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PINNACLE LIVING MOUNTAIN HOMES SOUTHERN • STYLE

HGTV

DREAM HOME
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PLUS

**6 Designs To Die For:
Our Beautiful Homes Winners**

**Blue Ridge, Ga:
Just About to Boom**

**Greenbrier Sporting Club:
A Most Heavenly Community**

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Environment-Happy Homes

When building a home, the options can seem endless. Materials, colors, styles — the choices go on and on. Now there's one more: standard materials or eco-friendly. Just look at what works today.

BY SARAH THOMAS



The perfect finish for this mountain home, bark siding has been used for centuries and is today environmentally correct since it requires no heavy-chemical paints or stains. Once most common in chestnut, it's now available in poplar.

With today's advances in design and manufacturing, homeowners who want a more ecologically responsible house can pick from a variety of practical and lovely options. Here is a sampling.

BAMBOO FLOORING: How about ecologically sound flooring made from grass? Okay, most folks don't think of bamboo as a grass, but that's technically what it is. A variety of companies are now offering gorgeous flooring, comparable to hardwoods, made from this material. Environmentally, the advantage is that bamboo replenishes itself very quickly, producing new shoots each year. This flooring is actually more durable than some hardwoods and its low moisture absorption properties make it ideal for humid climates. Look for retailers who stock plantation-grown bamboo or one of the many species not consumed by pandas. In addition, make sure a low-formaldehyde adhesive was used to laminate the bamboo slats together.

For more information, call Teragren, Bainbridge Island, Wa.; www.teragren.com;



Oh-so-beautiful, this bamboo flooring – believe it or not, a grass product – is a smarter choice than hardwood because bamboo replenishes itself quickly, can be more durable than hardwood and is ideal for humid climates.

(800) 929-6333, or Conscious Flooring, LLC, Asheville, N.C.; www.consciousflooring.com; (888) 835-6677, or see the card on page 83.

RECYCLED CERAMIC & STONE TILE: More and more companies are now offering recycled ceramic and stone tiles. Made using varying percentages of waste glass, recycled-content ceramic tile is often more durable and moisture and stain-resistant than non-recycled tile. Terra Green Ceramics offers two lines of tile, both made from 55 percent recycled materials. Ceramics in Crossville, Tenn., offers an Eco-Cycle program featuring products made from 95 percent recycled tile. The Eco-Cycle™ Stone series has all the added features of high-fire porcelain tile: strength that's stronger than natural stone and harder than granite, and durability with porcelain that refuses to scratch, stain or fade. No special cleaners or sealers are necessary.

For more information, contact Terra Green Ceramics, www.terragreenceramics.com; (765) 935-4760, or Crossville Ceramics, Crossville, Tenn.; www.crossvilleinc.com; (931) 484-2110, or see the card on page 83.

BARK SIDING: For centuries, bark has been a traditional exterior cladding for homes. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, chestnut bark was commonly used for cladding in the Appalachian Mountains. The bark was tough and inexpensive

and it stood up well to snow and ice in the winter and humidity in the summer. The chestnut blight of the 1900s ended the practice of using chestnut bark to clad houses, but today, several companies in Western North Carolina are making shingles from poplar bark in the tradition of the chestnut bark shingles. Poplar trees are abundant in southern forests and are harvested primarily for use in the furniture and plywood industries. Bark siding is an environmentally friendly choice since it is typically treated as a waste product and requires no chemical-laden paints or stains. One company,

Highland Craftsmen in Blowing Rock, N.C. kiln-dries its shingles and uses no chemical additives.

For more information, contact Highland Craftsmen, Blowing Rock, N.C.; www.barksiding.com; (828) 295-0796, or Natural Bark

Siding, Lake Toxaway, N.C.; www.naturalbarksiding.com; (828) 966-4035, or see the card on page 83.

ECO-SHAKE SHINGLES: The eco-shake is an innovative roofing material comprised of 100 percent recycled materials: reinforced vinyl and cellulose fiber. The eco-shake shingle is designed to resemble and replace wood shake shingles without the issues of rotting and breakage. The eco-shake has a Class A fire rating and a Class 4 impact rating, the highest ratings achievable from Underwriters Laboratories (UL®). The



The completely amazing eco-shake looks great, is manufactured from 100 percent recycled materials – reinforced vinyl and cellulose fiber – and is warranted for 50 years.

2006 BEAUTIFUL HOMES WINNERS ARCHITECTS/BUILDERS

If you love gorgeous homes as much as we do here at *Mountain Homes*, you'll relish the following pages as we showcase the inaugural winners in our Beautiful Homes Contest competition. Their entries are varied in style and come from a trio of states, but each has a distinctive flair that earned the entrants special recognition.

Reminiscent of European kitchens, this version at Mont Brae incorporates strong wood details, high ceilings and art elements such as paintings above the curved arch at the stove area.



**BRADLEY DOWDY
PLATINUM AWARD (TIE)**
PHOTOS BY TODD BUSH



Inspired by the traditional manor homes of old Blowing Rock, N.C. where this home stands, Dowdy created a dramatic design for Linda and Bob Pohle from such classic mountain materials as bark siding and stone and while it has a regal appearance, it is not only elegant and timeless, but casual as well.