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Purposefully

This soulfully designed home is the work of Patrice Cappelletti of Live Solar Maine and Emily Mottram of Mottram Architecture. The design inspiration for this solar farmhouse was a Monson slate sink that Patrice had rescued from a Freeport farmhouse (see also the vanity on pg. 38). Her affection for slate continues into the living room with the vintage slate chalkboards pulled from an old schoolhouse that she used for the wood stove hearth. The wood beams were rescued from a Bowdoin College fraternity house, the corbels from yet another Maine farmhouse. The modern Bari wood stove is made with Vermont soapstone from Hearthstone.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. WILSON



Repurposed

BY JUNE DONENFELD

Reclaimed white oak treads from Longleaf Lumber add warmth to contemporary stairs.

COURTESY PHOTO

Creating a beautiful, one-of-a-kind home by giving new life to reused, reclaimed or recycled building materials

WHEN IS A BARN NOT A BARN? Or a bottle not a bottle?

When it's been reused, reclaimed, repurposed, recycled or otherwise given new life in our homes.

Whether you're embarking on a new build or renovation, furnishing your home from scratch or updating it, you can do it in ways that are better for the planet, better for your health, better for your pocketbook, and will result in a one-of-a-kind look that will stand the test of time.

When we think of our homes in relation to planet-warming greenhouse gases (GHGs), many (or most) people picture operational energy, or what we consume when we turn on the heat, take a hot shower, bake a cake, or plug in a laptop. Less commonly considered, though, is another source of GHGs associated with building or renovating a home and that's embodied carbon, which includes the "cradle-to-gate carbon," or the carbon emitted when we extract raw materials, manufacture finished products with them, and finally transport and install them onsite. Products that have already been created have gone through this process, so they don't exact the same sort of environmental toll as new ones.

And then there's the all-important waste reduction argument: Every time you give something new life, you keep it from taking up precious space in landfills. Enough said.

But you certainly don't have to sacrifice beauty when you reduce your carbon footprint by one of the four Rs. By using

materials and objects in new and unexpected ways, you can create a distinctive look that will have a timeless quality that is hard to achieve if you limit yourself to the flavor-of-the-month styles in interior design. Even if we don't know the detailed backstory of a rough-hewn wooden ceiling beam or repurposed toolbox, we can feel its history, and with that history comes a sense of place, continuity and connection that can be difficult to realize otherwise.

With the application of a bit of imagination, and maybe some elbow grease, these materials and historical finds are versatile enough to be used in a range of settings, from traditional to contemporary rooms, where they can add both warmth and the freshness that comes from juxtaposing the old with the new.

There is also increasing awareness among people looking to build or alter their homes of the health benefits of using salvaged, antique materials, because they do not off-gas in the way that many of the newer furnishings or finishes do.

Julien Jalbert, an architect with the Knickerbocker Group in Portland and Boothbay, says that more and more of the firm's clients are asking for "reclaimed products, to give something new life, because of their visual and textural character and that they have a story to tell." He says, "Only a couple of years ago it was a rare treat to have clients bring up issues of sustainability and health, but now, at least four or five clients out of the 30 we're working with are actively seeking to build homes that respond to these concerns."

So let's go on a house tour of some of these possibilities, inside and out.



This master bath vanity was created by attaching barn board veneer to a vanity that Patrice Cappelletti of Live Solar Maine found on the side of the road, pulled from a house being renovated in Cumberland. The top is custom-cut marble to match a French sink she had seen in a photograph years prior.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. WILSON



A repurposed antique wooden door creates a focal point for this Cumberland home and acts as a screen for the washer and dryer.

Architect: Mottram Architecture.

Builder: Patrice Cappelletti/ Live Solar Maine.

PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL BERUBE, MAINE VIRTUAL HOME TOURS



Reclaimed redwood slab vanity top by Longleaf Lumber.

COURTESY PHOTO

Wood

Maine has abundant choices when it comes to wood from trees felled generations ago, from weathered antique barn siding to pristine, reclaimed timber from the bottom of the Penobscot River. Wood that has been exposed to the elements for decades will have the innate character that only comes with the passage of time, while timber that's been pulled up from deep in the water

may look as fresh as the day it was cut down.

