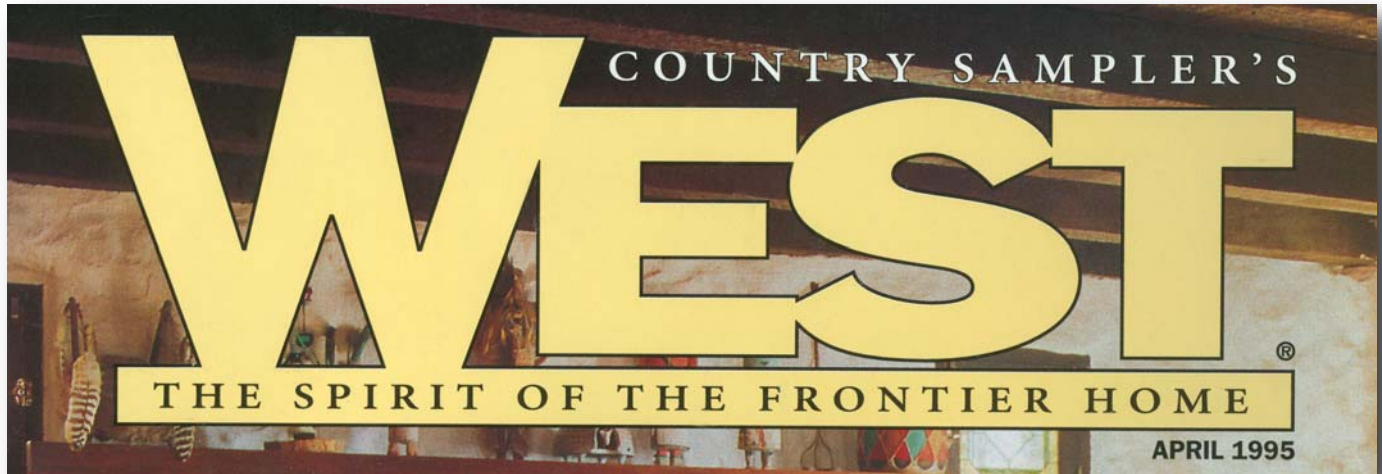


The Wakefield Ranch

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Kitchens with Heart

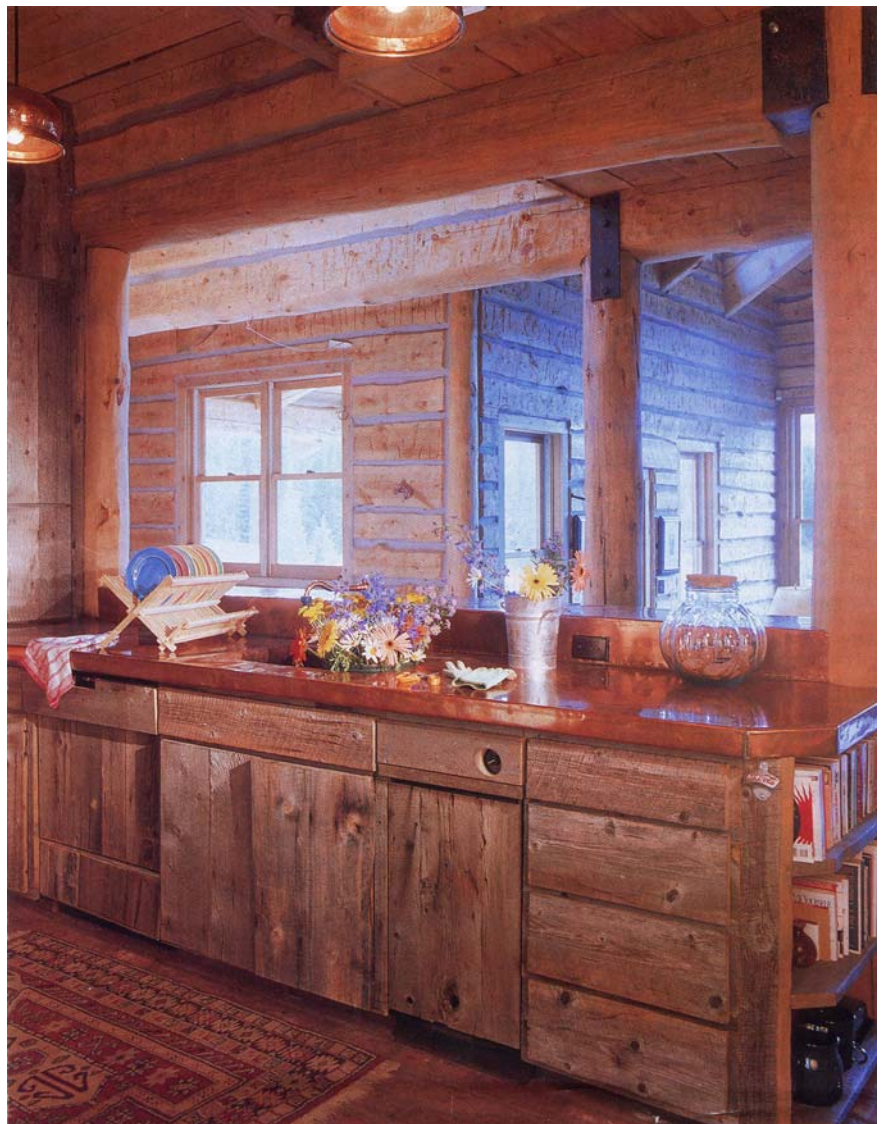
A Homesteader Tribute

The owners of this rambling Breckenridge, Colorado, home presented architects Jon Gunson and Keith Birchler with an unusual challenge: Build us a house that looks 100 years old.

“The goal of this project was to build a new house that had authentic ranch-house character,” says Jon Gunson. “The homeowners requested that no drywall be used anywhere in the house and that we use materials in keeping with (materials used by) homesteaders.”

“The homeowners wanted all the modern conveniences, but they didn’t want to look at any of them,” says Jon.

With mismatched and upside-down copper Turkish pots serving as light-reflecting fixtures, shimmering copper counters and sinks, salvaged tractor-seat bar stools, and unadorned custom barnwood cabinetry, architect Jon Gunson and his Breckenridge clients create a rough-hewn tribute to Colorado’s frontier days.



Although the builders easily installed local spruce and pine beams and walls in the rest of the home, the kitchen proved more difficult.

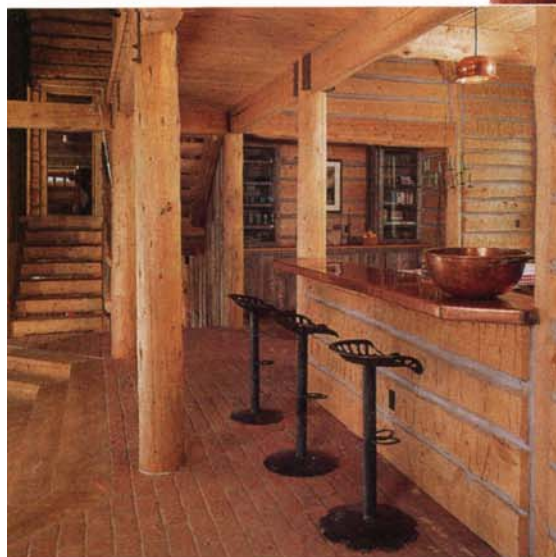
They built recycled barnwood cabinets on site and camouflaged the dishwasher and refrigerator with 1/4-inch-thick pieces of barnwood veneer. Recessed appliance garages hide the microwave and small appliances.

A barnwood kitchen called for distinctive counters-copper countertops were installed on site by a sheet-metal worker.

Sinks presented the same problem as cabinets. Prefabricated ones looked, well, prefabricated. So, the sheet-metal worker molded the copper used on the counters into sinks, soldering the seams to prevent leaks.

And what better way to create age-old floors than with recycled bricks-or better yet, misshapen recycled bricks? Jon purchased imperfect bricks call "clinkers" from Hillen Brick Yard in Denver and instructed the mason to "do a sloppy job" and lay all of the bricks at odd angles.

"When they made bricks at the turn of the century," says Jon, "some of the forms would twist into unusual shapes, and the masons would use them on the inside of the walls where they wouldn't show. We wanted them because they had more character."



Using a variety of recycled, weathered, and unexpected materials-from bricks to barnwood-Jon and Keith met their clients' challenge, creating an efficient Western kitchen that looks a century old.