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# A Rustic Berkeley Cabin Keeps Its Charm

By Amy Keyishian | Published: 7/30/2013

The East Bay is dotted with adorable but outdated cottages. In this renovation, the changes seem to have happened organically – which is just what the architect wants you to feel.



Photo By Gustave Carlson Design

You can be rustic and charming as well as luxurious and convenient. This cabin proves it.

Sometimes you just want to chuck it all and move to a cabin up in the hills. Heck, there are plenty of cabins in North Berkeley, just over the Bay Bridge from San Francisco, originally built as summer and weekend homes for wealthy city folks. But let's be serious: When we say chuck it "all," we don't mean chucking modern conveniences or even basic comforts. Cabins may have tons of charm, but charm won't do the dishes.

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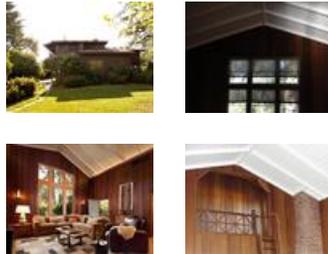
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Enter Gustave Carlson of [Gustave Carlson Design](#). When he saw this jewel of a cabin, whose owners wanted it updated and expanded, he knew he had to retain the aesthetic. "The old-growth redwood paneling and the detailing of many of the original designed pieces of the home made it feel [historic](#)," he says. "Keeping to the vernacular of the original cabin was important: We didn't want it to get lost in the [renovation](#)." The new cabin has a much bigger kitchen, a laundry space and an upstairs master suite, yet the overall look is still charming, simple and unobtrusive.

## A Cabin Goes From Sweet To Sumptuous

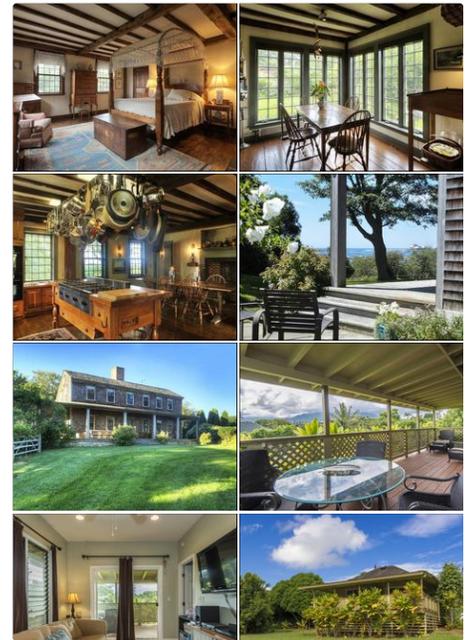


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Carlson prides himself on sustainable design, but he really had to bring his A game on this project. "That redwood paneling is almost impossible to get these days," he points out, so he couldn't afford to waste a single inch. "We took down each board, labeled the panel, and put it back in place after insulating and structurally upgrading the home." Many landscape and construction materials were locally sourced as well.

In the end, this is still a cabin: [rustic](#), handcrafted, tucked neatly into an undisturbed natural landscape. The upgrades, similarly, are tucked neatly into an undisturbed cabin – it's upgrading without showing off, a gentle makeunder.

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