Aesthetics aside, old-growth wood is denser, stronger, harder and more stable than most of today's lumber—which comes from trees cultivated for rapid growth—and better able to resist rot and termites.

This wood can be used to create anything from a cabin to a floor, a staircase, or closet built-ins, or simply a single element, like a countertop or sliding doors to hide a washer and dryer.

RESOURCES

Longleaf Lumber: longleaflumber.com

Maine Heritage Timber/Timberchic: maineheritagetimber.com

Goodwood Reclaimed Lumber: goodwood-reclaimed-lumber.business.site

Bingham Lumber: binghamlumber.com/wood-recycling-for/Saco/Maine

Down & Back Wood Salvage: downandbackwoods salvage.com

FROM BEAST TO *Beauty*

The transformation of a Falmouth barn into a high-performance home

WHEN THIS ONE-BEDROOM, open-plan gem in Falmouth was built in the 1970s as a barn-cum-workshop out of a hodgepodge of reused materials, it had no insulation, no running water to speak of, and an electrical system that was barely code-compliant. But when new owners Stephen Peck, an interior designer, and his husband, John Messner, saw it half a century later, they knew that under the dust and droppings it had the potential to become a magnificent and modern high-performance home.

Architect Chris Briley of BRIBURN Architecture worked closely with Emerald Builders to design a super-insulated, well-sealed building envelope and create plans that would transform the building and preserve the elements that gave it its unique qualities. Emerald removed all the lead paint, redid the foundation, leveled and straightened the structure, removed old trusses, and added wood and steel beams for support. To insulate and air seal, they used recycled rigid foam board, dense-pack cellulose, and a “smart barrier” that is both vapor-open and airtight, achieving an airtightness level far better than even the Passive House standard. They also installed an air exchange system for fresh, filtered air and heat pumps for warmth.

The most remarkable feature of the home is the first-level flooring, which is composed entirely of World War II Liberty ship deck hatches reinforced with steel and bronze and installed by the original owners. Of 2,710 Liberty ships, 250 were built in Maine.

Peck and Messner brought in their art collection, featuring Art Deco pieces, creating a beautiful juxtaposition of the rough and the refined, the old and the new, all of it underpinned by a design and high-performance features that transformed a rather neglected beast into the beauty it is today—inside and out.



PHOTO: FRANÇOIS GAGNE COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHIE



PHOTO: FRANÇOIS GAGNE COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHIE

Before



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIBURN

Nuts & Bolts

This is a largely utilitarian category for many things you would typically go to a hardware or appliance store to find but which can be found in new, like new, or gently used condition at these two terrific not-for-profit organizations.

The Maine Buildings Materials Exchange has been supporting Maine low-income families for more than 25 years by selling lighting, hardware, plumbing supplies, furniture, heating and cooling units, and architectural salvage. Anyone can shop there, but there are some guidelines, so it's best to refer to their website for who can buy what and when. As their stock changes daily, don't be put off by any of the little notices on the website that say "Sorry, there are no products matching your search"—just call ahead to see if they have what you're looking for. Founder and owner Dave Zimmerman will give you a warm welcome.

To help fund the remarkable work they do, Habitat for Humanity runs ReStores all over the United States, including five in Maine. Each store is independently operated and stock changes rapidly, so if you have something particular in mind, call ahead. Typically, the stores carry furniture, large kitchen appliances, kitchen and bathroom cabinets, kitchen and bathroom sinks, doors and windows, hardware, insulation, lumber and plywood, lighting, roofing, flooring and tools.

RESOURCES

Maine Building Materials Exchange:

mainebme.org/pages/about-us

HABITAT RESTORES:

Rockland: midcoasthabitat.org

Portland: habitatportlandme.org/restore

Topsham: habitat7rivers.org

Kennebunk: habitatyorkcounty.org

Waterville: watervilleareahfh.org/restore

Brick & Stone

Reclaimed brick or stone can be used both inside the house and out, from garden paths to kitchen walls to fireplace surrounds.

