

Finally Home

After a year of following Jim and Michele's log home journey, it's ready to be revealed — and it's a house worth waiting for.

By Adam Headley
Photography by Mark Sorenson

Out back, the home's abundant amenities are on full display, with a 16-by-24-foot in-ground gunite swimming pool, a fire pit and porch and patio entertaining spaces across two stories.

dirt
to
done
FINALE

HOME DETAILS

SQUARE FOOTAGE
4,380

BEDROOMS BATHS
3 3 FULL, 1 HALF

LOG PROVIDER/DESIGNER
COVENTRY LOG HOMES
coventryloghomes.com

BUILDER
BRANDON PERRY

60

Located in southwestern Maine near the Salmon Falls River, Jim and Michele Ducharme's 4,380-square-foot home sits where Michele's grandparents' former home once was. The 1800s house had fallen into disrepair, but the Ducharmes were able to leverage the utility connections as well as the recently repaved driveway.



right The Ducharmes attest the front porch is their favorite of the home's many outdoor spaces, and their basset hounds agree. The family gathers out front for morning coffee set to the soundtrack of birdsong.

below The kitchen may get its charm from its country style, but it's got storage smarts, too, with a sprawling 9-by-4-foot center island and customized perimeter cabinetry.



For Jim and Michele Ducharme, building their log home of a lifetime was an epic labor love, all set in the familiar surroundings of family and tradition. With it came plenty of emotions and opportunities; simply taking a moment to reflect on the process brings it all sharply into focus.

When it was finally complete, they scarcely could fathom what they had accomplished on a home site within the 25-acre tract of land near the Salmon Falls River in southwestern Maine — land that has been in the family for generations. Clocking in at 4,380 square feet of living space (plus an additional unfinished storage area), the house features three bedrooms and three full baths as well as an office, fitness room and finished basement. The adjacent barn provides 1,600 square feet with storage for Jim's car collection, while

the timber-framed pool house shelters a changing area and equipment space. A 16-by-24 in-ground gunite swimming pool and a fire pit complete the home's extensive amenities.

"Even though we've been here a while now, it still amazes me when we pull into the driveway," relays Jim. "I can't believe our dream came true, and it's honestly so much better than we had imagined it all those years ago."

From driveway to front door, the house wows all who enter.

The jewel of the entertaining space is the 868-square-foot great room, the largest space in the house, with a 28-foot cathedral ceiling, chandelier custom made by a Maine blacksmith and a stone-veneer chimney rising 40 feet tall. Local cabinetmaker Tom Penney, a craftsman the Ducharmes had engaged several times in the past, constructed the custom cabinetry in the kitchen and throughout the home. The kitchen

also features a 9-by-4-foot center island with storage at every turn. The primary bath includes a 5-by-5-foot custom tile shower that boasts luxurious heated floors. These are just a handful of the details that set the Ducharmes' home apart from the crowd.

"It's amazing," declares Michele. "Whenever I walk in the front door, it's like a warm hug. Our home is just comforting and inviting. And to think we decided to start building earlier than we planned only to finish it during the Covid outbreak and so many other changes in our lives. If we had waited, I wonder if we would ever have seen this dream come true."

The months-long adventure did include challenges and opportunities, highs and lows, periods of patience and moments of exultation tinged from time to time with frustration. In the end, the challenges were met; obstacles, overcome.



“Honestly, I think the most challenging part of the process was getting the last contractor out of here!” Jim notes with a laugh. “When we moved in, there were still a number of things being worked on – the pool and pool house, landscaping, the barn and a few finishing items in the house. For the first few months of living here, it seemed like there were different contractors coming and going day after day. They were all great people and did great work, but after more than two years working on this project, we just wanted some alone time to sit back and enjoy what they all helped us create.”

