

# NEW YORK SPACES

THE HOME DESIGN MAGAZINE OF METROPOLITAN NEW YORK

Best new  
looks  
*formal  
to funky*



POLKA-DOT PAD

GEOFFREY BEENE  
TREASURES  
at SOTHEBY'S

TOP LIGHTING  
SHOPS

BEEKMAN PLACE PENTHOUSE | GREENWICH GARDEN  
6 BLISSFUL BATHS | WESTCHESTER MAKEOVER



The carved crescent moon door, below, a special request of the homeowners, opens to a bathroom outfitted with a clawfoot bathtub, right.

To enhance the cabin feel, Shachat lined the bedroom walls with hemlock log facing, opposite. An antique quilt, a Western-themed area rug and a branded bed finish off the look.



wanted a crescent moon cut out of the bathroom door, and they showed me a sketch of a bedstead featuring a bronco branded with the client's initials. They also thought it would be great to have a wood-burning stove." Armed with these requests and the keyword "cabin," Shachat assembled a team to create rural authenticity amid the city's glass and concrete canyons. The complex project required more than two years, she says; construction alone took eight months.

The 280-square-foot addition was painstakingly built to suit, and boasts timeless, decorative stone chimneys, a copper roof, and even a 120-square-foot front porch, ideal for sitting and rocking new kinfolk. Invisible from the street, this upscale sugar shack is accessed from below by a stairway to the roof.

"Lots of effort went into choosing materials so the atmosphere would be true," says Shachat. "It's easy for a project like this to look manufactured and phony."

Montauk, New York-based contractor and cabinetmaker Ron Attinello, a friend of the family, built the small home piece by piece on site with a crew of four and many subs. To the neighbors' relief, no cranes were used to hoist the building components to the roof; everything was hauled up by rig and tackle. While that was laborious, it wasn't the most difficult part of the job.

"The biggest obstacle we faced was the city codes," Shachat recalls. "Making additions to a building in New York can be very difficult. The city doesn't like to add square footage to multiple-unit dwellings."

Shachat recruited independent expeditor Hannibal Galin to slice through red tape. The city's codes require a specific spatial distribution in co-op buildings, and adding to the upper floor would have violated existing zoning rules. A solution came in the form of prairie-town neighborliness, when the residents on the lower floors of the building each donated 25 square feet of their own space—on paper. This made the project doable and somehow fit its flavor, Shachat says.

The cabin, one vaulted room and a bath, was created with a masonry foundation set into steel beams supported by the brown-stone walls to create a parapet for the old roof. The original roof and drainage system still exist under the cabin, which is slightly elevated. Concrete block walls are faced with stucco and artificial stone veneer.

"Everything was selected for practicality or authenticity," says Shachat. After studying the materials used in hundreds of log cabins and ranch houses, she opted to line the interior walls with hemlock log facings, factory-milled but with the bark stripped by hand. There is hand-dabbed chinking between the rounded surfaces.

For contractor Attinello, setting the ridge beams into the masonry and using awkward, highly imperfect lumber proved to be the greatest challenges. "When you're dealing with the imperfections of heavy,





hand-hewn beams," he says, "it takes a lot of work to get them to look right."

Doors, window trim, rafters and floors are made of old pine, chestnut and oak recycled from Pennsylvania and New Jersey barns. Insulation on the copper roof was kept minimal so that falling raindrops would make their staccato pings.

The interior's warm décor is a mixture of old and new country styles, including antique quilts, rugs and paintings, cowboy sconces and posters of country-and-western and bluegrass performers. Attinello hand-made most of the interior, including the bed, modeled after the owners' original sketch, and even the crescent moon in the bathroom door. Only the wood-burning stove proved unattainable. The clearances offered by the small space forbade the use of wood stoves or working fireplaces—the chimneys (one of which belongs to the adjacent brownstone) provide only some structural support and the perfect finishing touch.

Since their retreat was finished, the couple has bought, gutted and renovated the rest of the brownstone, save the garden level. Whenever they need to "get out of Dodge," they head upstairs to their log cabin in the sky. It's as Western as you can get—and still see the Chrysler building through the bathroom window. □