RESOURCES

St. Laurent & Sons: stlaurentandson.com/updates/reclaimed-and-recycled-asphalt-brick-and-concrete

Perennial Stone: perennialstone.com

Stone Solutions Maine: stonesolutionsmaine.com/projects



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Salvaged bricks frame the bar and a salvaged leaded glass window is used as a transom in this saltwater farm in Damariscotta. Architect & builder, Knickerbocker Group.

PHOTO: DARREN SETLOW PHOTOGRAPHY

Glass

Looking for a stunning, durable, out-of-the-ordinary choice for counters for indoor or outdoor use? IceStone® ingredients include 75% recycled glass and non-toxic pigment—and it contains no glues, resins, plastics, petrochemicals or chemical binders. It's made in the Northeast and comes in (almost) a rainbow of colors. Plus, it's Certified B Corp-made, Cradle to Cradle Certified® and highly UV-, heat- and stain-resistant.

You can also use recycled glass under your home in the form of foam glass, a building material that is non-leaching, rot-resistant, non-flammable, durable and safe. It originated in Switzerland decades ago but was only available in the United States as an import until recently, when two companies decided it was high time to produce it here. AeroAggregates in Pennsylvania was the first and has been joined by Glavel in rural Vermont, where production of the low embodied-carbon material, made of 100% post-consumer recycled glass, is slated to begin in November.

RESOURCES

IceStone®: icestoneusa.com

Glavel, Inc.: glavel.com/our-future

AeroAggregates: aeroaggregates.com

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Architectural Salvage & Beyond

If you enjoy the hunt for that perfect piece as much as the find, you'll be spoiled for choice in Maine, which has some purveyors who are outstanding in the breadth and depth of their offerings. Some of them also sell antique building materials, so if you're in the market for both, you might just be in luck. And depending on where you live, New Hampshire or Vermont could be options as well.

If you want to take repurposing to a whole new level, keep an eye out for an upcoming concept showroom display by Catherine Weiland, who designs for Performance Building Supply in Portland through her balance design studio. Wholly committed to sustainability, Weiland wants to show how, if we shift the way we look at things—literally and figuratively—we can create functional, beautiful living spaces even as we tread more lightly on the earth. How? She'll be taking furniture found on Craigslist and repurposing it in the kitchen. Stay tuned.

RESOURCES

Portland Architectural Salvage: portlandsalvage.com

The Old House Parts Company: oldhouseparts.com

Nor'East Architectural Antiques: noreast1.com
(New Hampshire)

Architectural Salvage, Inc.: oldhousesalvage.com
(New Hampshire)

Vermont Salvage: vermontsalvage.com

balance design studio: balancedesign.studio

Renovation Angel: renovationangel.com

Craigslist: maine.craigslist.org

Goodwill

Local estate and yard sales



Old roof sheathing boards salvaged from the Boston & Maine Railroad Depot in Concord, NH and chicken feed lighting fixtures repurposed by Portland Architectural Salvage were used by Terrapin Landscapes to craft their office conference room in Arundel, ME.

PHOTO MIKE CORSIE, TERRAPIN LANDSCAPES

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OAR-INSPIRING: A Designer's Shed on Mount Desert Island

THIS JEWEL OF A SHED SITS on the property of Meredith Randolph, designer and building science expert at Four Winds Design, a sustainable building design firm on Mount Desert Island.

The repurposed oars on the front are fully functional handles that rotate to open and shut the door; they were found at the boat shop of Randolph's boatbuilder husband. The siding came from shop scrap wood and the copper birdhouse was fashioned from copper left over from flashing used on their home. The main 8'x8' section is a typical walk-in shed, but under the shed roof side, Randolph installed a shelf at counter height and placed a strip of corrugated polycarbonate roofing over it to illuminate it directly. There is external access to the area under the shelf, providing storage for a lawnmower, wheelbarrow and other tools.

COURTESY PHOTO