

MATT CREVIN
MR. LYAN
JEFF SCHILARB
WARREN SHEETS
ERIC ZENER
& MORE

CAPTURE

MAGAZINE
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LOG CABIN LUXE

THE LORE, LEGEND AND LUXURY
THAT IS KOOTENAI
INTERIOR DESIGN BY WARREN
SHEETS DESIGN, SAN FRANCISCO.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ROGER WADE STUDIO
GRAVITY SHOTS
ALLEN KENNEDY





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When mining millionaires Lewis Orvis Evans and Cornelius "Con" Kelly first laid eyes on Montana's Swan Lake and the surrounding Big Fork area countryside in the early 1800s, they knew that they had discovered a little slice of paradise. The duo, often referred to as the "Copper Kings," swiftly purchased 2,700 acres naming it Kootenai after the American Indian tribes that had hunted and fished this pristine wilderness for centuries.

Flush with money from their Anaconda Mine, Evans and Kelly hired the North West's top architect of the day Kirtland Cutter of Spokane, Washington. Cutter's client list brimmed with timber barons and shipping magnates all of whom looked to Cutter for his unique ability to build edifices with strength and gravitas. A Cutter mansion signaled to the world that you had arrived. For Kootenai, Evans and Kelly requested a grand lodge set on the shores of the lake that would pay homage to the surroundings. Cutter delivered in spades with an Adirondack-style lodge featuring a vaulted two-story ceiling, vast porch and massive stone hearth.

Over the years, celebrities and dignitaries including Charles Lindbergh, Will Rogers, Jon D. Rockefeller, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and Western artist Charles M. Russell all visited

Kootenai falling in love with the land and the sporting way of life. Throughout the 20th century, Kootenai stayed in private hands, but time took its toll. Beginning in 2006, a complete renovation took place. The grand lodge was restored, with the utmost attention to detail, and work began on a handful of private residences surrounding the lodge that are now part of the exquisite Kootenai Experience.

The award-winning San Francisco-based interior design firm Warren Sheets Design was tapped to re-envision the Kootenai interiors. Warren's career has largely been devoted to high-end residential design while his partner Sharon Regan's career spans projects from the Waldorf Astoria in New York to the Beverly Hilton. Together they collaborated on the 5-star Grand Del Mar Resort in Southern California. Their combined talents were needed to tackle a project of Kootenai's scale.

"The lodge is a very open double-story space," notes Warren. "The entry doors are centered in the room and overhead trusses

run toward the lake. Because it is one's immediate reaction to walk out to the view of the lake, we found it a challenge to design the overall space, without cutting the room in half." Their solution was to use color as a unifying theme throughout the space. Sheets and Regan researched the early 1900s and selected historical hues from Pratt & Lambert's historical index in spruce, rust and gold tones.

With a color palette in mind, they had custom linen draperies crafted and embroidered with a floral motif. "The colorway of the drapes informed our choices for the rest of the room," notes Warren. "We had custom rugs woven in a pattern appropriate to the period of the Copper Kings and selected period fabrics from manufacturers that were in business during that era, as well, including Clarence House, Brunswick et Fils, Kravet, and Schumacher."

For the lighting in the space, Warren and Sharon were determined that mass-market products would not do. "I drew the con-

cept for the wall sconces one afternoon following a site visit," recalls Warren. "I wanted them to be crafted of hand-forged iron with a weathered patina, and wanted them to reflect rich color, so I incorporated different colors of glass. Most importantly, I wanted them to look as though each was a one-of-a-kind art piece." He turned to International Ironworks in Los Angeles to develop the vision.

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The Kootenai Lodge



Fresh Local
FISH!

The same care was put into the selection of the Lodge's accessories. "We don't like to just add objects unless they have a true meaning to our clients, the property or the surrounding area," Warren stresses. "We spent nearly three years selecting special items and antiques—even tracking down original wildlife photographs that hailed back to the days when Kelly and Evans would come with their families to Kootenai and spend their summers."

Another gem of a project at Kootenai was brought to life by the Warren Sheets team, "The Rogers cabin," says Warren, "was created to be the quintessential log home. It's family oriented and meant to be enjoyed by multiple generations." To that end, Warren added a game room reminiscent of a space he'd seen in Connecticut—complete with painted floor white siding and an American flag. "It was such a happy bright space I wanted to recreate it with the beautiful Montana landscape outside." We specified Da Vinci Marble's Honey Onyx at the VIP Bathroom Vanity top because it told a story of success and riches. It looks truly stunning and has a timeless effect.

Much like the Kootenai Lodge, the great room in the Rogers Cabin has an open feel and dramatic ceiling. The design here is quintessential Americana. Large-scale cotton fabrics are wrought in jewel-tone colors and mixed with Native American-style rugs. Hickory furnishings anchor the space, while rustic antique signs add finesse. The result is a home that is inviting—beckoning its owners back year-after-year to enjoy all that this special place has to offer from fishing, hiking, biking, kayaking, canoeing and paddle boating in the summer to every cold-weather sport imaginable in the winter.

Taking in the view of the billowing grassy knolls and scores of elderly cedar, lodgepole, cottonwood and ponderosa pine at the edge of Swan Lake from a rocking chair on a gentle porch at Kootenai, one can understand why Evans and Kelly so adored this part of the world and why a handful of present day homeowners have an unbridled passion for Kootenai.



For more information: www.thekootenai.com



The porch at Rogers cabin



The red barn at Kootenai