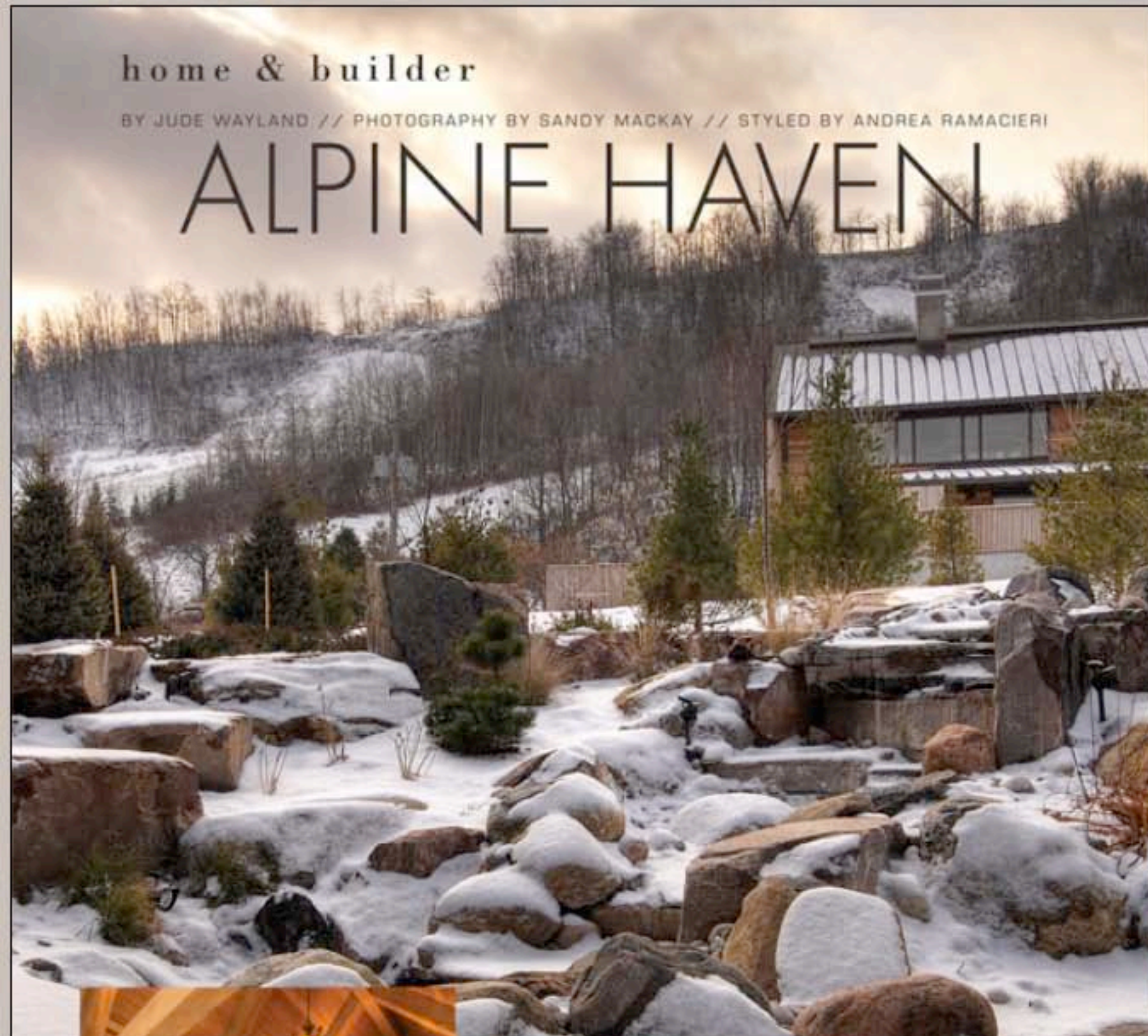


ALPINE HAVEN



Not everyone who ventures north on winter weekends to enjoy the Collingwood area is an avid skier. In fact, some outdoor enthusiasts don't take up the sliding sport until their early 40s – like Steve and Gerry Ferguson of Port Credit. They enjoyed the Georgian Bay lifestyle for 20 years before they even considered strapping on the boards. *Continued on page 95*



The exterior of the home built by Village Builders and the majestic backyard waterfall by The Landmark Group make living in the shadow of Blue Mountain a dream come true.

