

MAY-JUNE 2015

# VERANDA

*easy living*

SUNNY  
SPACES &  
GREAT  
ESCAPES



THE CULTIVATED

# Life

*architecture*  
**HIGHER  
GROUND**

A North Carolina mountain house blends rustic touches with a compelling modern vibe.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Chandelier, South of Market; dining chairs, Lee Industries; walls in Bone White, Benjamin Moore. The porch serves as an outdoor living room. An inviting back entrance. Wicker furniture, Logan Gardens. The house seemingly grows out of the hillside.

**T**ucked into a steep slope, the house feels like part of the landscape, rising up out of the mossy evergreen forest in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Everything about the residence harkens back to the land, from its long, linear shape burrowed into the hillside to its expansive windows, its lush earthy palette, and an indoor-outdoor floor plan that brings the sounds of a nearby stream and plenty of fresh air right into the living room.

After 20 years of collaborating on second homes for clients, interior designer Kathleen Rivers and architect Mark Paullin teamed up to build Rivers her own mountain retreat in Cashiers, a densely forested, high-altitude vacation enclave in North Carolina. “I kept thinking about log cabins,” says Rivers. Her ideal had a contemporary twist, though. She envisioned a home steeped in the rugged charms of the region but updated to feel like an airy, light-filled escape.

Instead of rough logs, Paullin created a cabin-like facade made of bark, its texture still visible beneath the deep brown paint, with white boards replacing the chalky stripes of chinking traditionally layered in between. Large poplar columns flanking the front door were left bare to harness a more natural look.

The interior was inspired from the start by a historic plantation Rivers toured in Louisiana, whose rooms aligned to provide a sweeping view of the lawn from the front landing. Rivers designed a large foyer that spills into a sun-drenched dining room featuring a wall of leaded doors and windows to mimic that effect.

That free-flowing scheme is perfectly suited for entertaining: intimate enough for a small dinner but still comfortable on evenings when 30 people mingle over cocktails. Filled with furniture, the entry hall acts more like a salon than a passageway, and a pair of fireplaces on either side of the dining room—one in the plush, serene living room, the other on a porch decked out in wicker furniture—offer ample space to relax around. Modern glass pocket doors recede completely into the walls and open onto