

RUSTIC

inspiration



Taking cues from farm and mountainside retreats

Inspiration can come from many places. Terry Polyak found inspiration for his timber frame cottage in his office building.

Few of us consider our offices inspirational, especially when designing an away-from-work cottage retreat, but Terry's office is an exception. The building, which features exposed brick and raw wood, warm colours and textures, made his imagination run wild.

The problem was, the cottage he had purchased did not match the vision.

"We loved the lot, but the cottage that was on it wasn't at all what we wanted," says Terry. By tearing the cottage down, Terry and his wife could replace the building with the textures and characters that filled his imagination. "I saw the potential and had a vision for what could be."

The cottage would be open, great for entertaining, featuring walls and windows that would bring the outdoors in, all with a contemporary post and beam design.

"I had been to a friend's timber frame cottage before and loved

the post and beam look," says Terry. So when it came to building his own cottage, he sought out Normerica. "I don't remember how I discovered Normerica, but once my wife and I stopped in and met the team, I felt no need to go anywhere else."

Collaborative design

Terry says working with Normerica was one of his best choices in the cottage build. Not only were they able to create a custom timber frame design, but they also offered a level of collaboration that he didn't expect.

"I kept on researching styles I liked: farmhouses, mountain lodges, rustic cabins. I'd send them to the Normerica team, along with my own drawings of what I wanted to see," says Terry, a graphic designer and artist. "They wove those ideas into the design. They allowed me to be creative, while also being a great sounding board for what would work and what wouldn't."

But Normerica wasn't simply working with Terry – they also had to work with the confines laid out by their building permit. The allowable footprint was smaller than Terry

wanted, but that didn't limit Normerica's ability to build a cottage that wowed.

Rugged appeal

As you drive up to the cottage, it oozes farmhouse appeal. But from the lake, the design revels in elements of modern mountain lodge.

To accentuate the exposed timber frame posts, Terry sourced metal roofing that aged to a rusted red after only a few months of wear. "It has that rugged, aged look, without being aged at all."

A deck on the lake side spans the length of the cottage, perfect for entertaining outdoors.

Inside, the cottage features a vaulted ceiling and double-hinged doors that open completely, removing the barrier between the indoor great hall and the large deck outside.

A Muskoka room features a mix of post and beam and barrier-free design, using floor to ceiling motorized screens that roll away during the day and roll back into place in the evening when the bugs come out.

Terry also worked with Normerica to design a bar in the walk-out basement. "It has timber beams, reclaimed wood details and a full bar sink for mixing and prepping drinks."

They also designed a garage on the property, which includes a second-floor loft-style living space where Terry's kids and their friends can relax and have fun.

Enjoy everywhere

When asked about his favourite space, Terry pauses before concluding that he loves every single space.

"When we designed it, we wanted every room to cause our guests to gasp and say 'how did you come up with that? I love it!' and I think we accomplished that," he says.

Of course, how the family uses the cottage changes

season by season. In the winter, the great hall is perfect for hosting Christmas get-togethers, allowing the family to cook, dine and relax together – all within one open space. In the summer, those get-togethers seem to happen more outdoors, in the Muskoka room and on the lake-facing deck.

But what he loves most about his family's new cottage is how it embodied the vision he had first had for their lakeside retreat.

"I'm an artist and a graphic designer. What I do can be a bit off-the-wall," says Terry. "But Normerica embraced it and allowed me to express myself."

The result was nothing short of fantastic. **DS**

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