



\$50.00 U.S.

ISBN 978-1-4236-4027-1



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AMERICAN RUSTIC

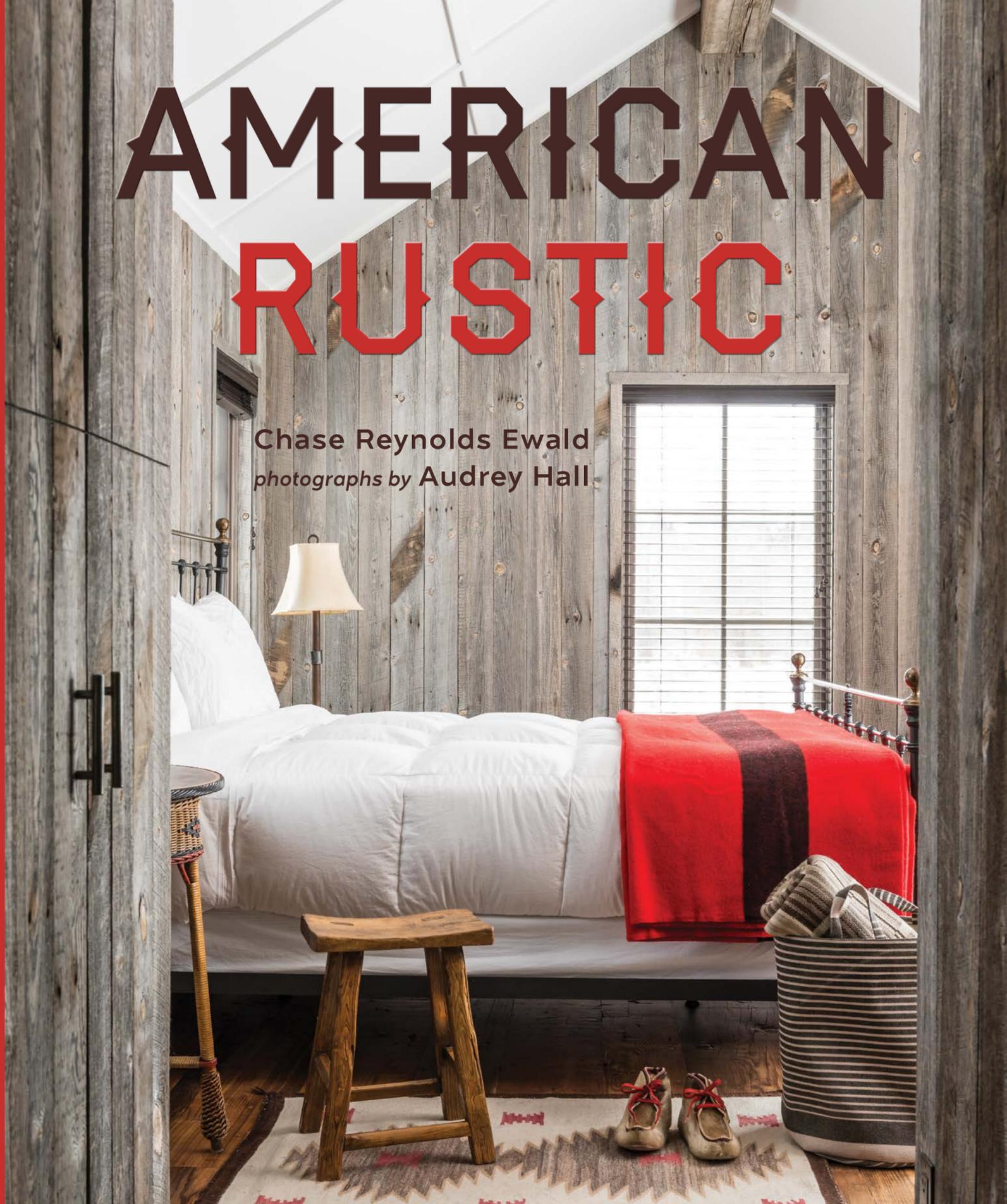
Ewald • Hall



GIBBS SMITH

AMERICAN RUSTIC

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photographs by Audrey Hall





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A vivid blue velvet sofa, colorful throw pillows, a vintage illuminated bar sign and a cabinet made from car parts by Jason Clary of Rusty Nail Design inject energy into the gathering space. The bar, made by the owner years ago and refurbished, has retro bar stools and a top embedded with currency from the family's travels.

Creative Spaces for Work & Play

Rustic outbuildings celebrate the relationship between indoors and outdoors in an unadulterated way while allowing the utmost play in expression. Barns, boathouses, guest cabins, tepees and other charismatic and idiosyncratic retreats are long on charm and redolent with atmosphere, whether they are working buildings like an equestrian complex or fanciful retreats, such as a wall tent perched high up in the foothills near Yellowstone and furnished entirely with vintage items.

