INSIDE DESIGN

Courtesy of Nicole Skinner-Graudons, Designer, Interiors of Ballston

Adirondack Style of Design has Come A Long Way...

We are so fortunate to be living here in beautiful upstate New York where the rustic Adirondack style originated in the mid 1800s. During that time, many people from NYC began building summer homes here in the Adirondacks. The style caught on quickly combining the rustic beauty of the mountains with the sophistication of the big city and still remains popular today. The Adirondack style is so interesting because it has the capability to blend with many other styles. Mission, Arts & Crafts, Country, Vintage & Modern pieces all blend beautifully with this style . As "Green" design is on the fore-front, the Adirondack style is also admired because many of the beautiful simple rustic furnishings are made from surrounding natural materials. The Adirondack style's color palate is inspired by Nature's colors of warm crimson reds, chocolate browns, golds, mossy greens and tans. These warm, cozy, relaxing colors are also used in Mission, Arts & Crafts, Country and Modern styles as well.

Speaking of Mission, Arts & Crafts, and mixing styles; I once again had the opportunity this year, to be a part of an award winning team with Waldron Builders to decorate their Showhouse for the "Showcase of Homes," (which some of you may have seen). I was able to bring this article to life... blending Adirondack with Mission, Arts & Crafts. The home was built with an Arts & Crafts flair. Each room I blended in custom accent Adirondack Furniture pieces with Mission Furniture pieces. The color palette echoed Nature's warm colors that I mentioned above. There was a consistent cozy flow. Many of the people on the tour said , this Showhouse was the most unique concept and were pleasantly surprised to see how amazing the styles blended together. Many had said... "Yes, I could see myself living here! Its so rich in style, but cozy too!"

When choosing a flooring material to complement your Adirondack design, wood floors are ideal. If you're stuck with old softwood floors that are covered with carpet, but you aren't ready to replace them or re-carpet them, go Adirondack! Seal the softwood or paint it a dark, woodsy neutral. You can even stencil an "Indian Blanket" pattern on a painted floor. If you prefer tile, a quarry tile, slate or brick pattern is appropriate. Rustic and natural is key. For a lower-budget solution, duplicate this look in sheet or tile vinyl. The linoleum that we were once familiar with has been replaced by vinyl products that wear like iron and coordinate with almost any color scheme. To soften the floor, look for rugs with strong geometric patterns in reds, blues and earth tones. "Indian Blanket" patterns are more casual. For a more formal look, choose an Oriental rug with a strong geometric pattern. Sisal can also lend an interesting natural texture as well. Rustic, branch-like support elements and woven seats and backs are the most common furniture elements of the style. Another common look involves using panels of applied bark as drawer and cabinet fronts. A third popular style is applied twigs, the ornate rustic look. "Comfort" and "Moderation" are the key words in furnishing in Adirondack style. Use armchairs generously. If you have room, consider a sofa or a big cushy chair with an ottoman. In today's market, couches and lounging chairs sold as "Mission" or "Southwestern" are great choices. And don't forget leather! Leather is a wonderful way to introduce another texture into your design. Tweeds, Buffalo plaids, and Herringbone patterns are terrific choices for accent pillows. Many upholstered pieces are offered in a fabric and leather combination and these are becoming increasingly popular. Just be sure to keep the lines of the furniture simple. Some interesting Adirondack accessories can include Vintage Boats, Paddles, Fishing Poles, Old-fashioned Sleds, Snow Shoes, Shovels & Saws, Pottery, Lanterns, Mission Style Lamps & Authentic Family Photos, Stained Glass, Rustic Twig Mirrors. Baskets also capture the Adirondack charm. Creel or Pack Baskets can be grouped on the floor or wall for a display. Remember it doesn't have to have a bear, a duck, or a moose on it to be considered "Adirondack"! Ralph Lauren has been an iconic designer in this style and is known for his classic "campy" or "ranch" interiors.

We are so fortunate there are many talented custom Adirondack Style Furniture and Accessory Designers right here in our back yard. Remember to shop locally! In conclusion, The Adirondack Style is known to be compatible with many other styles. Remember, blending some accent pieces of the other styles I mentioned above, with a few vintage antiques, is the perfect recipe to create your own custom Adirondack Style!

For more information, contact your home town Interior Designer, Nicole Skinner-Graudons of Designer Interiors of Ballston, (518) 399-6240/883-4751, or e-mail: designinter@aol.com.