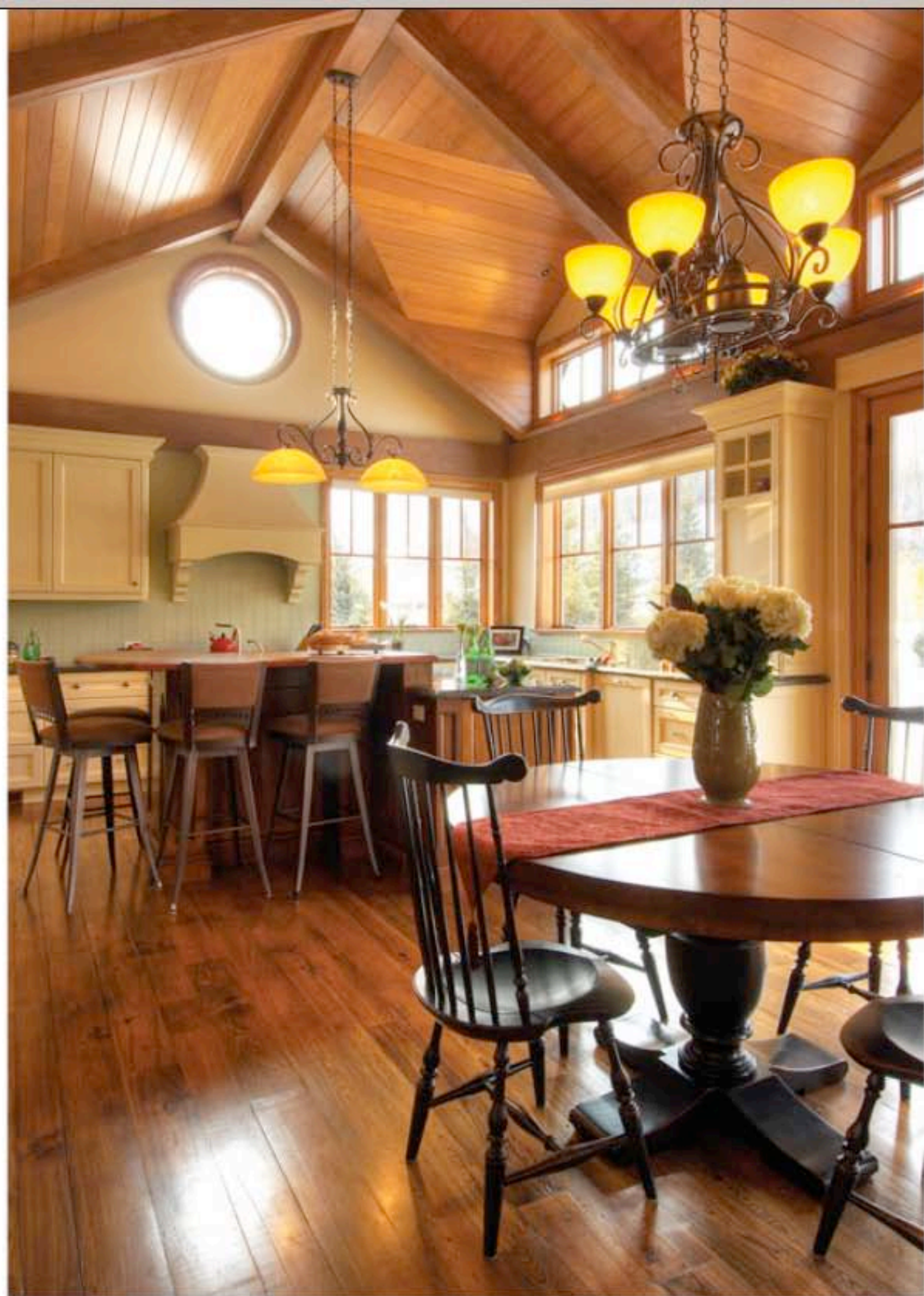
INSET: The stone fireplace and soaring pine ceiling are the focal point in the ultra-comfortable, main living area of Steve and Gerry Ferguson's mountain retreat.



LEFT: The sideboard between the living room and kitchen is all dressed up and ready for family and friends to enjoy a mid-day Mimosa.

ABOVE: Steve and Gerry Ferguson relax by the fire.

RIGHT: The view into the kitchen from the living room shows off the soaring 22-foot-high pine ceiling and the glorious bank of windows that let the sun shine in.



Now, the couple and their three children enjoy skiing in and out of their spectacular new home at the base of Alpine Ski Club. "We love it here. We can't wait to get up on weekends," says Gerry. "Steve and I didn't ski. We had no intention of coming here, but then the kids got older and wanted to try a few winter sports. Now we belong to a ski club. The girls snowboard. Jeffrey skis. And I take lessons every year because it's a great way to meet people."

