



CABIN FEVER

Susan Arnoldy Hansen's dad had a small cabin in Minnesota where the family would vacation growing up. As the children married and had their own families, it became clear with people sleeping on pullouts and on the floor that a larger retreat was needed.

Unable to add to the original which had been expanded seven times already and with no where else to go with it, they scouted out a new one, about 6,000 square feet, built on Gull Lake in Nisswa near Brainerd, Minnesota, by a commercial builder. It featured then a master suite on the first floor, bedroom, bath and billiard room downstairs for his son.

"It still wasn't big enough, but we loved it," says Susan, a 31-year member of the American Society of Interior Designers. In the three years since owning it, the family has doubled its size to a sprawling 12,000 square feet. One large addition was put on after a vacant adjacent lot was bought and split with the next door neighbor.

The original master suite became her dad's, aptly named "Eagle's Nest." In the addition on the first floor, two more Masters were built, one for Susan and her husband, called "Cheetah's Lair" and one for her brother and his wife called "Antelope's Savannah." Both are named after the carpet in each room.

On the bottom level, besides a few pull-out sofa beds where kids can sleep in the billiard table room, there's a girls' room called "Beaver's Lodge" with two queen beds and a boys' room called "Bear's Den"

with three custom made extra-long bunks. One bunk has a full on the bottom under a single bunk in case they want to use the room just for an adult couple. There's also an apartment on that level called "Logger's Quarters" which originally served the caretaker for Susan's late father and now to accommodate a single couple. The whole cabin can accommodate six couples, each with a private bedroom and bath.

Much of the furniture is custom made, and much of it comes from Texas where Susan runs her business, Susan Hansen Interior Design. Her favorite is her own bed of hand-carved twisted bedposts with an upholstered leather headboard with nail-head trim.

The family has named the "cabin" Eagles Ridge in honor of the eagle who hung out on the property as the cabin was being built. The name is on a hand-carved plaque hanging over the driveway. 🦅



Clockwise from top left, The "Bear's Den," the boy's dorm/bedroom (sleeps 6). It includes a Fairmount-Cocoa-Beach nylon waffle pattern, another bunk, a novel one-over-two twin-over-full bed for when guest couples come to stay. In the "Antelope's Savannah" room, above, is 2018 Antelope from the Couristan Royalax Wild Asia Collection in wool; Susan says it is also available in nylon with a slightly pink cast. The headboard is an iron gate which took six men to lift into place. Below is an authentic Texas cowhide over real maple in the first floor entry. Below left, is the "Eagle's Nest," designed for Susan's late father, featuring a green-and-red plaid from Burtco with a hint of khaki to complement the wood tones. At left is the downstairs living room for the adult children with a maple laminate which came with the house. It turns out to be a great choice for this lake lodge, standing up well to the tracked-in lake water and sand.

