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Fabulous FIRE FEATURES

NO MATTER THE SEASON, THE FIREPLACE IS THE HEART OF THE HOME

BY LISA READIE MAYER

A SOURCE OF WARMTH, comfort and beauty in wintertime, the fireplace beckons everyone and everything inside the cabin – from snow-dampened socks drying on the hearth to tuckered-out kids sprawled in front with a mug of cocoa after sledding. But, even in the “off-season,” the fireplace remains an important focal point. No wonder we adorn its mantel and hearth with our favorite accessories and seasonal trimmings. Here are some design ideas for making the fireplace the heart of your cabin home.



Photo by Karl Neumann Photography

▲ Make it work

What's the best way to deal with a design challenge? Go with the flow! Instead of avoiding it, this fireplace was designed to conform to the room's sloping ceiling, creating a cozy nook in this log cabin. The Montana Moss stone front and reclaimed oak mantel soften the look of the gas fireplace insert. Rustic decorative elements add a touch of whimsy.

Design: Faure Halvorsen Architects, www.faurehalvorsen.com

Builder: Teton Heritage Builders, www.tetonheritagebuilders.com

► Scenic route

When the view is this pretty, you don't want to block it. Here, oversize windows flank the wood-burning fireplace to showcase the scenery outside the cabin. The light and dark variations of the custom-blended Loon Lake and Clark Fork ledgestone pick up the colors of the Douglas fir mantel and the arched beams and trusses in the vaulted ceiling. The fireplace's quoined corners and hearth are done in contrasting Frontier tumbled stone.

Design: Frog Rock Design, www.frogrockdesign.com

Builder: Dovetail Construction, www.dovetailmontana.com

Photo by Karl Neumann Photography





Photo by Cesar Rubio

▲ Streamlined simplicity

A sleek linear gas-burning fireplace is right at home in this contemporary cabin. But to prevent it from appearing stark, the warmth of the wood on the floor, ceiling and walls balances the cool tile colors and modern design of the horizontal fireplace. The space is a study in simplicity and minimalism, but still welcoming and comfortable after a day of winter outdoor fun.

Design: Burton Architecture, www.burtonarchitect.com

Builder: Lawrence Construction Inc., www.lawrenceconstruction.biz

► Narrow escape

In a narrow room, use height to your advantage and go vertical. Here, a tall and narrow wood-burning fireplace sits between two slender, floor-to-ceiling windows, left bare so light floods the room. The fireplace mantel and surround are made of precast concrete that looks like it was hewn from slabs of natural limestone. The connection to nature is carried through with simple accessory pieces – a vase of wildflowers and a wood-carved duck – on the mantel.

Design: Bosworth Hoedemaker, www.bosworthhoedemaker.com

Builder: Ravenhill Construction Inc., www.ravenhillconstruction.com



Photo by Michael Jensen, courtesy Bosworth Hoedemaker



Photo by Rick Hammer, courtesy Lands End Development

▲ Accent on fun

Bright splashes of color, tons of natural light, and whimsical works of art fill this cabin great room with a sense of joy and fun. An industrial-looking, wood-burning fireplace with a metal façade dominates the room, but a stone hearth and timber mantel keep it anchored to nature. Two red leather sofas, set at a jaunty angle, add to the charm.

Design/Builder: Lands End Development, www.landsenddev.com



◀ Drama queen

A soaring wood-burning fireplace makes a dramatic statement in a room with cathedral-height ceilings. Using fieldstone veneer – thin cuts of the real stone – lightens the weight of such a massive fireplace. The raised hearth is topped with Mahogany flagstone steppers that have been cut in irregular shapes and fit together like puzzle pieces, and the wraparound mantel holds changing displays of nature's seasonal bounty. ■

Design/Builder:
Lands End Development, www.landsenddev.com

Dinner and a movie in front of the fireplace is a favorite Sunday-night tradition in writer Lisa Readie Mayer's home.

Photo by Rick Hammer, courtesy Lands End Development

▶ Sibling rivalry

A big-screen TV can compete with the fireplace for attention in a room. Here, they share the spotlight equally – along with some handsome bookcases – in a custom-built wall unit detailed with architectural moldings and wainscot panels. The tongue-and-groove beadboard on the ceiling is echoed in the bookcases and lends a cottagey feel to the nearly all-white room. The natural brick fireplace has a wood-burning insert with a fan system to return maximum heat to the room.

Design: Savvy Interiors, www.savvyinteriors.com



Photo courtesy Susan Wintersteen, Savvy Interiors