The Fergusons moved into their 3,500 sq. ft., six-bedroom weekend retreat in August, 2009. Designed by Architect Brian Lee and built by **Doug Abbott of Village Builders** in Creemore, Steve and Gerry are delighted with their abode, which features meticulous craftsmanship and attention to detail. Designer Marilyn Lake (Lee's partner) added several special touches to the décor.

Abbott has been in the building business for 30 years, constructing homes at Blue Mountain, in Thornbury and along the water to Lara Bay. Village Builders specialize in quality custom homes, as well as additions and renovation projects.

Light floods the Ferguson home. "It was all about the view," says Gerry. "We wanted windows, windows, windows at the back." A wall of generous windows offers a stunning view of the ski hills. High end, self-cleaning **Kolbe & Kolbe** windows feature LoE (low emissivity) argon gas filled insulating glass.

The pièce de résistance is a spectacular cathedral ceiling in the living room. "Doug's guys did an amazing job on the ceiling beams," explains Gerry. The 22-foot-high pine ceiling is Abbott's favourite part of the home. "I like the woodworking in the living room ceiling. I had one of my best guys do it and he did a great job. Because those ceilings all come in at different angles, it takes a very good carpenter to make that all come together. It's very detailed."

Reclaimed elm floors add an element of warmth to the spacious main floor. "An antique floor has a patina to the wood that you just can't replicate," says Abbott. The main floor is an expansive, open-concept space that includes living and dining areas, media room, master bedroom with ensuite, powder room, sizeable mudroom with a Chinese slate floor, as well as an equally roomy high-end kitchen. *Continued on page 30*



The custom kitchen has a built-in wine cooler, a top-loading microwave, iridescent, blue-green granite countertops and an elevated island bar with solid Brazilian Jacoba wood.

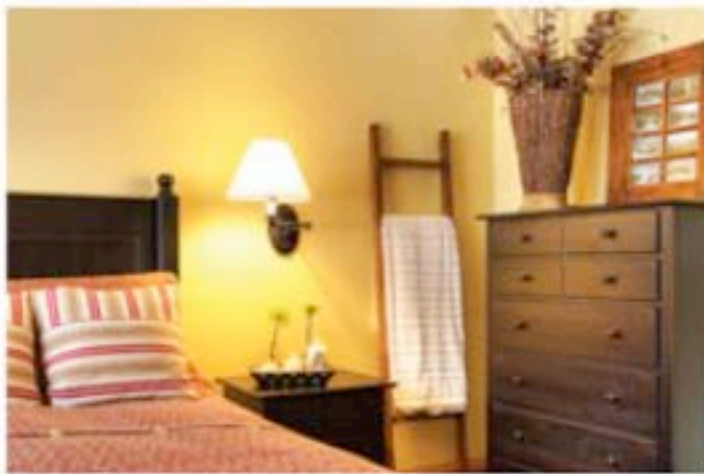
home & builder

The focal point of the living area is a 60-inch gas fireplace that throws off amazing heat (**Chantico Fireplace Gallery** in Craigleith). It's also Gerry's special spot. "A woodburning fireplace is nice," says Gerry, "but in the morning when I get up and want a coffee before I go skiing, no one's building me a fire. After skiing, everyone sits on the hearth to warm up."

The master bedroom is conveniently located on the main floor. An ensuite features electric radiant in-floor heat, a shower that converts to a steam room, and a self-drying tub that blows air through the lines until the tub is dry.

A waterfall (**The Landmark Group** in Thornbury), complete with a large stone bridge, cascades down a rock face outside the master bedroom. All summer long, the Fergusons listen to the soothing sounds of running water. "It started out as a window well," says Gerry. "We don't like window wells. Now we've got a firepit and a sitting area with interlocked stone, and it's so beautiful."

Gerry smiles when she talks about her custom-crafted kitchen. She loves her built-in wine cooler, top-loading microwave-in-a-drawer, custom lazy Susan, and iridescent, blue-green Labradorite granite countertop. "It's like the mountains; it's perfect up here." Plenty of counters mean lots of working space. An elevated island bar features solid Brazilian Jacoba wood; an understated backsplash showcases soft, mint green glass tiles. *Continued on page 102*



TOP: The spacious master ensuite is designed for two.

The serene master bedroom has an unobstructed view of the ski slopes.