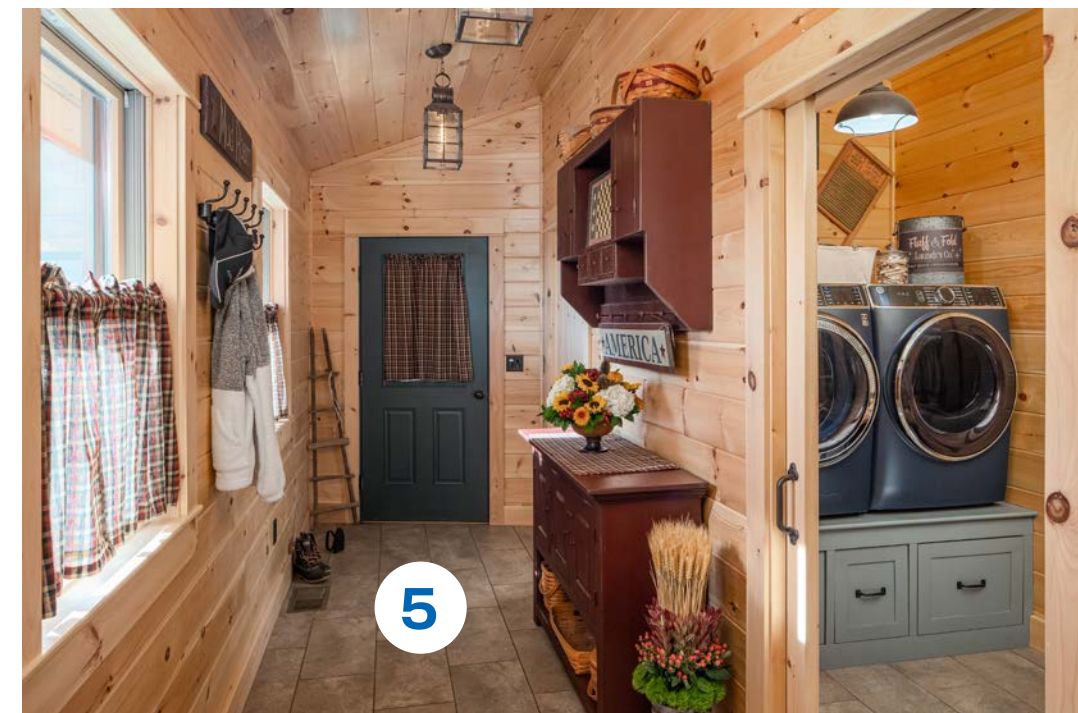
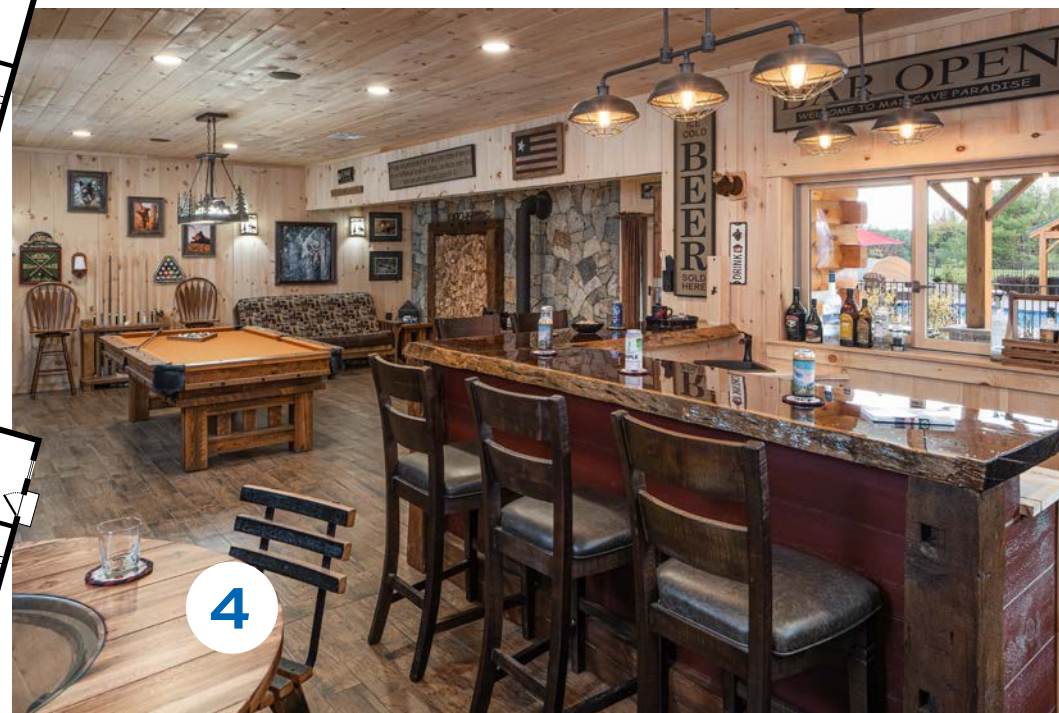
The Ducharmes praise their general contractor, Brandon Perry, and offer sound advice for any home construction project. “Find your Brandon! The relationship with your builder is key. Before you begin, ensure you have a builder that will be on the journey with you and your communication works. There were difficult times, but thanks to our relationship, we could work through them together.”

Jim and Michele also found the floor plan that fit their wants and needs. After exploring several options, they continually returned to Coventry Log Homes, and that ever-present partnership with the right builder and log crafter produced fantastic results.

Both inside and out, the home is highly functional and more than hospitable. “My favorite indoor space has to be the great room,” Michele says, “especially in the colder months when the fireplace is roaring. Great family times and memories are made there. Each member of our family has their usual spot in the room where our seating just happened to create a family circle of sorts. And with our open



The largest space in the house at 868 square feet, the great room features a 28-foot cathedral ceiling and a wall of windows framing up an inviting stone-veneer chimney.



kitchen, it's easy to stay connected to the conversations in what feels like one large area."

Jim loves the basement, and for good reason: "OK, well, it's my 'man cave,'" he explains. "It has a full bar, pool table, large TV, several classic arcade games, pinball machines — and it's the only space I got to decorate! It's a fun space, and it's great for entertaining."

Outdoors, the Ducharme home exhibits true harmony with the surroundings, a blend of nature and creature comforts that beckons folks to rest, relax and reflect. The couple agrees that the front porch is their favorite outdoor area.

"Jim and I enjoy sitting out there in the early morning to have our first cup of coffee," comments Michele. "We love watching the hawks and

Baltimore orioles in the spring. The front porch has also become a great hangout for the family and our basset hounds as well. We all gather and have great conversations or just watch the cars go by."

Therein lies the beauty of a vision, well planned and perfectly executed. Finding the moments that make lasting memories from season to glorious season — and doing it all at home.

- 1 A barn situated adjacent to the home provides an additional 1,600 square feet of storage space, perfect for Jim's car collection.
- 2 The primary bedroom gets a boost of privacy thanks to its positioning on the second floor. Inside the suite, a ladder leads to yet another "loft," which makes the most of the available space over the bathroom and closet.
- 3 Upstairs, the bright-and-airy loft overlooks the great room and dining room and leads to the primary bedroom suite.
- 4 Downstairs is Jim's "man cave," where a full bar, a pool table, arcade games and a big-screen TV set the scene for good times.
- 5 The main garage connects to the home via a breezeway that doubles as a mudroom and laundry area. Sliding doors conceal any mess without taking up space.

See more! Find in-depth videos and past installments of the Dirt to Done series at: loghome.com/dirt-to-done-2023