

A BUSINESS
BUILT FROM WOOD

WASATCH TIMBER PRODUCTS



Things are different at 9000'. Breathing is a bit more labored. Bighorn sheep and mountain goats can be spotted in the rocky outcroppings. Snow comes early and stays late. But most importantly to someone like Chip Turner, 9000' is where you find the Engelmann spruce he prizes most. It's the wood Chip has used to build Wasatch Timber Products into the business it is today, a business he has built from the ground up with the wood found in the Wasatch and Utah high country. For over 30 years, this wood has been a prize feature of many custom homes in the Rocky Mountain West.

The logs Wasatch Timber works with have been killed by beetles and need to be removed from the forest. While that might make a lot of people feel good about the environmental significance of this work, Chip makes no concessions when it comes to quality. This spruce offers the grain and color that allows him to produce the work on which he stakes his reputation. With that there are no compromises.

Once the wood is down in the Heber Valley at the Wasatch Timber Products mill, Chip fashions the logs into the specific products his clients are looking for. Everything from milled and hand-peeled logs to rough-sawn timber. Custom mantels, tongue-and-groove, railings, and custom siding.

For anyone with even a passing affection for wood, visiting the mill is a great experience. "When folks come here, they're like kids at Disneyland. Most have never been to a log mill before. They can walk right up to the log. They can look at it and see what we're talking about. I can educate them. It's a huge eye-opener for those who come over," explains Chip.

"Recently, we've been working with some folks from New York who are building down in southern Utah. They are thrilled to come in and be able to hand-pick some of the wood. There are creative looks they are going for both in

the antique timbers we have as well as some of the really unique logs," Chip adds. "They're combining both into a Southwestern Anasazi-style home. They are not only very creative but place a high value on authenticity. It's been a dream to work with them."

Bringing these custom visions to life in natural materials is what genuinely excites Chip—perhaps because he does it so well. And as design trends throughout the Mountain West have taken a distinctive progression to more contemporary architecture, Chip finds there is still plenty of room to showcase and integrate the character inherent in a distinctive piece of wood. "A lot of people really want to work their personalities into their homes. Whether they like a real crazy log vertical or they want a piece of steel wrapped through, it's those folks we really cater to because there aren't really too many of us around still doing that kind of work."

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GROUP PHOTO HERE



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The contemporary aesthetic, with its more refined lines and less emphasis on rustic overtones, is something Chip is excited about and more than able to accommodate. “My dad was an architect. I understand the importance of how things look and how they reflect the homeowner’s personality,” Chip continues. “What we’re seeing is a combination of styles. There are very modern lines, but people still want a western look. A contemporary design accented with a rustic mantel and maybe some furniture. There is still a love of timber no matter what the design.”

It speaks to the fact that, no matter how much these new styles permeate into the western landscape, there is still an intrinsic reason people are drawn here—to connect with the natural world and natural things. Nothing accomplishes that inside a home better than wood. “People want to leave their home and go to something different in the mountains, they don’t

want their mountain home to look just like their home in the city. They’re drawn to something that has some traditional feel even though overall, the lines are very modern,” says Chip.

Collaborating on these ideas and creating the solutions together with clients is as much at the core of Wasatch Timber Products’ success as working the wood. This deep commitment to customer service is a large part of what has kept Chip thriving in an industry that has seen many of his competitors struggle for survival. Chip explains, “I have always enjoyed doing deliveries. You know, as a small business owner you do it all. But I always appreciate going to the job sites, meeting the folks, and looking at the project. It really helps me make sure we’re giving them the best product. And at the end of the day, that’s what you have to hang your hat on—great product and great customer service.” ■