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Height of invention

An airy Seattle home celebrates earth-friendly design

BY PETER O. WHITELEY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS J. STORY

"It's a loft in disguise," says Don Ice about his remarkable 2,300-square-foot home. Its peaked roof blends handsomely into an older Seattle neighborhood while hiding a dramatic interior. Designer-builder Joe Schneider organized the main floor around a two-story, barrel-vaulted room containing the living-dining area and kitchen; identical upper-level bedroom suites overlook that space and a striking double stairway along one side, reinforcing the airy effect.

Ice was drawn to the house's openness and flexibility and its innovative use of materials. Shoji-style doors open or close whole bedroom walls, and the kitchen island is on casters so it can roll to one side when he wants more room for a dining table. "I liked the warm color of the recycled wood," says Ice. "Seeing a whole staircase made of it was cool."

Recycled materials add character

- Salvaged Douglas fir beams support the loft rooms and frame the stairs.
- Recycled floorboards panel the kitchen walls.
- Reused fir studs are part of the railing and exterior decking.
- Salvaged cast-iron radiators connect to a state-of-the-art boiler system.
- Secondhand cabinets form the base for the kitchen island.

DESIGN: J.A.S. Design Build, Seattle
(www.jasdesignbuild.com or 206/547-6242) ★



Surprise at the center. Flanked by sleeping lofts, the dramatic Y-shaped staircase acts as the living-dining area's focal point and gathering spot. The luxurious-looking floor is walnut-faced plywood.



Open and shut. Glass barn doors open the rear wall to the patio. "They make the house seem spacious," says owner Don Ice.



Breakfast roll. The kitchen centers around a wheeled island. Its reflective greenstone top complements the stainless steel appliances.