

SPECIAL ISSUE: HANDCRAFTED LOG HOMES

LOG HOME

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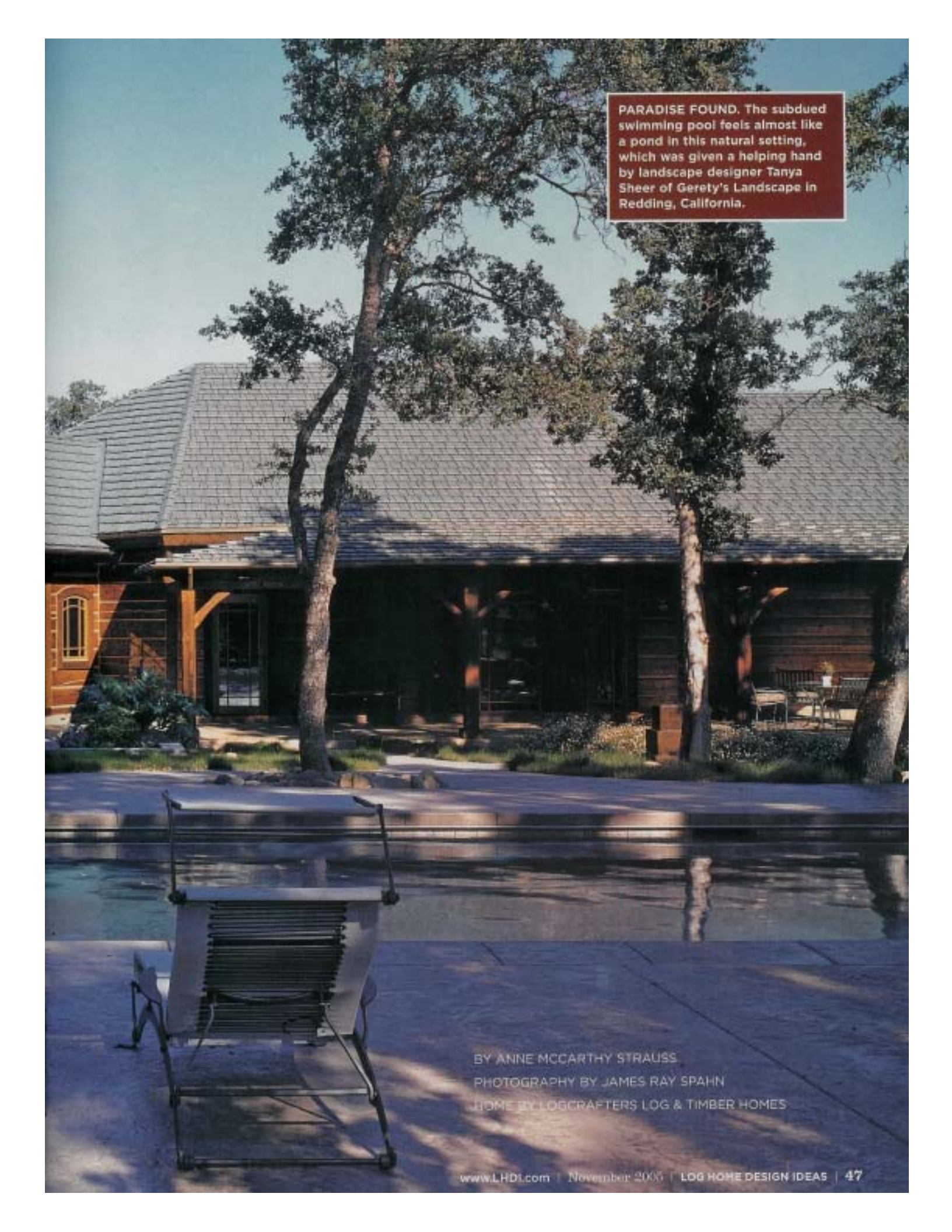


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the NATURALS

A California couple gets down to earth in their handcrafted haven

A photograph of a log home with a swimming pool and trees. The log home has a grey shingled roof and a covered porch area. Two large trees are in the foreground, and a swimming pool is visible in the middle ground. A lounge chair is in the foreground on the left. The scene is set in a natural, wooded area.

PARADISE FOUND. The subdued swimming pool feels almost like a pond in this natural setting, which was given a helping hand by landscape designer Tanya Sheer of Gerety's Landscape in Redding, California.

BY ANNE MCCARTHY STRAUSS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES RAY SPAHN
HOME BY LOGCRAFTERS LOG & TIMBER HOMES



LEFT: A Waterford wood stove is nestled inside a hearth of natural and faux lodge rock. The handcrafted sofa complements the coffee table made from an antique door. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Mission and Spanish antiques adorn the home.

Deciding to build a log home on a whim is not the usual path most buyers take. But for Jeff Krahling, a nephrologist and intensive care physician, and his wife Anne Marie Della Valle, a stay-at-home Mom and former nurse, the idea of building a log home was just that: a spur-of-the-moment idea that caught fire.

