

Title: MonicaD's Log Home Q&A (Build)

Subtitle: Build

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Summary: This is about the experience during the building process.

Did you do any part of the construction? *(All, some finish work, site clean up, etc.).*

Having been part of building a much larger log home, I did all of the construction on this off-the-grid cabin. Had a bit of help putting up logs (one other person), but for the most part, did single-handedly, including electric (mix of DC & AC outlets and all DC lighting).

What were the factors in choosing a builder? *(Personal "match", reputation, references, etc.).*

In this case, no builder nor sub-contractor was needed. For instance, with 550 square feet, a vent-free fireplace that runs on propane is sufficient for heating the space. Note also that we built this on piers instead of a slab or basement foundation.

How long did the building process take? What was expected? Any impact? *(For example: took 18 months & we expected 12 months. Sold house & had to rent for 6 months.).*

This turned into more of a "hobby". We found that people liked to see the "work in progress" when coming to see our log homes, so it became a semi-finished sometimes guest house for several years.

What things affected actual vs. budgeted costs? *(For example: well/septic was cheaper, forgot to consider installation cost changes for upgrade to exposed beams, etc.).*

Some of the off-the-grid items (composting toilet, solar panels) were costly, but I was able to find used panels through the internet to keep the costs in line.

What was the most challenging part of this stage? *(Perhaps getting a replacement drywall finisher, etc.).*

The most challenging part here was just designing/planning some of the components like plumbing (shower/bath, kitchen water to come from a cistern) that were very 'non-traditional'. The conceptual approach I've taken is to view it like a travel trailer.

What surprised you? *(How quickly the logs went up, etc.).*

Of all things, how large/bulky the composting toilet was! As a second build for me, I found that I was much more aware of details and built a tighter home.

What advice do you have to share for this stage (preparing & building the home)? *(Be sure to visit the site weekly, etc.).*

There is a definite benefit to an experienced builder (even self-builder!). If you plan to self-build, be sure you have access to advice from someone who has done the same.