

CUSTOMIZED and ready

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FEARMAN

Plenty of options when building a timber frame home

Warm, spacious and richly textured, timber frame homes incorporate the beauty of nature and a timeless style. As beautiful as they are, though, there's more than beauty to consider when building a timber frame home.

How involved do you want to be?

There's a lot involved in planning and building your own home or cottage. While some people enjoy being fully involved, others would rather leave the details to someone else.

Brian and Beth Rennie love to travel and spend half their year in Florida. They wanted to be involved, but couldn't be tied down throughout the project. "When they contacted us about designing, manufacturing and building their timber frame cottage, we knew it would require a turnkey solution from start to finish," says David McFarlane, president of Normerica. "It was important that we earn their trust upfront so that they'd be confident that their

project was in good hands while they were away and that it would be completed on time and on budget.

"We met with the Rennies and took the time to understand who they were and what their vision was. We developed a project budget, customized their design, prepared the build site, manufactured and built their home...along with the thousand other details involved in a project of this scope."

What style feels most like home?

The style you choose for your home or cottage should reflect who you are. When you see it, it should feel like home.

The Rennies started out as many of Normerica's clients do. They found a design plan on the Normerica.com site that appealed to them and used that as their starting point... and then it evolved. Normerica's design team created a customized home that reflected the Rennies' tastes and lifestyle. For example, the family history of the property was important:

the land had been in Beth's family for generations. To honour that, trees that were cut on the property were milled into interior trim and doors, including custom barn doors crafted from ash.

The cottage's interesting and varied roof lines give it a style and personality all its own. The front boasts wraparound porches. Expansive decks at the back capture the impressive lake view.

And what about the interior finishes? Normerica helps their clients choose finishes, paint/stains, windows, even appliances. Rather than a traditional chandelier in their great room, one of the unique finishes included in the Rennies' cottage is a light fixture made from an antique kayak.

What about where it's being built?

The property where you'll build is an important piece of the puzzle. How does the house fit with the surrounding topography? Which direction should it face to make the most

of views and surroundings? Are there access or environmental considerations?

Working on this large and remote property, Normerica helped the Rennies work through the intricacies of environmental requirements, land division, utility service... even building their road access. Because of its remoteness, it was important that the building be fully self-sufficient for electricity, heating and services. And, of course, the design had to make the most of their lakefront view and surrounding forests.

How will you use it?

Your lifestyle has a lot to do with the functionality and design of a home or cottage. Do you like to entertain? Is family important with room for extended visits from adult children and grandchildren? Are you looking for privacy, comfort and the perfect spot to read a book?

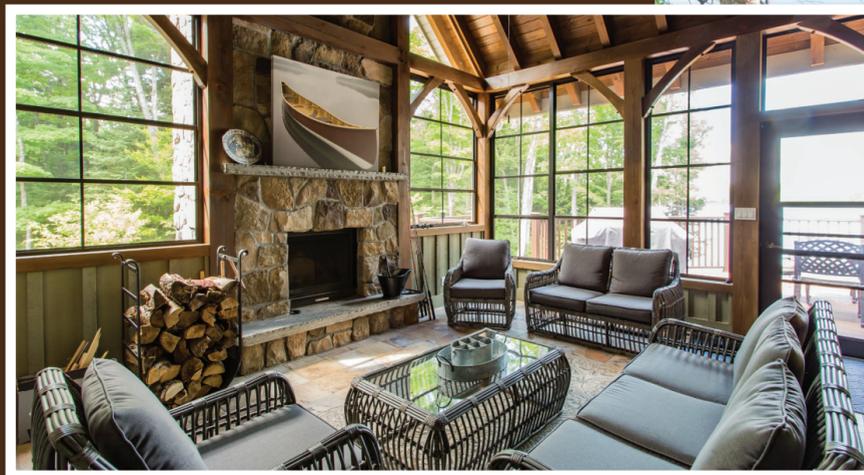
The Rennies wanted a self-contained unit above the garage to accommodate their extended family. The space includes a beautiful screened porch area

with a built-in fireplace. Inside, under the stairs and created in glass and stone, is a mini wine cellar complete with an air cooling system for the wine.

Technical requirements included allowing for a possible elevator at a later date. The land had been divided into three lots, so Normerica laid underground electrical cable to all of them – over a kilometre of cable in total – to allow for future development.

"Since 1979, we've built a reputation for combining state-of-the-art design engineering with traditional handcrafted quality in our timber frame structures," says David McFarlane. "Not every client wants a turnkey, start-to-finish arrangement, or has us conduct the build. And that's fine. Whether it's design, manufacture and build, or collaborating with architects and designers; whether you want to add a great room, build a boat house, cottage, home or lodge, we scale our services to meet each client's needs." **DS**

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