The two were already fans of natural living spaces. For the last decade, they had lived in an adobe home in New Mexico. But they decided it was time to return to Northern California to be closer to family and seek a relaxed lifestyle.

Just minutes after turning over their keys to a real estate agent for an open house, they hit a local bookstore to pass the time. Jeff happened across a book about log homes—and the rest is history.

"We went into the project rather spontaneously," says Anne Marie. "But once we made our decision, we never looked back."

The couple bought a five-acre wooded property in Redding, California. But it was Logcrafters Log & Timber Homes—all the way in St. Ignatius, Montana—that won their business, customizing a floor-plan to suit their style and needs.

Sure Fit

Anne Marie and Jeff selected Western white pine logs for the exterior and Douglas fir for the support structure. The logs were hand-hewn with a foot adze, a traditional tool used for centuries to square and flatten logs.

Each corner is then hand-cut into a full self-locking dovetail corner inspired by Scandinavian craftsmanship. The result: a rustic yet elegant line.

To ensure perfect assembly, Logcrafters built the home in its log yard, numbered each piece of timber to match the shop

COZY CATHEDRALS. Twelve-foot-high walls paired with 25-foot-high ceilings give the sitting room a spacious, yet intimate feel. A "Tibetan Rose" area rug from Ethan Allen adorns the hickory floors.





LEFT: At meal time, the family enjoys their surroundings from arched Craftsman-style windows. "You just can't reproduce the feeling that comes from living with natural elements," says Anne Marie. **ABOVE:** The handsome monk's table is a family antique.

drawings, then disassembled the structure and shipped it to the site.

In the interim, Jeff and Anne Marie hired a local contractor, Northwest Homes, to prepare the foundation and sub floor. When the log package arrived, the crew followed Logcrafters' manual—reassembling the home quickly, without a single hitch.

It's Only Natural

Jeff and Anne Marie chose to use all-natural building materials for their log home.

"Our adobe house was a wonderfully warm and earthy setting," says Anne Marie. "With a traditional home, no matter what you

bring in or how you decorate, you just can't reproduce the feeling that comes from living among all natural elements."

In the couple's new home, natural elements abound, including marble for the bathroom floors, granite for the kitchen countertops and hickory flooring. The fireplace is faced with beautiful ledge rock. On the wall above is the home's only faux finishing material.

"Originally, we had not planned to extend the hearth all the way up the wall," says Anne Marie. "We changed our minds once the project was underway. And, at that point, the fireplace foundation would not support the weight of all that

natural rock. So we ended up going with a synthetic up there." Luckily, the man-made stone is almost a perfect match.

Simply the Best

To stay true to the home's historic design, the couple selected arched Craftsman-style windows—opting to leave them naked (i.e., no window treatments), which allows natural light to flow freely inside. The home's simple Kalco lighting fixtures are equally understated.

"Wood walls need a lot of light," says Anne Marie, noting that logs are not as reflective as some other building materials. "So, in addition to the visible fixtures, we added



SHINE ON. Reflective surfaces, from granite countertops to stainless-steel appliances, pair beautifully with the kitchen's matte wood cabinetry.



The family enjoys their **outdoor living** spaces to the fullest. A favorite spot? The covered **redwood porch** that wraps around the house.

lots of hidden lights, including some recessed lighting above and below a soffit in the great room.

"They're positioned to show off the irregularities in the logs," adds Jeff. "They light up the walls in a unique, comforting way."

Go With the Flow

"This home incorporates an impressive amount of living space into one story," says Jesse Brockmeyer, Logcrafters' marketing director. "Thanks to the angular floorplan, it feels far more spacious than its 3,700 square feet."

One space-stretching strategy was to maximize outdoor living

spaces, including a redwood porch that wraps all the way around the house. The sloped roof extends over the porch, providing the exterior logs and window trim extra protection from the elements.

"After the aluminum hip roof was installed, we also opened up the interior a bit more," says Anne Marie. "We decided that the walls would be just 12 feet high even though the ceilings are 25 feet high." The result is a very private yet open living space.

Now happily settled into their new abode, the couple and their two sons enjoy sharing their log home's beautiful common areas.

LEFT: This simple and sweet bedroom features a quilt from Yves Delorme France and a Pier 1 bench. **MIDDLE:** A vintage-style faucet completes this "shapely" soaking tub from Sunrise Specialty Co. **RIGHT:** Handblown glass ornaments give the covered porch a punch of primary color.

But each member of the family has a favorite solo spot, too.

"For me, it's the kitchen, because I cook all the time," says Anne Marie. Jeff loves chilling out in the living room.

And the boys? No surprise, they love the outside. Among the towering oak trees and crushed-gravel pathways, this duo can pretend to be anything from monsters to spacemen—or even Wild West pioneers living in a log home. ■



HOMESPECS

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