

Log and Timber Works Creates Custom Homes

Scandinavian Log and Timber Works creates custom log homes built by hand. Founder Steve Estola has had a lifelong interest in log homes and big timber buildings, which led him to start the Wisconsin-based company more than two decades ago. His first projects were for himself, but they soon generated enough interest that he decided to split building time with his primary work as an auto mechanic, eventually transitioning to the construction business full-time in 1992.

Even so, its roots date back one hundred years to when founder Estola's grandfather, Leonard Estola, immigrated from Finland. He was a master craftsman for log, post, beam, and stone construction and passed on his passion for quality work to the rest of the family.

Today, Scandinavian Log and Timber's artisans follow traditional techniques for building stack log homes, log post and beam structures, and hybrid buildings. The workers hand-dress every fusion to certify a perfectly detailed fit and finish. Many homes also feature hand carving and natural detailing to provide a sense of personality and flair. The company utilizes a variety of building methods based on the project. Heavy timber work requires traditional mortise and tenon joinery, while roof systems typically require simple trusses, intricate hammer beams, and king post trusses. However, their specialty style is Scandinavian scribe fit notches with a patented double scribe lateral groove.

Projects range from simple cottages to large estates or conference centers, though most are second homes or seasonal residences.

Most projects are made with hand-peeled western red cedar, prized for its natural flutes, flares, and taper that make it visually interesting. It also has a high level of thermal resistance, which makes it the most energy-efficient building log available. Finally, cedar is naturally rot-resistant and repels insects. The logs are debarked,



Each house is dry-fitted at the company's work facility before every log is numbered, disassembled, and shipped to the building site.

crafted as necessary per project, and pieced together before being disassembled and transported to the construction site. When possible, the company uses locally sourced wood.

The company handles every part of the project, from the initial design to the build, delivery, and on-site assembly. This ensures transparent communication through every project phase so customers know precisely what they're getting.

Each house is dry-fitted at the company's work facility before every log is numbered, disassembled, and shipped to the building site. While other companies will deliver a package of material that requires the aid of a contractor to assemble, Scandinavian eliminates this hassle with assembly services, guaranteeing that the people who initially crafted the house are also reassembling it at its final location. The company handles all logistics associated with construction, both nationally and internationally. All transportation costs are included in the initial project estimates.

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She Makes Custom Cowboy Hats

When people order a custom cowboy hat from Kaycee Orr-Hoffman they get a few bonuses. Great customer service, a purple lining (the color of champions), a \$2 bill tucked in the band (to never go broke), and the perfect style for the hat owner are all part of the package from her Bar None Hat Company.

As a Nebraska rancher and the sixth generation of a ranching family, Orr-Hoffman knows what cowboys want. Nevada cowboys typically wear a buckaroo-style hat, while Nebraskans prefer the George Strait-style hat, for example. Her most popular style is a traditional cowboy hat with a cattleman crease.

All start with hat blanks she purchases from a Tennessee company. The felt ranges from rabbit fur in the lowest price range, a blend of rabbit and beaver in the mid-range, and all beaver fur on the high end.

"I block it, and there's a lot of sanding

the hair down, heating, cooling, ironing, and sewing to get a soft felt finish," Orr-Hoffman says.

Following the tradition of two hat-making aunts, she started her business 20 years ago and named it after her family's brand dating back to the 1800's.

The process begins with getting the right size, either in person at her Thedford, Neb., hat shop with a conformateur device or online by following measurement instructions on her business webpage. Orr-Hoffman also molds the hat according to different head shapes.

Customers have color options, and she keeps the most popular ones (black, silver belly, and natural) in stock. Many are repeat customers who have two hats, a dress hat and a work hat. When the work hat gets old, the dress hat becomes the work hat, and the client orders a new dress hat.

"It's a very traditional trade. But what's changed a little bit in the last 10 to 15 years

They're Growing French-Style Peppers In California

Though Piment d'Espelette chile powder is a staple for chefs at fine dining restaurants, it's unfamiliar to most home cooks as it's an expensive import from a specific Basque region in France. A California couple plans to change that by growing and processing the chiles in the U.S. under the name Piment d'Ville.

The name is a nod to Boonville where the peppers are grown, says Krissy Scommegna, owner of a farm near the California town. She discovered the chile powder when she worked as a sous chef at The Boonville Hotel.

The powder is sweet and spicy and adds a deep lingering rich flavor and colorful garnish to any dish, she says, from eggs and avocado toast to fancy restaurant entrees to regular weekday meals. She uses it instead of black pepper in most dishes.

"We have a similar growing region to the Basque region in France, so in 2012, we got some seeds and started with 20 plants behind the hotel," she says. "It took some experimenting to turn the fresh peppers into chile powder."

A passion project transformed into a revitalized vision for a sustainable business in 2019, when Scommegna and her husband, Gideon Burdick, took ownership of her family's chile farming operations and founded Boonville Barn Collective.

After starting seeds in a greenhouse, they plant between 65,000 and 80,000 pepper plants (11 varieties) in May on 4 acres that they rotate with dry beans. Drip irrigation lines provide water collected in an irrigation pond between November and May. Harvest begins in September by handpicking peppers as they ripen. After drying in the greenhouse, stems and seeds are removed before the peppers go into a homebuilt industrial dehydrator. When completely dry, the peppers are ready to grind into powder, make flakes, or kept whole.

"Piment d'Ville is used in about 700 restaurants in the country. I think we're the largest producer outside of France," Scommegna says. "We also have Mexican



Photo courtesy of Nik Zvolensky

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peppers and some unique varieties with low to high heat, so there's something for everyone. We like growing (and drying) chiles because it's a fun way to be a mainstay in someone's kitchen year-round."

With a national food distributor, Boonville's French chiles have a strong restaurant market. The farm's online store gives home cooks a way to buy the chile powder chefs rave about.

"It's great to see new customers come to us and reply that it's become a mainstay in their kitchens," Scommegna says.

The website offers the chile powder in classic, smoky, and spicy flavors at \$12 for a 1.2 oz jar as well as an assortment of chiles, dry beans, and olive oil that the couple produce from their olive tree grove.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Boonville Barn Collective (hello@boonvillebarn.com; www.boonvillebarn.com).



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is distressing them to make them look ranch-worn. Also, hat bands can make a hat look different," she says.

Hats range from \$400 to \$900, and turnaround time is usually 1 1/2 to 2 months.

Orr-Hoffman's attention to quality and good service has built a great reputation and word-of-mouth advertising. It's a skill that fits well with ranching with her husband and

raising three children.

To order a hat, check out her website or call to set up an appointment in her shop.

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