

# New England HOME

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## The Past Made New

Older Homes  
Reworked For  
Today's Families





## MOUNTAIN MAKEOVER

The Vermont getaway's extensive exterior facelift includes a new standing-seam roof and siding, a streamlined and modernized deck, an expanded master bedroom, and a welcoming new entryway.

**A Vermont ski house sheds its 1980s skin  
in favor of a contemporary, yet classic, look.**

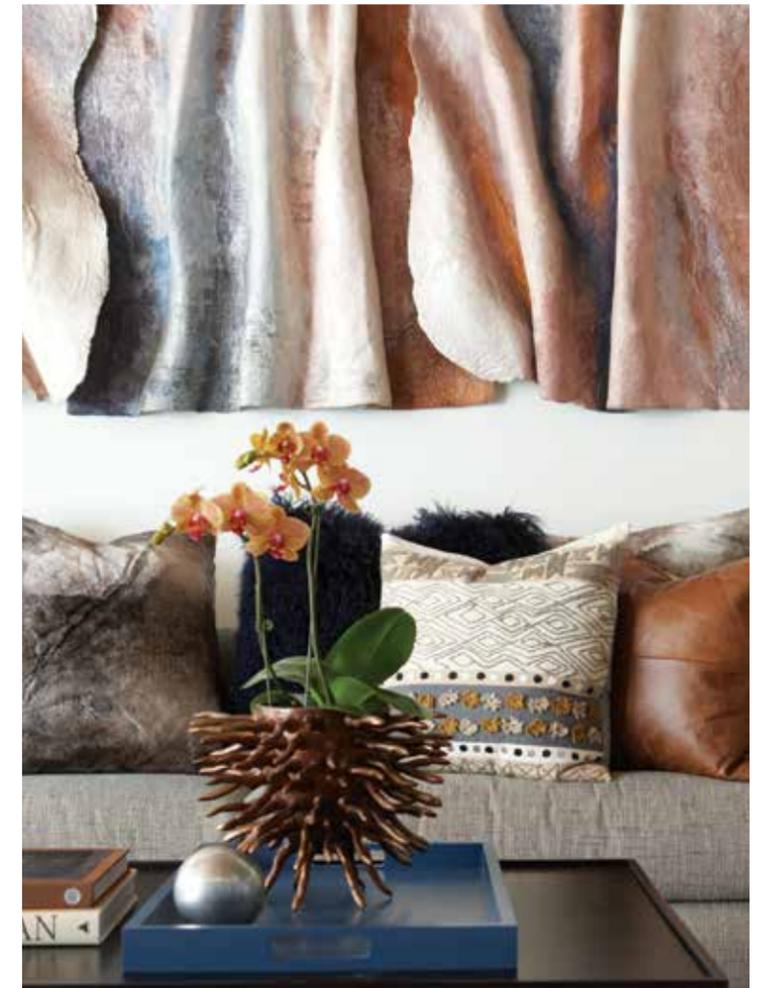
TEXT BY **ROBERT KIENER** | EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LES JÖRGENSEN**  
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Multiple textures—in the artwork by Kathryn Lipke through Stowe’s West Branch Gallery and in the variety of fabrics—along with shots of bold sky-blue against a neutral background lend interest to the living room. **FACING PAGE:** A natural cleft slate fireplace studied with custom-made sconces is a focal point of the room.

**“WHO KNEW?”** asks Kerry Berchem, as she smiles and recalls how the modest renovation she and her husband, Craig Goos, planned for their 1980s ski home in Ludlow, Vermont, morphed into an extensive, year-long redesign and makeover. The couple expected to spend two or three months on the revamping, but “one thing invariably led to another and it just sort of grew and grew,” explains Berchem, a financial executive based in Fairfield, Connecticut. “But we got exactly the house we were hoping for. We are thrilled!”

Berchem, who grew up in Vermont and loves skiing, introduced her husband and their three children to the sport at Okemo Mountain, and the family took so eagerly to the slopes that they began looking for a



#### PROJECT TEAM

**Architecture:** Jodie Fielding, Roots Design Studio  
**Interior design:** Holly Hickey Moore, Holly Hickey Moore Interior Design  
**Builder:** The McKernon Group



The kitchen (left) and adjacent dining area (facing page) feature a combination of open shelving and custom cabinets. A pair of spider-like ceiling lamps that can be reconfigured to shed light where it's most needed illuminates the raised island, which steps down to meet the wood-and-metal dining table.

**“When the house is full, guests can be sitting at the table eating or chatting, while the living room is packed with people enjoying the fire or the views,” Kerry Berchem says. “There’s a sense of separation and room for everyone.”**

go,” Moore says. We decided to aim for a timeless, eclectic design.”

