They agreed on stylistic twists that make the residence eminently suited to the clients, who eschew the overly formal and prefer that their home appear added to through time. The flexibility and regional interpretations of farmhouse vernacular allowed Hansen, who served as project architect, to introduce elements of East Coast shingled country houses, notably via the exterior and millwork,

and the spare aesthetic of classical Swedish interiors in the whitewashed beams, paneled walls, and wood ceilings. "This home was to be elegant and generous, but never overscaled just because it could be," Hansen says.

In the end, the utilitarian spaces became his favorite. "I recall being intrigued by the service areas of historical homes—the working kitchen, the scullery, the laundry room, and the pantries," he says. "They always seemed modern because they were often spare and simple." The clients, also excited about these rooms, added touches of strong color. They moved into the home in fall, just in time to watch the leaves drop from the trees into the river below. But this time, instead of marking an ending, the seasonal ritual signaled a new start.







FRESH FARMHOUSE STYLE

Ceiling

Ceiling heights and room sizes are modest. One ceiling in the residence is 10 feet; others are 9 feet for a more cozy feel. Farmhouses are meant to be intimate, not cavernous.

Walls

The use of white on walls and ceilings instantly brightens and modernizes a traditional style. Varying the shades of white and whitewashed finishes adds interest and depth.

Paneling

The home is swathed in wood rather than drywall. Walls are V-groove paneling—wide boards connote a modern look. Rough-hewn beams add country flavor but when painted white or stained lightly avoid a heavy lodge or cabin look.

Windows

Double-hung windows are traditional to farmhouse style. Here, fixed transom windows above maximize the light, especially important in climates with long winters.

Floors

Wood with variations in color and pattern, such as the pine used here, adds character. Wide planks in new or salvaged materials instantly enhance a farmhouse look in new construction.



Farmhouse zone

The kitchen has always been the working center of a farmhouse. In this modern interpretation, Hansen keeps the space simple and sensible by selecting hardworking materials in matte finishes and by dividing the kitchen into three zones defined by countertop materials chosen for their function and visual impact.

Honed carrara marble takes center stage on the island and cooking area. A 5-inch-thick, 250-pound slab of butcher block tops a second island. In the far corner, stainless steel sheathes the cleanup zone. Echoing this no-frills approach, the reclaimed pine floors are waxed, not sealed, and matte enamel details cabinetry. A shade of dark French gray grounds base cabinets, while wall-mount cabinets float in their coat of white. Simple, sleek hardware and lighting enhance the functional look and feel while avoiding any country clichés.

EXTRA STORAGE The design utilizes space under the gas cooktop, *above*, for pullout storage. **NO WASTED SPACE** A track, *right*, secures a ladder to reach the topmost cabinets.





Finishing Touches

Sleek hardware emphasizes the clean lines of the custom cabinets in a kitchen designed for dedicated cooks. See Resources starting on page 112 for product information. Below are our product picks for a similar look.



Architectural Shapes

Absolute Zero collection, \$11-\$54, Providence Artworks, Inc., 877/684-3362, providenceartworks.com



Crisp Edges Studio collection, \$4-\$7, Hickory Hardware, 877/556-2918, hickoryhardware.com



Gentle Curves Signature & Essential, \$12-\$14, Galleria, 800/218-8083, galleriahardware.com





SPECTACULAR STORAGE FLOWS FROM KITCHEN TO PANTRIES.

THE GETAWAY Recalling memories of her grandparents' kitchen, the homeowner wanted a getaway eating nook, *opposite*. The design marries form and function in the archway between kitchen and nook by creating more room for display.

PEEKABOO Ideal for entertaining, messy dishes can pass through the sliding door, *above left*, from the cleanup zone into the pantry for attention later. Oversize glossy subway tiles are 4x8-inches, a scaled-up version for a modern look.

PAST PERFECT Inspired by the butler's pantries of 1920s homes, this new pantry, *above right*, is the homeowner's favorite room. She stores antique linens, silver, glassware, and several sets of dishes there. A deep farmhouse sink, second dishwasher, and open shelves make cleanup easy. The architect designed the rolling ladder for use in both the kitchen and pantry.

WHITE ON WHITE Paying careful attention to how the owners live, the design team created custom storage, such as this closet, *right*, for specific collections. Here the dowels keep antique linens neat, orderly, and accessible.



Farmhouse flair

Architects Christine Albertsson and Todd Hansen took their clients' wish list and created a functional floor plan that melds the best of open, shared spaces, private retreats, and specialized functions. Features such as the exercise room and in-law suite adapt the home to the owners' lifestyle.

Separate retreat

A corner allows privacy for shared living arrangements.