Where primary living spaces are by necessity more about an ordered life, work and play spaces provide the perfect opportunity for creative expression and whimsicality. Bozeman, Montana, designer Abby Hetherington, who is known for her bold use of color, highly original ideas and sure sense of fun, proves this point in an outbuilding on a client's property just outside of town. The idea for the retreat, which is adjacent to but separate from the main house, is to serve as both a private space for houseguests and a funky clubhouse for the owners' teenage sons.

"We call it 'the Launch Pad,'" explains the owner, "because it's the perfect launch pad to Yellowstone Park, or for skiing, fishing or exploring."

In deference to houseguests, as well as to regional tradition, the structure, comprised of a living room with bar/kitchenette, guest room and bath, has that you-are-now-in-the-mountains vibe. But Hetherington put her original spin on the usual motifs. One wall is papered over in enlarged 1895 topographic maps of Park County (with hues changed to match the room's palette). The bedroom wallpaper is a trompe l'oeil design of stacked logs, and there's a bench made from an old ore cart. A working vintage neon BAR sign occupies pride of place above the hand-built bar.

"I wanted it to feel like a little 1970s hunting lodge," says Hetherington. "But I want every design to have a sense of humor. I want people to smile when they come in."

This doesn't mean the designer shuns typical rustic elements. She chose an Adirondack-style chair with a back made of skis for the entry, created a montage of fishing items with an elk mount on one wall, placed an antler side table next to the couch and sourced the rustic handmade bed from a local craftsman. But in making bold color choices and fusing traditional elements with the unexpected—an orange spray-painted coat rack, a bedroom lighting fixture dangling from a model of a hand, a bar top embedded with currency from all

the family's travels—she creates festive spaces brimming with life.

"It may seem like mayhem," says Hetherington, "but it's what I call my 'bucket theory.' You want to be able to put everything in a bucket and shake it up and have it still work. This was a fun project because it really shows the owner's personality."

The place where one pursues one's passion is by definition a very personal, almost sacred, space. A wall tent built by musician/writer Dick Dillof is one such intimate spot. It is deliberately shared with few, precisely because it's a quiet retreat where he can ponder, write, and get away from the world. Perched up high in the Montana hills, with a spectacular view south into Paradise Valley and Yellowstone National Park, the canvas tent is furnished with items from another era: camp cots, vintage rockers, and an array of rare and vintage musical instruments Dillof collected over several decades.

"I had a similar canvas wall tent set up in the summers on an old mining claim in the Beartooth Mountains," he explains. "The tents are simple and impermanent, like tepees or sheepherders' wagons, both of which I've had before. Why did I put it up there on my hill? The obvious answer is to be up higher than my creekside home, where I'm able to sit and gaze out across the valley.

"I used to hike up there and sit on a big rock," he says, "but with the tent, I can spend hours up there protected from the elements. I can sit on the porch, or inside, feel the breeze blow through the tent, settle back in a bentwood rocker and play the banjo. There's a small stove on a table and I can cook, smoke a pipe and spend the night up there, with my instruments and things safe inside. A wood cabin is nice, and more protected from the elements, but canvas breathes and lets in light and absorbs the smell of wood smoke and lets you feel more part of the land. I keep a spyglass up there and an old manual typewriter and a Victrola with some scratched-up 78s. What more do you need up there," he asks, "but maybe some good company?"



Little Lost Cabin

ABOVE: A ring of peaks surrounds the cabin, seen here from the north, where entry is sheltered by a small porch at the glazed dogtrot between the low-slung shed form and the tower-like granary. Openings are limited on this side to the framing of key views while sheltering the cabin's interior from northern exposures.

FACING: Small cabin, big view: porch seating faces east and south, toward warm sun and rising trout.





ABOVE: Smedley and Chow got the idea for the insulators on the stair rails from lightning bugs: they light up. Pointed doors accommodate sloped ceilings. Small windows were found at a salvage company in Pennsylvania.



FACING: The master bedroom features wood from a 100-year-old Amish barn, a salvaged door, and flooring from a 250-year-old white oak milled by the owners. The side table is an antique milk can, fitting the tone of this New York farm house.



LEFT Peter Buehner and Deborah Day's Santa Fe living room decor takes its cue from the timeless solidity of adobe walls and timbered ceilings. Day sourced many of the blankets, pillows and rugs in the home from Guatemalan and Mexican sources and installed a Scandinavian wooden bench for freeseating. Ornamental tin wall sconces were commissioned from local artisan and tin-art expert Maurice Dixon. The graceful chandelier with candles, a gift from a friend, was made by an El Paso craftsman.

ABOVE: White trim creates a crisp contrast against tinted adobe walls. The large cupboard, a Guatemalan antique, was purchased in Taos. The Godin cast-iron parlor stove from France has been owned by the couple for thirty years.



LEFT A bunkroom makes a fresh statement with its lively patterned textiles, large drum table and standing lamp with gently curved horn.

FACING: The diamond-patterned upholstered headboard stands out against a wallpaper inspired by arrows, a nod to Native American themes. An antique ottoman rests against the leather-covered bed.

