

ORANGE COUNTY  
REGISTER

# OCHOME

DECEMBER 2015

## INTO THE WOODS

*Natural  
accents add  
warmth*

CABINET TRENDS | LOVELL BEACH HOUSE | TABLETOP CRYSTAL

# DESIGNERS



## TOUR

# HEAD BACK TO THE WOODS

RECLAIMED AND NEW, ATTRACTIVE LUMBER IS SETTING THE TONE IN HOME DESIGN.

By PAUL HODGINS  
STAFF WRITER

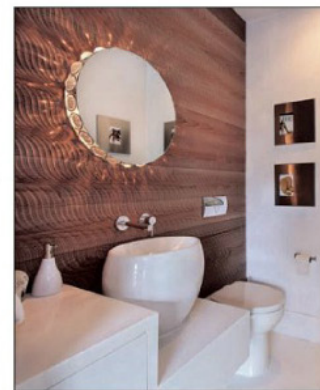
In the late 1960s and early '70s, wood was everywhere in home design and decor. Remember redwood siding? Heck, we even surrounded our hot tubs with it. Many new houses sported rustic-looking cedar shake roofs. And no countercultural home was complete without a touch or two of weathered wood in the form of a planter, old window frame or ancient rocking chair.

More than four decades later, wood is making a comeback, but this time designers are using it more judiciously and tastefully.

"More and more, people are finding ways to use reclaimed elements, especially wood, when decorating their homes," says popular home-improvement expert Bob Vila. "Salvaged wood is not only hot in structural elements, like flooring, beams, doors and wall treatments. It's just as fashionable when it's used in furniture applications - like for a desk, dining table, headboard, mirror, coffee table or even a set of shelves."

Vila is attracted to the qualities that wood and other reclaimed building materials bring to a project. "Reclaimed wood lends ... warmth to any room, but also infuses a space with a sense of history and charm that new materials lack."

The wood is often culled from old barns, industrial buildings and other structures where exteriors were left largely unpainted and allowed to weather naturally. And because it has already been exposed to the elements for years, it's stable and rot-resistant.



Natural wood is making a huge comeback as a decorative element, part of a movement toward organic, simply finished materials. Architect Andrew Patterson makes liberal but tasteful use of wood in public areas, such as the living room, as well as in the bathroom, right, where it provides contrast to the smooth, white fixtures.

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JERI KOEGEL PHOTOGRAPHY



Design guru Bob Vila says natural and reclaimed wood is getting popular in custom furniture as well. Patterson's Corona del Mar design includes a few examples.

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A recent project in Corona del Mar by Patterson Custom Homes is an excellent example of wood's new decorative applications in residential architecture.

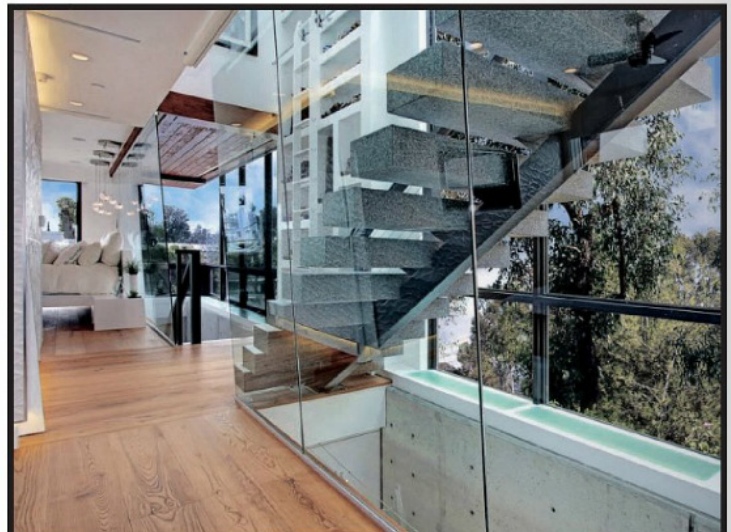
**"We use reclaimed wood as accents against clean painted white surfaces to create a rich contrast of clean crisp white against antique old-world wood."**

**ANDREW PATTERSON**  
PATTERSON CUSTOM  
HOMES

"We use reclaimed wood as accents against clean painted white surfaces to create a rich contrast of clean crisp white against antique old-world wood," said Andrew Patterson, the company's founder and president. "It brings warmth to a space and gives it character."

Reclaimed wood is getting pricier as a result of its popularity, and it can present problems – traces of asbestos and other undesirable impurities, for example. For those reasons, some designers are moving to newer wood.

"A lot of people are no longer using re-

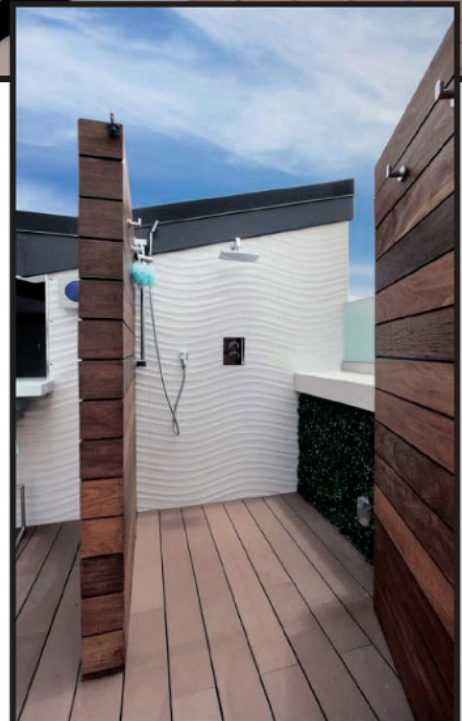


Floors, too, are subject to the natural, rough-hewn look, though Patterson has opted for a light stain in this spot suffused with natural light.

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Properly treated, wood serves well outdoors, too, including areas exposed to a lot of moisture.





Home gyms are evolving, with more space for yoga and stretching and fewer costly, cumbersome machines.

## Home gyms get a new look

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claimed wood," Patterson said. "Currently, clean wood that is free of any knots and has been brushed and weathered is being used (more)."

Patterson's golden rule of wood accents: a little bit goes a long way.

"The problem now is that people have gone overboard and are using it as more than an accent; they are covering their whole rooms with it. In so doing, these homeowners are creating a dark, drab space that is too overwhelming."

Patterson believes the wood-accent trend reflects a growing environmental awareness by builders and homeowners. "It gets its origins from green building, trying to use reclaimed woods to be eco-friendly," he said. That movement, of course, was born in the Age of Aquarius. Our sentiments were sincere back then – but our taste is better now.



This gym in a home on Strand Beach Road in Dana Point is a mix of equipment and open space.

The home in Corona del Mar built by Patterson Custom Homes is at the cutting edge of another trend besides its use of wood – it has a custom-designed home gym. They've been getting more popular; and they're designed more specifically to the owners' needs.

"High-end homes almost always have gyms in them now," says Andrew Patterson, the company's founder and president. It's more of a practical consideration than an extravagance, Patterson explained. "Clients with strange hours who work a lot like to work out at their own leisure, not have to go to a gym. It's common for my clients to call me at 4 in the morning while they are on a treadmill."

But today's home gyms tend to be less crammed with sophisticated exercise technology, Patterson noted.

"The gyms now are more for crossfit, meaning that there are no weights or stationary bikes. It's geared more towards climbing, peg boards, ropes, TRX and straps."

– Paul Hodgins