



LAYER UP

To ready an Idaho cabin to host generations of family, designers blend English country with American Western luxury into a personal design aesthetic that's comfortable, inviting, and just plain fun.

WRITER SARAH EGGE PHOTOGRAPHER ANDREW FRASZ PRODUCER ANNA MOLVIK

OPPOSITE The wood beams and river stone fireplace are strong features of this 2002 house in Idaho and were in excellent shape when the family purchased it three years ago. Interior designers Caroline Tyler DeCesare and Kathryn Brower had the leather-upholstered coffee table custom-made to match an inspirational photo shared by the homeowners. **ABOVE** The designers leaned into the cabin aesthetic with plaid and leather upholstery, including armchairs that swivel to take in the lake views and curtains with elegant trim subtle enough not to compete. They even retained a canoe suspended above the patio doors and the moose taxidermy. "We wondered if the moose head would be too much, but we decided to keep him because of his friendly demeanor," Brower says.



WITH DANGLING TURQUOISE BIRD EARRINGS DANCING AS SHE SPEAKS, PROJECT DESIGNER KATHRYN BROWER makes it easy to see why working on this family vacation

home on Payette Lake in McCall, Idaho, was so much fun. This house was her muse, she says. “I would spend hours at night on the couch on Etsy and other vintage sites finding all the cool things for it.” Brimming with wildlife paintings, a taxidermy moose, tramp art, celestial wallpaper, and dozens of bird sculptures, art, and carvings, the spacious cabin exudes whimsy and lake life character.

“This house isn’t maximalist, but it feels as if the family has had this cabin for a hundred years, with throw pillows that don’t match and art that has been collected over time,” says principal designer Caroline Tyler DeCesare. She and Brower worked with the homeowners, who wanted to reflect their family story in a Kit Kemp meets Ralph Lauren way. “The homeowners are widely traveled and love design,” DeCesare says. “Kit Kemp has these layers of color and pattern that are rooted in English country tradition, and Ralph Lauren, of course, has this gentleman’s hunting cabin look with plaids and leathers and an English undertone. When you mix the two, we think it’s a fun blend and highly layered.”

Feathering in all those layers started from the ground up, when the designers updated the foundational aesthetic of the 2002 house. The family purchased it in 2023, and the structure was solid, with beefy timber beams and handsome stone fireplaces. But, as DeCesare puts it, the overlapping wood tones “were orange on red on yellow.” To emphasize the features in a cleaner way, the designers had the tongue-and-groove ceiling paneling coated in a white paint-and-glaze combination that allows some of the wood grain to show through. Then they had the beams glazed in a custom dark stain. “We increased the contrast in finishes with dark beams and light walls, so now we don’t feel like we’re swimming in orange,” DeCesare says.

Throughout the 18-month renovation, the homeowners were highly involved in helping the designers craft a one-of-a-kind home. “This is a legacy project for them,” DeCesare says. “It was very, very, very



OPPOSITE TOP The cabin-style home is nestled into fir trees on the shore of Payette Lake in McCall, Idaho. The family uses it year-round and often hosts gatherings, including a daughter’s wedding last summer. **OPPOSITE, ABOVE LEFT** Barrel-back wing chairs wear weathered leather in keeping with the vintage game table set between them. Carved wood picture frames on the wall echo the tones in the newly darkened timber beams. **OPPOSITE, BELOW LEFT** For this cozy game space, DeCesare and Brower leaned into English pub style, with wainscoting featuring smoky-mirror panels. Plaid fabric covers the walls above, even wrapping the picture rail the designers used to hang vintage portraits. A built-in banquette has worn leather seat cushions and velvet back ones, which are comfy when putting together a puzzle or playing a game. **ABOVE** “With all the windows, this space has a conservatory feel,” DeCesare says. Stationary panels of fabric curtains soften the room’s angles without covering the view. Upholstered chairs and a long bench at the white oak table accommodate a crowd.



ABOVE By lightening the ceiling paneling and darkening the wide beams, the designers changed the cabin's architecture from one-note to high-contrast. Painting kitchen cabinets pale colors, such as cream and celadon, brightens the low-ceilinged interior space. **OPPOSITE, ABOVE LEFT** When they added a bathroom to the main floor, the designers carved out space for a pantry at the homeowner's request. She loves to cook and wanted to keep extra wares and mess separate from the central kitchen area, which is open to the living room. A wallpapered ceiling and collections are consistent with the layered look of other rooms. **OPPOSITE, BELOW LEFT** Flagstone anchors the main entry—a rugged texture offset by an elegant upholstered settee. Fabric with the look of exaggerated ticking stripes covers the walls above the painted wainscoting, installed horizontally for an enveloping feel. DeCesare found the scrubbed-oak wall shelf 10 years ago and saved it for the right house. "With those big chunky knobs, it's a fabulous piece, and I wanted a space worthy of having it," she says.

"IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
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FAVORITE SPACE.
EVERY ROOM
IS A SPECIAL
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—PROJECT DESIGNER KATHRYN BROWER

RIGHT Reflecting the other side of the entry, a carved wood-frame mirror joins a brass pheasant sconce in adding decorative layers. The design team lined the wood cubbies with zinc trays to make them harder for stowing wet sandals and muddy hiking boots.



collaborative." For example, when Brower located a woodland motif wallpaper for the powder room, the homeowners offered up a landscape painting and a ceramic vase with birds on the handles for it.

The owners thought through every aspect with care and precision, DeCesare says. "This house is for gathering. They would say, 'This is Grandma's room.' And they wanted closets big enough for a Pack 'n Play for when their kids have kids." In the shared spaces, the designers made it comfortable for large groups with ample upholstered sofas, a banquette, multiple game tables, and a kitchen island sized for a crowd of cooks. They paid close attention to the bedrooms as well, making them feel extra pampering and cozy by adding tall upholstered headboards and covering walls with fabric. They outfitted the attached bathrooms with loads of storage so guests can settle in, put away their things, and stay awhile.



ABOVE When the family comes off the lake, they arrive at this screen porch, where indoor-outdoor fabrics and rugs suit the room's rough-and-tumble nature. The wagon wheel chandelier was original, "so we just leaned into it," DeCesare says. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT** An English country feature, skirting below the counter hides dog kennels. DeCesare had the cabinets painted olive green with a glaze applied to make them feel aged. **OPPOSITE, ABOVE LEFT** In the laundry room, a tiled sink creates a handy potting area and dog-washing station for the family's two adventurous pets. **OPPOSITE RIGHT** "I really like this dipped feeling," DeCesare says of the two-tone paneled walls painted with Sherwin-Williams Olympic Range and Evergreen Fog. Illustrating the collaborative nature of the design project, the homeowners contributed the artsy oar and carved wood birds, DeCesare found the framed life jacket, and Brower added brass hooks on the wall and a braided belt on the bench, which is covered in faux leather. "No detail is too small. It's what gives a room soul," DeCesare says.



"WE'RE REALLY FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR FAMILIES AND LOVE THEIR LIVES."

—PRINCIPAL DESIGNER
CAROLINE TYLER DECESARE

Brower says the family uses the house year-round, boating in the summer and skiing in the winter. "They participate in every outdoor activity you can think of and probably some you have never heard of," DeCesare says. To that end, the house is practical, with hard-wearing, wide-plank wood floors; a tiled floor and pleather-covered bench in the mudroom; and indoor-outdoor fabric on the upholstered porch furniture. Last summer, the homeowners hosted a daughter's wedding at the house, and friends and family filled every bunk and bed.

"I love spaces that tell a story," DeCesare says. "The story this family wants to tell is: We want you here, and we want to be together and enjoy this area." □

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"THIS FAMILY
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ABOVE A freestanding concrete tub is a sturdy counterpoint to delicate curtains featuring birds and plants in crewel embroidery. On the walls are paper cuttings of quilt patterns.

RIGHT Shiplap paneling lends a crisp appearance to this guest space, which is called Huckleberry Hideaway. "Huckleberries are big in this area," Brower says, "so we pulled the berry colors into fabric patterns." A framed Guatemalan story blanket hangs above the leather headboard. **BELOW** A design plan that emphasizes contrast plays out in the primary bathroom, where a dark walnut vanity and cream-painted armoire balance masculine and feminine tones. The floors are covered in mosaic marble tile.



ABOVE A new vanity features leather pull handles, and an antique armoire offers extra storage to guests. On the floor, tiny mosaic tiles form a plaid pattern. **ABOVE RIGHT** Set by the patio doors with a perfect view of the lake, this reading nook is inviting thanks to the leather studded slipper chair and plaid tufted ottoman. An owl print in a hand-painted frame is another avian design touch. **RIGHT** Pattern and texture strike a relaxed note in the light-filled primary bedroom. The curtains and wall-to-wall carpet feature two types of plaid to cozy up the space. The fabric draped over the headboard is a nod to a horse blanket. Windows above the bed are covered in tone-on-tone Roman shades so the emphasis is placed on the lake view out the glass doors.

