

Classic American Homes

By ANNA CHANG-YEN | Green Shoot Media

Are you a nature lover who feels most at home in a rugged log cabin? A fashionista calmed by modern, chic surroundings? There are almost as many types of homes as people, and if we're lucky, we find an abode to match our personality. Make the best of a space that isn't quite your style, by bringing your passion — the woods, the sea, the detail of a craftsman bungalow — into your home's design.

A few types of homes define the American real estate landscape more than others. Whether you're house hunting or redecorating, consider these pillars of American home style.

LOG CABIN

From dinky to palatial, the log home aesthetic works on any scale. These structures have been American staples since they sheltered our forebears in the 1600s. The cedars, pines and oaks that color our landscape have lent themselves to this most utilitarian type of home that appeals to our inner outdoorsman.

If you're considering buying a log home, be sure to use the services of an inspector with expertise in these types of structures. They are trained to spot rotting wood, evidence of leaks and other potential hazards associated with log homes. Since log homes can be expen-



REAL ESTATE 101

American Architecture Primer

OldHouses.com offers an overview of various types of older homes, as well as resources for owners. Visit www.oldhouses.com/styleguide for in-depth descriptions of various home styles and recommended reading about American architecture.

sive to repair, it's best to know what type of maintenance you're in for before making an offer.

If you can't build or buy your own log cabin, bring a woodsy look into any type of home with nature-inspired elements. Rough-hewn exposed wood beams add log cabin-inspired style, and you don't have to spend a small fortune to get the look. Ask your local home improvement retailer about faux wood beam products, or head over to Pinterest for a plethora of do-it-yourself proj-

ects. For a quick, inexpensive project, search for log cabin-inspired decor. Many retailers offer lines of bedding, throws, curtains and other accents that cater to the cabin dwellers, with many featuring moose, bears and heavy plaid prints.

CRAFTSMAN

If you're an engineer or tradesman who appreciates the hard work and detail of quality workmanship, a craftsman might be for you. With heavy emphasis on hardwoods and functional details, craftsman

homes offer quality like no other type of structure. These homes were popular in the first half of the 20th century, so when shopping for this type of home, you'll need to take the same precautions you would when buying any older home. A good home inspector can help educate you about what you're getting into while pointing out potential issues that may crop up.

The bright side is that you may be able to qualify for grants, low-interest loans or tax incentives to restore a craftsman to its original glory.

It's easy to bring craftsman style into your existing home. This timeless style has made its way into countless home improvement products, from garage doors heavy on wood tones and windows to bathroom vanities with signature

craftsman blocky style. Built-in furniture and storage are craftsman standbys, so consider one of these weekend projects to add this look to any space in your home, such as recessed bookcases or a wall-to-wall buffet with wood tones and glass-paned doors.

COLONIAL

With rows of windows and plenty of symmetry, colonial homes evoke a time when America was coming into its own as a nation. If you're a history buff with a collection of antique furniture pieces, a regal 1700s-inspired colonial home could fit the bill.

Achieving the full feel of a long bygone era can require quite the investment of resources. Of course, you don't have to outfit your home with authentic antiques from wall to wall; reproductions are popular and easy to find. The style is formal and distinct, and if you do it right, before you know it, you'll be able to imagine a group of early Americans gathering to discuss revolution over a cup of hot tea in your living room.

You can spruce up any space with colonial design — a long, narrow wooden bench in the entryway, spindly, rounded dining chairs and a table with turned legs, light fixtures that simulate candle light or Edison bulbs, and butcher-block kitchen countertops.



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If you’re considering buying a log home, be sure to use the services of an inspector with expertise in these types of structures. They are trained to spot rotting wood, evidence of leaks and other

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HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

Escrow agent: a person or entity holding documents and funds in a transfer of real property, acting for both parties pursuant to instructions. Typically the agent is a person (often an attorney), escrow company, or title company, depending on local practices.

SOURCE: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

AD SPACE