A New Approach

Hoyt Homes and EverLog Systems team up in Montana's Nine Mile Valley to create a contemporary home with a traditional Montana look

Hoyt Homes Inc. of Missoula built this custom home in the Nine Mile Valley in western Montana. The home has a concrete log exterior from EverLog Systems.

Architect Pat Suppele from Studio Modera in Missoula designed this home in the Nine Mile Valley. The home was built by Hoyt Homes Inc.

Hoyt Homes hand-built the stairway out of beams and planks and assembled it with dowels. Fireplace by WarmStone Fireplaces and Designs, Livingston. Concrete logs by EverLog Systems of Missoula.

The Nine Mile Valley is one of those idyllic Montana places. A stream meanders through the broad valley and tree-covered mountains stretch into the sky. In this unmatched setting it's here that Hoyt Homes Inc. built a unique home that blends contemporary touches with the look of a log home.

Driving into the 30-acre property on the west side of Nine Mile Valley you get your first glimpse of the home, which appears to be made out of logs. But on closer inspection you see that in fact it's not a log home at all; the builder used concrete logs from EverLog Systems in Missoula to give the home the look of log, without the drying, splitting logs to be chinked nor the worry of damage from woodpeckers or mites of a traditional log home.

The home was built by **Hoyt Homes Inc.** of Missoula. Owner Wade Hoyt had never worked with concrete logs before this project, and he liked the way they added to the design of Pat Suppele, an architect with Studio Modera.

"We like the uniqueness," Hoyt said. "As an owner of a log home I know how much upkeep they are. This totally takes the upkeep out of the picture."

EverLog Systems supplied all of the exterior log components and deck support systems, all of which were built out of concrete. With concrete logs, there is no staining, sealing, shifting or settling of the wood. "The owners wanted a worry-free home and a very energy efficient home," Stewart Hansen, president of EverLog Systems, said. "They understood what they wanted, and they just didn't want any of those maintenance issues with this house."

The owners had lived in a natural log home previous to building this home. With this home they wanted something with a more modern design appeal, along with the look of log. On the interior they used American clay to give the home Southwest design accents. By supplying everything from the concrete deck supports to the concrete "logs" used in the home, EverLog Systems was able to help Hoyt Homes' client get the home they wanted. "This really showed the diversity of our product," Hansen said. "It's an amazing house."

The soapstone fireplace from WARMSTONE FIREPLACES in Livingston is a custom design, and was built out of three large boulders.

From a design standpoint, the 4,400-square-foot home represents a contemporary look. Glass and metal are used as design elements throughout the home, which has tall, storefront windows. A glass walkway connects the master bedroom to the library, while a large soapstone fireplace anchors the center of the home.

The fireplace, also known as a masonry heater, was built by **Tulikivi** in Finland and it's an efficient way to heat the home. The heater is a custom design, and was built out of three large soapstone boulders, then disassembled, shipped to the United States and assembled by **WarmStone Fireplaces and Designs** of Livingston, Montana.

The boulder heaters are so unique that only about five of them have been installed in Montana. "There are no two that are alike," WarmStone owner Ron Pihl said. The 11,000-pound fireplace has channels throughout the structure that heat up the soapstone mass. Soapstone is one of the heaviest, most dense stones in the world, so once it's been brought to full warmth, the fireplace can provide up to 24 hours of continual heat.

In addition to wood heat from the soapstone fireplace, energy efficiency is increased by the use of a Ground Source heat pump. Keeping the home well insulated are 12-inch structured insulated panels on the roof. Passive solar heat from the tall windows allow sunlight to help heat the home also. The house is so energy efficient that the owner was actually able to sell power back to the utility in the summer. ▪

Resources

HOYT HOMES INC.	hoythomes.com
EVERLOG SYSTEMS	everlogs.com
WARMSTONE FIREPLACES	warmstone.com