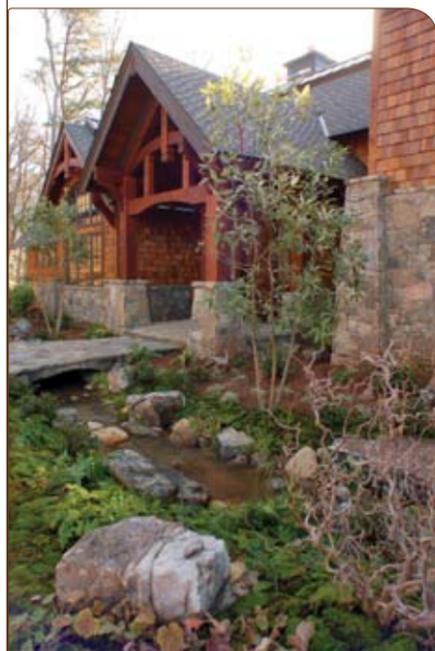


# MOUNTAIN TOP MASTERPIECE

## A Preview of the *Southern Living Home in Big Canoe*

[ WRITTEN BY JULA JANE ]



It's that time of year again — when cherry blossoms bloom, birds sing and show homes at long last open their doors to cabin-fevered guests. Ah, yes, spring — the inspiration for new wardrobes, long walks and, well, spring cleaning. And with spring cleaning comes the desire to spruce up your humble abode or to buy a new one.

What better place to find the latest and greatest in kitchen and bath design than in a show home? But where is a home tourist to go? That's easy — Big Canoe.

### **Over the Mountain and Through the Woods**

As you pull up to the gate at Big Canoe, you'll be met with sincere hospitality and a much-needed map. With more than 100 miles of paved roads, Big Canoe can be a bit overwhelming unless you know where to go. Pass the map to the backseat driver and off you go. The path from the entrance to the show home is full of twists and turns, covered bridges, directional signs and never-ending eye candy. You're high atop the mountains with a breathtaking view of downtown Atlanta on one side and nothing but nature and scenic treasures on the other. When you reach your final destination you'll know it. There's no mistaking this magnificent mansion. Simply park alongside the road or pull into the cul-de-sac where a shuttle will happily give you a lift — practically to the front door.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRYAN WETZEL | ONEFOUR TWO PRODUCTIONS





#### Inside out and Outside in

Big Canoe relishes its natural setting — it's *au naturale* for these folks. As the brochure says, "It's nature in all its glory." And what a pleasant change of pace that is. There's nothing but woodlands and meadows, lakes and streams, wildflowers and wildlife as far as the eye can see, which was the muse for design firms Cynthia Aiken Interiors, Town & Country Interior Design, Lakota Cove and Park Place Interiors; builder, Chris Vann, of Vann Custom Homes,

Inc.; and landscape architect Cynthia Hendry of Woodland Gardens Landscape Services.

This Natural Element home boasts lodge-style construction with natural finishes both inside and out. You'll marvel at Douglas fir beams and trusses, cedar hand-split shakes and lovely fieldstone on the outside and hand-painted murals depicting bears, brooks and falling leaves on the inside.

The feature I liked most was the open and screened porch spanning the back of the home. This key element brought the outside in and the inside out in a way you only dream about. The must-see part about the porch is the Iron Woods decking. Bye, bye leaky grey boards — hello sleek sophistication. As for the livability, Aiken

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CYNTHIA HENDRY | Woodland Gardens Landscape Services

said it best, "The fireplace on the screened porch is perfect to take the chill off cool fall evenings, while enjoying the beautiful colors of the fall season here in the North Georgia Mountains."

And while the porch is a great way to get closer to the elements, it's the meticulously maintained lawn that truly connects the homeowners to nature. Hendry is, without a doubt, a landscape genius. Her work is not only captivating but also eco-friendly. From lot-clearing to completion, she made sure no stone was unnecessarily turned and no sizeable tree chopped down. It's as if this home has been nestled among its surroundings for generations, which is extremely hard to do from a construction standpoint. The one detail you simply can't miss is the boulder- and moss-lined stream flowing under the entry sidewalk as if it's always been there. It's gorgeous and worthy of duplication.

"Approaching the landscape plan for this site, my greatest fear was messing up what nature had already done for us. The house has so many fine details, I struggled to simply frame them," said Hendry. "I hope visitors will leave totally relaxed, feeling that

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#### Behind Closed Doors

All show homes are designed to impress you with creativity, but what about functionality? Well, this home has it all — in abundance. It's a Smart Home — meaning fully automated, which is good because who out here would ask for anything less? The home's audio, video, security and data are managed by a Control4 System. With the touch of a button you can control all of the lights in your home, wirelessly listen to your music collection and even adjust the temperature as the evening chill sets in. You can also login to *my.Control4.com* to access your system from any Internet connection in the world — allowing you to make it look as if you're home even when you're not. If you have a man in tow, he's going to be like a kid in a candy store when he sees this feature.

While he's playing with electronic gadgets you can take your time exploring this innovative home. Venture down the hall to discover a private elevator servicing all floors, sculpted art niches, a stone fireplace designed after one at a ski lodge in Whistler, British Columbia Canada and the *piece de resistance* — the gourmet kitchen.



The Big Canoe Southern Living Show Home at 7309 Skyline Drive is open to the public through May 31, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. For more information, contact Big Canoe Realty at 770-893-2733 or 866-244-2266, or visit online at [www.bigcanoe.com](http://www.bigcanoe.com).



It features all custom cabinetry made from knotty cherry, black walnut and pine; innovative appliances such as the Sub-Zero integrated refrigeration system and freezer drawers, Sub-Zero wine cooler, 48" built-in Wolf range with double ovens, six burners and a grill, plus two Fisher & Paykel dish drawers; and, of course, a spectacular view.

On the opposite side of the house is the luxurious master suite dressed to impress by Carol DeLaney and Alecia Alvis of Town & Country Interior Design. They chose a color scheme of brown, mustard, olive green and rusty red, feeling these colors would create a warm and comfortable setting. "Our custom window treatments and bed linens add so much richness to the room," boasted Alvis. "As does the custom-made upholstery covered in rich fabrics that are as comfortable as they are beautiful to look at." The bathroom is spectacular with its natural stone floors, heated, of course; decked out with closets; and unique infinity tub. But the coolest part of all is Kholer's new DTV shower system. The digital keypad on the wall allows you to control the temperature and jet settings for both the man and the lady of the house. Once you step in, you'll never want to step out.

Throughout the home are soothing colors, comfortable-yet-impressive furniture and textured finishes. The amazing part is that four different firms with four different styles created a seamless environment that flows from one room to the next. Each designer, including Linda Magness of Lakota Cove, who designed the terrace level's rustic, fun and livable space, brings a unique and imaginative style to the project and, best of all; you're allowed to photograph their work.

That's right. You can walk around freely, view all the nooks and crannies, and take as many pictures as your heart desires. It's a rare opportunity to be able to capture the designs not only in your mind but also in your camera. One valuable reason why I say it's worth the drive.

So, whether you're looking for fresh ideas for window treatments, custom bedding, appliances and automation, a new home, or simply a fun afternoon, the *Southern Living* show home in Big Canoe is, without a doubt, the place to go. **PN**