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You Dream, We Design

SOMETIMES, finding that perfect log-home design can seem nearly impossible, with so many different companies—and even more floor plans—to choose from. To alleviate some of the legwork, we took two couples in search of their dream home and paired them with some of the best in the business to devise a log-home plan that embodies their visions.



Family Affair

Looking ahead to retirement, William and Tish Vaughan want a plan that allows them to relax and enjoy their home, but also is equipped to handle multiple visitors for when their three sons grow up and begin to bring their own families to stay. Large entertainment spaces—i.e., the kitchen—were key to their design, as were varied sleeping areas, including a bonus space above the garage. The design team at Green Bay-based Wisconsin Log Homes took on that challenge. Here are the ideas that they came up with.

Future homeowners: William and Tish Vaughan

Desired square footage: 2,400 to 2,800; primary residence

Location of your new home: Winona, Mississippi

Special property features: Private, secluded family land featuring plenty of trees, with a hilltop view overlooking a pond

Number of people living in the home: Two adults (with three boys likely visiting with their future families)

Most important rooms: For the main living area, a large, open kitchen with an island and/or eat-at bar, casual dining room and a great room, with a fireplace, overlooking the backyard. For sleeping accommodations, a main-level master bedroom, two bedrooms and one or two baths upstairs, and a loft area. Also, an attached garage, preferably with a bonus area over it for a bunk room and/or storage.

Outdoor space: “We like simple designs that will allow for easy retirement living,” Tish notes. Such designs should include large windows in the great room to capture views and a screened-in porch on the back of the house off the kitchen, dining and great room areas. Added bonus: an outdoor kitchen.

Why a log home? “We love the look of a rustic, open plan, and our property setting is perfect for a log home,” Tish says.

Designer’s thoughts

“Planning for retirement, William and Tish envisioned a floor plan that offers easy living for two, but also accommodates visits from their three sons and their future families,” notes Stephanie Janczak, marketing and public relations representative for Wisconsin Log Homes. The Vaughans worked with personal home consultant Ehren Graf and the design team at Wisconsin Log Homes on preliminary plans to create their dream design.

“Starting from the overall concept of our existing Amber Ridge plan, we were able to customize the design to fit the Vaughans’ specific requirements,” she adds. “The energy-efficient, low-maintenance home utilizes our Thermal-Log Building System and features an open concept with comfortable indoor and outdoor living spaces—something very important to the future homeowners. Designed for convenient living and entertaining, the spacious kitchen flows efficiently into the window-filled great room, dining area, screened-in porch and outdoor patio. William and Tish had specific requests in mind for the master suite, and we were able to accommodate them all, including a secluded patio, to create a private space the couple will enjoy for years to come.”



Upper Level

proposed plan

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 3,056

BEDROOMS: 3

BATHS: 3 1/2



Main Level



Room-by-Room Design:

GREAT ROOM: "Cathedral ceilings with an impressive window wall overlooking the backyard, a stone fireplace, and handcrafted logs create a dramatic, inviting feel in the heart of the home," Stephanie notes. "Built-in cabinets for the television and nearby half bathroom were also important requests."

KITCHEN: "The goal was to create an efficient, attractive kitchen," Stephanie explains. "The U-shaped design includes a peninsula and storage island, which provide a generous stretch of counter space for prep and entertaining. Other requests from the Vaughns included a window over the sink, pantry and granite countertops. Convenient access from the garage makes unloading groceries simple."

DINING AREA: "The Vaughns preferred a casual dining space adjacent to the kitchen rather than a formal dining room," Stephanie relays. "Requirements for this area include a built-in china cabinet and large eating area with outdoor views. To merge the indoor and outdoor living space, sliding glass doors open to the screened-in porch and the patio."

MASTER SUITE: "To fulfill the couple's current and future needs, the master suite is privately placed in its own wing of the main level and offers a secluded patio and luxury bath," Stephanie says. "William and Tish envisioned his-and-her walk-in closets, a large walk-in shower with bench, double sinks, a private toilet area and linen storage for this area."

LAUNDRY ROOM: "Using space to its best advantage, built-in storage cabinets and double upright freezers were a must for the laundry and adjacent mudroom," Stephanie notes.

UPPER LEVEL: "To accommodate family and guests, two private bedroom suites with charming window dormers are located upstairs," Stephanie explains. "A spacious loft overlooking the great room can function as a home office, exercise space, game room or cozy sitting area."

STORAGE: "The couple took advantage of every nook and cranny for extra storage, including the space above the garage and below the staircases," Stephanie adds.