

Home Grown

By Donna Peak

As an architect for Integrity Timber Frame, James Kroeker is accustomed to listening to his clients' needs and interpreting their wish lists into buildable, livable plans. But as he points out,

sometimes you need to keep your own goals in front of you as well. The Pine Hollow plan was conceived from James' own desire to push the small-home envelope while remaining true to its cabin living roots.



THE LOW DOWN

When designing the Pine Hollow, James did something rare for architects — he took his own personal needs into account. He had been searching for property to build a cabin, and though he didn't have a lot in hand yet, he couldn't help but begin to sketch the attributes he wanted to see in that future getaway. His primary objectives? He wanted something cozy and charming but, above all else, functional.

"For me, functionality is about entertaining family and friends. That's

why incorporating decks in the front and above the covered parking area was essential. I love to cook for people, so I wanted a place we could hang out and barbecue," James says.

In addition to the outside entertaining spots, the interior is deliberately wide open both horizontally and vertically. The hollow-square design of the second story affords a tremendous amount of light, as well as an unusual amount of visibility from floor to floor.

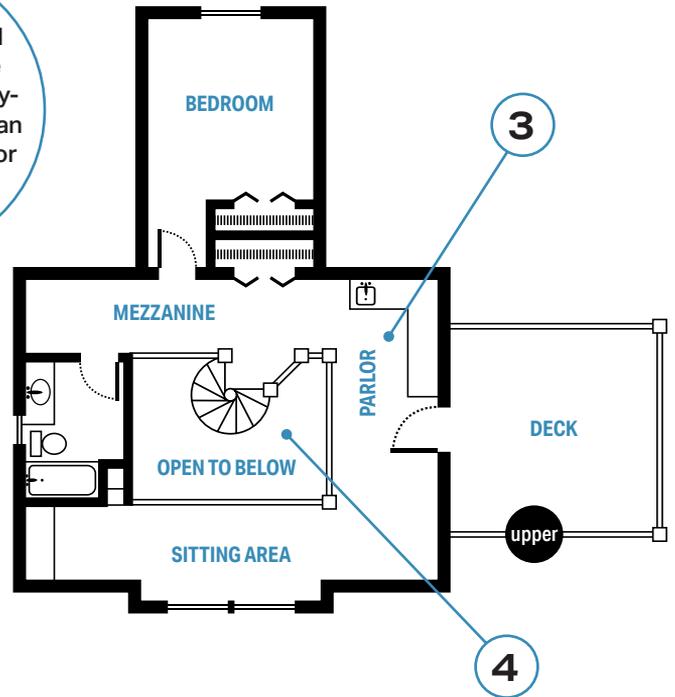
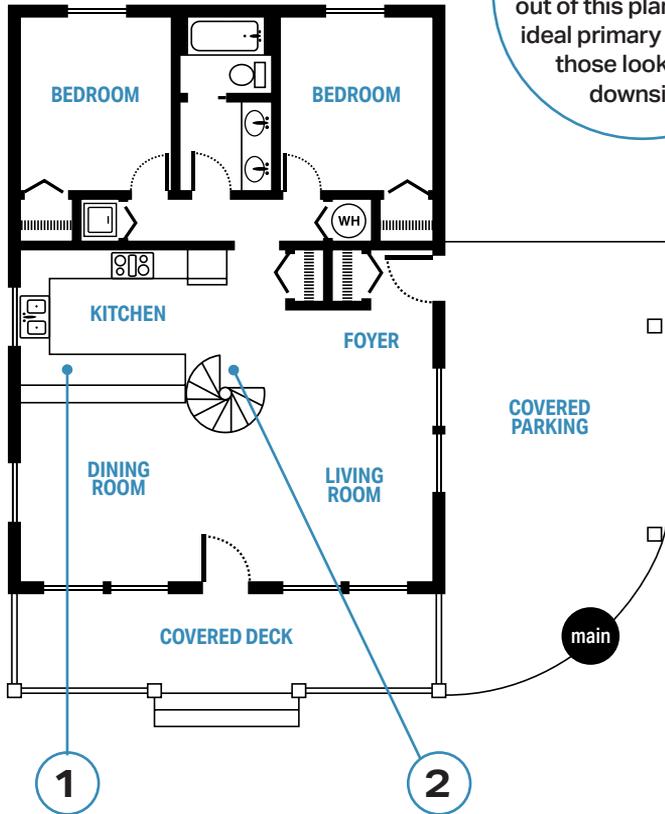
"If you're having a party, you don't

want anyone to feel cut off from the rest of the guests. Here, you can stand in the first-floor living area and still be connected with someone in the second-level mezzanine," James explains.

Although the plan accounts for timber-framed posts and beams on the first floor to support the second-story walk around, thanks to the ingenious design, a person can be sitting on the sofa, tip his or her head back and appreciate the beam work of the roof as well.

"It's pretty cool," James raves.

Though originally conceived as a weekender, the size, amenities and layout of this plan make an ideal primary home for those looking to downsize.



The Inside Scoop

Staircases can govern a home's entire layout, and while James confesses a spiral staircase isn't for everyone, in a small plan, it can make a lot of sense. A challenge to spiral stairs is the ability to move furniture to the top floor. James says the upper deck helps solve that issue by enabling you to hoist it from the ground to the deck and through the parlor's wide swinging door.

One of James' pet peeves is when a communal bathroom is located near a main living/entertaining area. "Bathrooms require as much privacy as you can give them," he asserts. Here, both of the home's full baths are neatly tucked away from the action.

In a small home, storage is key. Even James admits that he'd like to see more in this design, but to keep the footprint compact, concessions had to be made. However, he always recommends a coat closet, a pantry and space to store family games, supplies and all the extra stuff that life accumulates.

1. With a peninsula that seats four, the kitchen dominates the main level — an intentional decision because, after all, this is the area where everyone congregates.
2. In a small footprint, spiral stairs can be a real space saver, giving an average of 60 square feet of usable space back into a floor plan.
3. The parlor boasts a small sitting area, a wet bar and easy access to the party deck that crowns the carport below it.
4. The upper level features an open square to the main floor below, providing a unique opportunity to create site lines both horizontally and vertically.

HOME DETAILS

SQUARE FOOTAGE

1,745

BEDROOMS BATHS

3 2

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