

Cole Contracting Creates An Idyllic Hideaway On Lake Eden



Story and Photos By Kim Dixon

Tucked away on Lake Eden, among the birch and spruce, loons and ducks, lies a tranquil and happy place for homeowners Nick and Tara Montalto: a 1,600-plus sq. ft., four-bedroom country lake house with Adirondack-inspired designs and finishes. Leading a tour, Dan Cole of Cole Contracting in Johnson was proud to show us the 14 months of work he put into this gorgeous property, built from hand-drawn designs and blueprints by architect Paul Trudell of Silver Ridge Design in Hyde Park.

At the end of a half-mile switchback driveway, the house gives first impressions of warmth and relaxation, even in the middle of a northern Vermont winter. The layout features an open design with plenty of width and depth, but also verticality. The kitchen, living and dining rooms are all open to each other with a wall of windows reaching for the 26-foot ceilings, and the inviting view of Lake Eden to tie them all together. Douglas Fir plank-style stairs access the upstairs loft, which spans half the width of the house and shares the lake view with the main floor. The master bedroom and bath, second and third bedrooms and a second bathroom sit on



The master bedroom of the home on Lake Eden built by Cole Contracting in north central Vermont.

the main floor. A loft overlooks the main floor and breathtaking lake view.

Pine shiplap boards are found throughout the dwelling. The vaulted ceiling is adorned with one-by-six-inch stained boards, with one-by-eight-inch painted boards on the walls. Cole also constructed 21 handmade solid pine doors for the property, stating that Nick and Tara wanted the doors to reflect the other finishes in the house. So he used an Adirondack-style finish, stained vertical panels and a custom reveal between the boards, to complement the horizontal, painted panels of the walls. This is also found on the home's kitchen island and bathroom vanities, also made by Cole.

The majority of the windows in the home are double-hung, snap-on Marvin Ultrex, with a fiberglass exterior and wood interior. The wide, 16-foot sliding glass door and the adjacent windows are topped by a row of fixed transom windows that work with the slider below to further open up the landscape horizontally. The seamless flow to the back deck and the lake makes it feel less like a view and more like an open invitation to interact with nature.

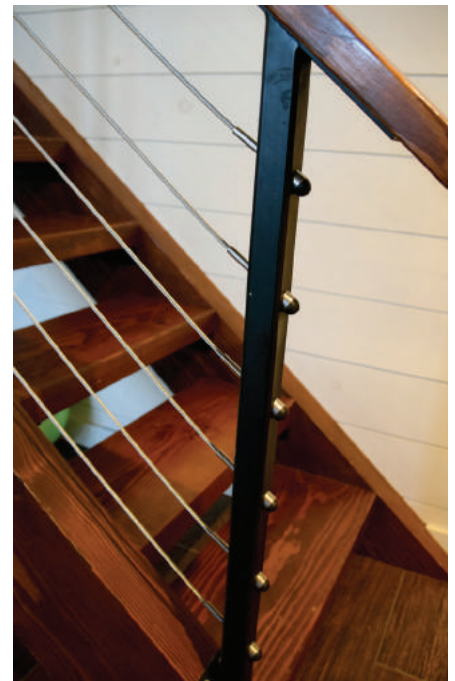
The floors, which Cole also helped to lay, are made of durable ceramic tile that can easily be mistaken for wood. This keeps the earthy, country tone of the house

without the care and upkeep required by wood flooring. The stone fireplace provides an attractive centerpiece to the family room, courtesy of Craig Armstrong.

I recently visited the house and sat down with Dan Cole to talk about the project. He's clearly happy with the results.



Dan Cole fabricated 31 doors for the project. This is one of them.



This stairway leads to the loft, which overlooks Lake Eden.



The home's living room.

“It would be a great place for ice fishing, cross country skiing, swimming in the summer, and just contemplating life,” he muses.

We talked about how architect Paul Trudel provided hand-drawn designs for the home, which Cole likes very much. He feels it provides a personal connection and warmth to a project and compliments Trudel, noting, “Being able to draw is an art form.”

Dan Cole’s approach to contracting and construction is reflected in his results and his reputation. He works with the architect to try to create what the homeowner envisions. He believes it is imperative to a successful project to have a relationship with the client(s) and to listen to their vision and make it tangible. The goal, as he puts it, is to “really hit the mark, to see people... overwhelmed with happiness. That’s what you want.”

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