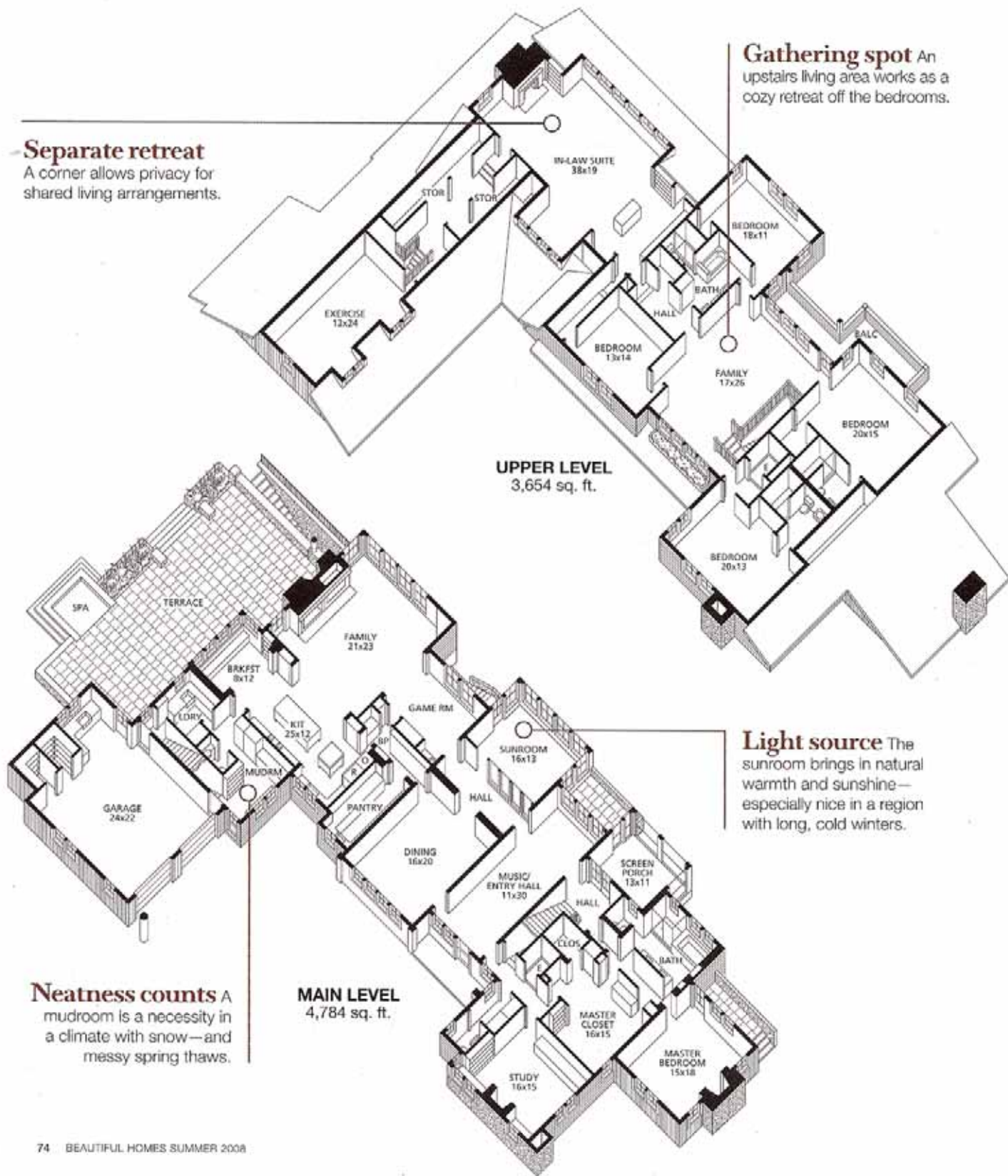
Gathering spot An upstairs living area works as a cozy retreat off the bedrooms.

UPPER LEVEL
3,654 sq. ft.

Light source The sunroom brings in natural warmth and sunshine—especially nice in a region with long, cold winters.

Neatness counts A mudroom is a necessity in a climate with snow—and messy spring thaws.

MAIN LEVEL
4,784 sq. ft.





QUIET RETREAT The vaulted ceiling, with exposed beams, left, and stone fireplace contribute to the vacation feel of the master bedroom.

HALLWAY ACCESS A cabinet-style built-in with glass doors, below, adds display space in the master suite, which includes a generously sized dressing room/closet.

Cabin cozy

Far from the secondary bedrooms on the upper level, the master bedroom and bathroom also provide a quiet haven from the main living area. For a psychological and physical shift, Hansen changed the flooring in this private space to ebony-stained maple and designed the bedroom to appear as if it were added on to the home later.

The painted cathedral ceiling, with exposed white-washed beams, and walls are paneled. The stone fireplace anchors the room and acts as a cozy spot for morning coffee and a newspaper or a quiet evening conversation.

Indeed, entering the room feels much like escaping to a vacation cabin at the end of the day.

Architects **Todd Hansen** and **Christine Albertsson**
 Builder **Peter McKinnon**

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OPEN STORAGE AND NO-FRILLS SURFACE MATERIALS IMBUE THE MASTER BATH WITH A SPA FEEL.

BEST BARS A warming bar, *opposite*, keeps towels always close at hand for the ultimate bath luxury. The side of the built-in tub puts an extra towel bar within arm's reach.

ADJUSTABLE SHELVING Good design is functional and adaptable. Adjustable shelves, *above*, allow flexible storage and display. Spa-blue subway tiles offer an interesting background for bath accessories.

SHARED SPACES The shelving allows room for a shaving mirror, *above right*, mounted at just the right height. Open adjustable shelves and drawers below maximize storage in the narrow space between the window and the wall. The marble vanity features open space ideal for bins.

EVERY INCH Backed by glossy tiles, built-in shelves below the window, *right*, add convenient, open storage without taking up floor space. Narrow trim adds a finished, custom look.