Moore remembers that the couple asked for a design they described as “boutique hotel meets contemporary ski chalet.” Berchem adds, “We knew that we would have lots of visitors and wanted a boutique hotel look so guests wouldn’t feel they were descending on us and invading our home, but would feel relaxed when they came to stay with us.”

weekend ski home in the area. They eventually found this five-bedroom, four-bath, 2,700-square-foot home close to the mountain. “It was a great house, but it needed updating,” remembers Berchem.

After spending time in the home for a year, the couple decided to renovate the kitchen, but then, as Berchem relates, “We kept seeing other things that we wanted to change. It had good bones and suited our family, but we wanted to put our own stamp on it.”

To do just that, Berchem and Goos enlisted the aid of designer Holly Hickey Moore, who practiced in Vermont at the time. “I visited the home and agreed with Kerry that the time-warp, 1980s look—white walls, Berber carpeting, knotty pine ceilings—had to

The designer brought in another Vermonter, architect Jodie Fielding, initially to help finalize a new fireplace and stairway design. “But Jodie also had so many great ideas about updating the house that the project suddenly expanded in scope—again,” says Berchem.

“Like many houses of that period, it had more deck than needed,” Fielding says. “In fact, there was so much deck that you could barely see the house.”

The couple agreed, and much of the expanse was removed or reconfigured. The decking that remained was replaced with clear cedar and edged with hand-rails of sleek metal topped with cedar.

The home also lacked an obvious front door, so





Bright, fun colors—from the wall tiles behind the wood-burning stove to the rainbow-hued carpet to the throw pillows—dominate the home's basement level, which is the children's domain, complete with ping-pong table and rooms for games galore.

**“I repeated many of the colors to make the design more cohesive, much like a hotel uses color to pull together its different rooms,” says Holly Hickey Moore**



Fielding suggested adding the striking entry section, also finished with clear cedar to blend in with the decking, along with a custom-designed ski and boot room. While they liked the rest of the house's basic configuration, the couple decided to bump out the master bedroom and incorporate a dramatic master bathroom.

“It was a challenge to work on this project because we were changing so many features on the fly,” says contractor Justus Cameron, vice president of The McKernon Group, the company responsible for the renovation as well as for the home's custom cabinetry. “It was one of those renovations where you'd uncover siding and discover rotten wood or take an interior wall down and realize we needed new insulation. Before we knew it, we were taking the inside walls down to the studs and reinsulating,

replacing the roof, and redoing the foundation.”

To create a feeling of continuity throughout the house, Moore chose a color palette that includes lots of charcoals and other grays, creams, and European oak finishes. The kitchen cabinets, all of the interior doors, and the window frames were painted with the same gravel-gray color. “I repeated many of the colors to make the design more cohesive, much like a hotel uses colors to pull together or brand its different rooms,” the designer says. She updated the Berber-covered floors by installing cerused white-oak engineered-wood flooring throughout the house; she applied the same wood to the ceiling of the great room.

Moore and Fielding joined forces to design the living room's arresting ceiling-high fireplace of natural cleft slate with a custom quartzite surround. The previous fireplace was built of fieldstone, but the

**“Before we knew it, we were taking the inside walls down to the studs and reinsulating, replacing the roof, and redoing the foundation,” says The McKernon Group’s Justus Cameron.**

**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Snowflake-inspired tiles in the master bathroom’s shower suit the home’s ski-area location. The bath also holds a twelve-foot-long marble sink. Natural materials in neutral tones add to the master bedroom’s peaceful ambience.



owners wanted something with a “simpler, cleaner” look. “The cleft-edge gives a textural focal point to the room,” says Fielding. “It also provides a strong visual contrast to the quartzite.”

The massive fireplace is studded with a collection of custom-designed lighting sconces, fabricated from the same wood used in the room’s floor and ceiling.

The design team and Berchem purposely chose smaller furnishings to ensure the rooms look clean and uncluttered. “I wanted to retain an efficient use of space and to do that, we kept the scale of the furniture relatively small,” she says. The eclectic interior design also made it possible to add a few of her favorite pieces of furniture and artwork to the mix.

The kitchen, the site of the makeover that eventually inspired this whole-house renovation, sets the tone for much of the project. “I love the kitchen’s clean look, from the open shelves to the custom cabi-

nets to the wood-clad range hood to the island that tumbles down into the dining table,” says Berchem.

Although the kitchen and the living room flow into one another, the spaces feel very different. “When the house is full, guests can be sitting at the table eating or chatting, while the living room is packed with people enjoying the fire or the views,” Berchem says. “There’s a sense of separation and room for everyone.”

She and her husband report they are so pleased with the transformation of their once-dated ski home, they admit that one day—in the distant future—they would like to make it their retirement home.

“There is a timeless, warm feeling to this house that is so inviting,” she says. “Who wouldn’t want to spend as much time as possible here?” ■■

**RESOURCES:** For more information about this home, see page 172.

