



There's architectural gold in those hills.

MINING THE PAST

There's a lot of history in the quiet mountain towns around Lake Tahoe. Architect Jeffrey Lundahl wanted to evoke that history when he designed his own house, and he looked to the gold-rush-era timber buildings of his hometown of Glenbrook, Nev., for inspiration. To realize his vision, Lundahl needed a contractor who knew how to re-create the exposed-beam construction he so admired.

Builder John Percevil proved the perfect match. Percevil builds only a house or two a year because, he says, he likes to do things the old-fashioned way. "What's unique about John is that he's hands-on," says Lundahl. "He provides carpentry himself throughout the entire construction phase." Percevil and his crew of three built all the framing for Lundahl's house and installed the fine woodworking. He even shot grades himself.

The house is located on a hillside with views of Lake Tahoe and Shakespeare Rock, a massive geological outcropping. The exterior, a pleasant mix of gables, red cedar shingles, and forest-green trim on a base of Sierra granite, recalls the rustic style of Glenbrook's logging camps-turned-guest lodges.

Indoors, Lundahl and Percevil were more ambitious, seeking to optimize the majesty of their primary material: vertical-grain, old-growth douglas fir. Lundahl specified the precious lumber for its lack of knots and its tight grain. "It's very rich in appearance," he says.

Already kiln-dried to 10% moisture, the wood was brought to the site, stacked on A-frame supports, and dehydrated further with fans to 6%, "so when it was installed, there would be no cracking," says Lundahl. Percevil's crew crafted decorative millwork from it, detailed to the level of fine furniture. There's wainscoting, chair rails, crown molding, columns, and pilasters that line up with a pattern of exposed ceiling beams and flooring of sandstone and granite.

The banked house allows for two distinct landscapes: a meadow-driveway on the entry side facing the lake and a patio facing the national forest. Visitors entering from the front encounter a utility level, including two multicar garages. As they climb the stairs to the main living area, they are treated to soaring ceilings supported by exposed glulam trusses rated for snow loads of 175 pounds per square foot.

Despite the region's alpine environment, Lundahl and his houseguests have no problem staying warm, thanks to a hydronic heating system installed beneath the sandstone and granite floors. Hydronic heating costs at least twice as much to install as forced air but, Percevil notes, it's much more efficient and comfortable. "You're heating the entire space and because the heat comes up from the floor, it warms your body."

What warms Percevil's heart is that the house creates a respectful legacy for its rare raw material, "a harmonious blend," he says. "It's so well integrated that it's seamless." —*Michael Leccese, a writer in Boulder, Colo.*



▲ This custom home derives its timeless appeal from natural materials skillfully applied, including granite front steps, red cedar shingle siding with a light stain, and, in a concession to harsh weather, vinyl-clad wood windows.

▼ To maximize exterior views and natural light, the architect clustered main living spaces on the top floor and capped them with a ceiling of exposed glulam beams. Banding in the granite and sandstone floors aligns with the beams and with the columns and pilasters found throughout the house. The fireplace wall, with its fluted columns, granite surround, and doug fir mantel inlaid with ceramic tile, conceals an entertainment center.

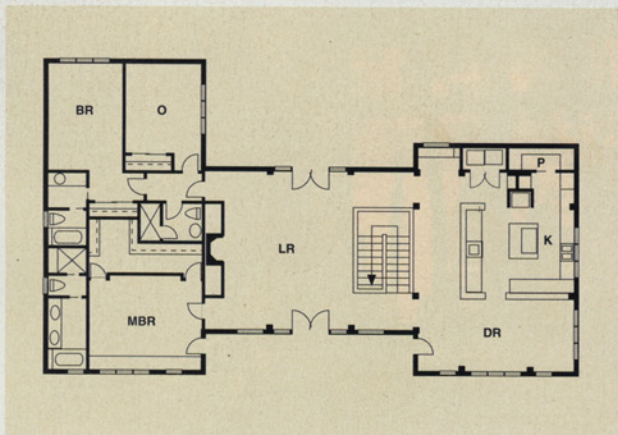


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BUILDER PERCEVIL CONSTRUCTION
ARCHITECT JEFFREY A. LUNDAHL, AIA
PHOTOGRAPHER SUZANNE LUNDAHL
LIVING SPACE 3,200 SQUARE FEET
SITE .9 ACRE
CONSTRUCTION COST \$150 PER SQUARE FOOT

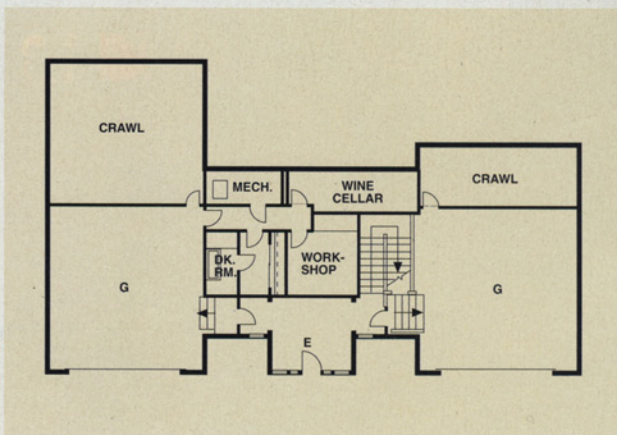
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◀▶ (Left and lower left) The kitchen and dining room combine to form one great room, connected by a granite-topped bar. "It has an open, airy feel with exterior views in three directions and lots of windows," says the architect. Custom copper and brass lighting fixtures illuminate the bar and the custom-made cherrywood dining table. (Below) Wainscoting, fashioned from old-growth doug fir, rings the large master bedroom and melds seamlessly into the bullnose of the granite cabinet top.



UPPER LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL