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# Their Own Private Montana

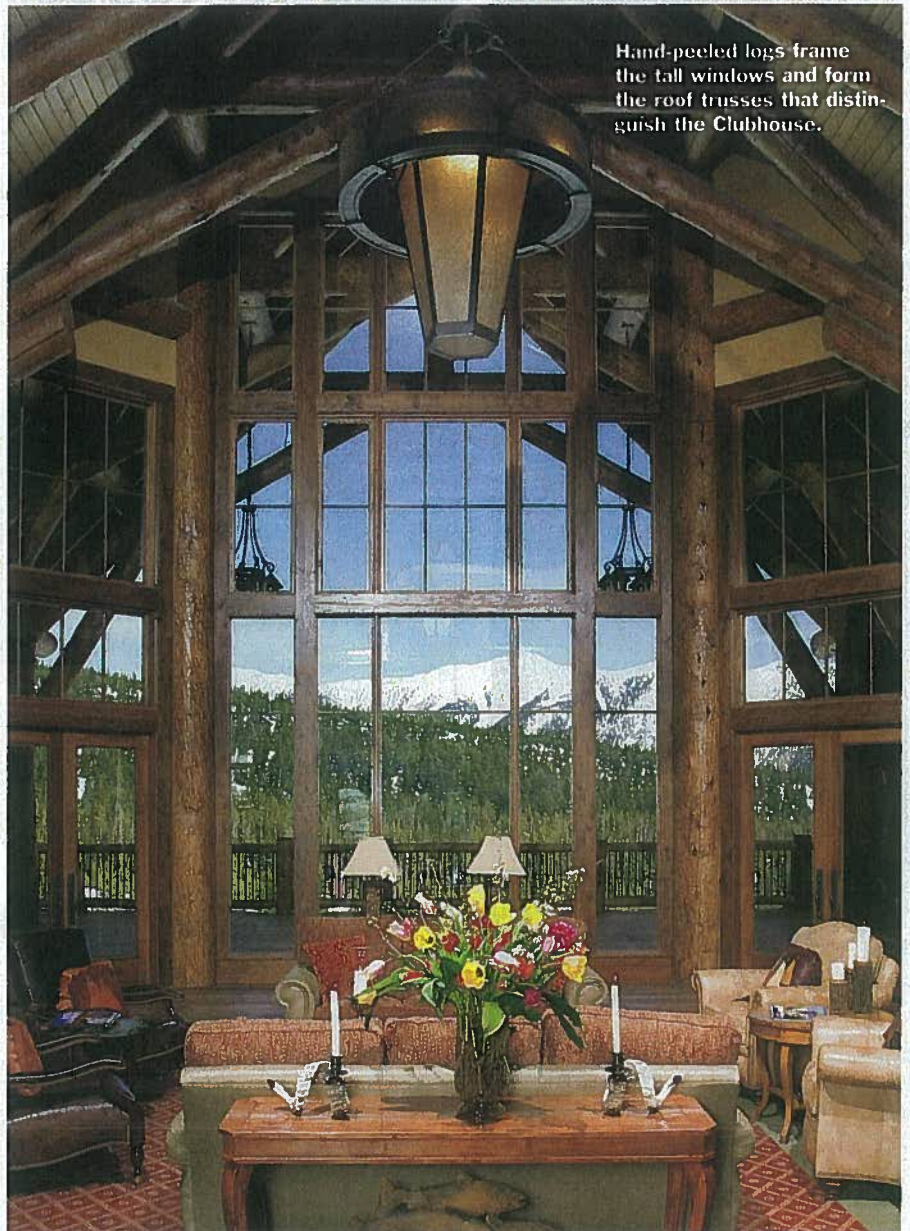
**Western wilderness setting inspires a log-friendly community.**

MONTANA CONTINUES to lure people seeking the authenticity of the American West and its abundant wilderness. With such attractions to offer, developments abound. One is The Club at Spanish Peaks, a private residential community located on 5,700 acres in a secluded valley right next door to four million acres of rugged nature encompassing Yellowstone National Park, Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area and Gallatin National Forest.

When developer Jim Dolan asked John Burkholder to design the community, he had a clear vision in mind. "He wanted it to be purely Montana," says Burkholder, a principal of Hart Howerton architectural, land planning and landscape firm. "In Montana, it's more wild, more genuine, so that was exciting for us because we love that kind of architecture. It gave us a chance to really get down to the basics of what made that building style work. I think of it as a more pure form of inspiration from the old lodges of the national parks around the West that were built in the 1920s."

Stringent standards maintain architectural consistency with Dolan's vision. Homes must use native materials: wood, stone, log and timber-frame construction and some rustic metal. An example is the Settlement, a neighborhood at the club that resembles an old family compound, with stone-and-timber lodges loosely gathered around pools for swimming, fishing and ice-skating.

The epitome of the community's architecture is the Clubhouse. Its great room, dining room, bar and entry are all full-log construction, and the box



Hand-peeled logs frame the tall windows and form the roof trusses that distinguish the Clubhouse.

around the kitchen and locker rooms is a stick-built structure with half-log siding. "In terms of construction, to combine a framed building with parts of it being log structure, that was a real effective way today to produce the log look," says Burkholder. "The marriage of technologies works well."

Massive Engelmann spruce logs from British Columbia, many 24 to 36 inches in diameter, serve as trusses and rafters in the 32,000-square-foot building. "The whole idea of historical buildings is to have the building be subordinate to the landscape so that you bring the outside in," Burkholder explains. "The structural expression

of the trusses and columns, rafters and wall systems and logs all are meant to feel like they are part of the landscape. And the great room of the clubhouse lines right up on the highest of the Spanish Peaks, Wilson Peak. The scale of the building reflects the scale and drama of the setting."

All the wall logs are hand peeled and chinked, and the corners are Swedish coped. Guests instantly feel comfortable in the Clubhouse, where some rooms are small enough for intimate gatherings and others are ideal for large New Year's Eve parties. "The Clubhouse really functions well for all the different types of activities held there,"

The Club at Spanish Peaks photo