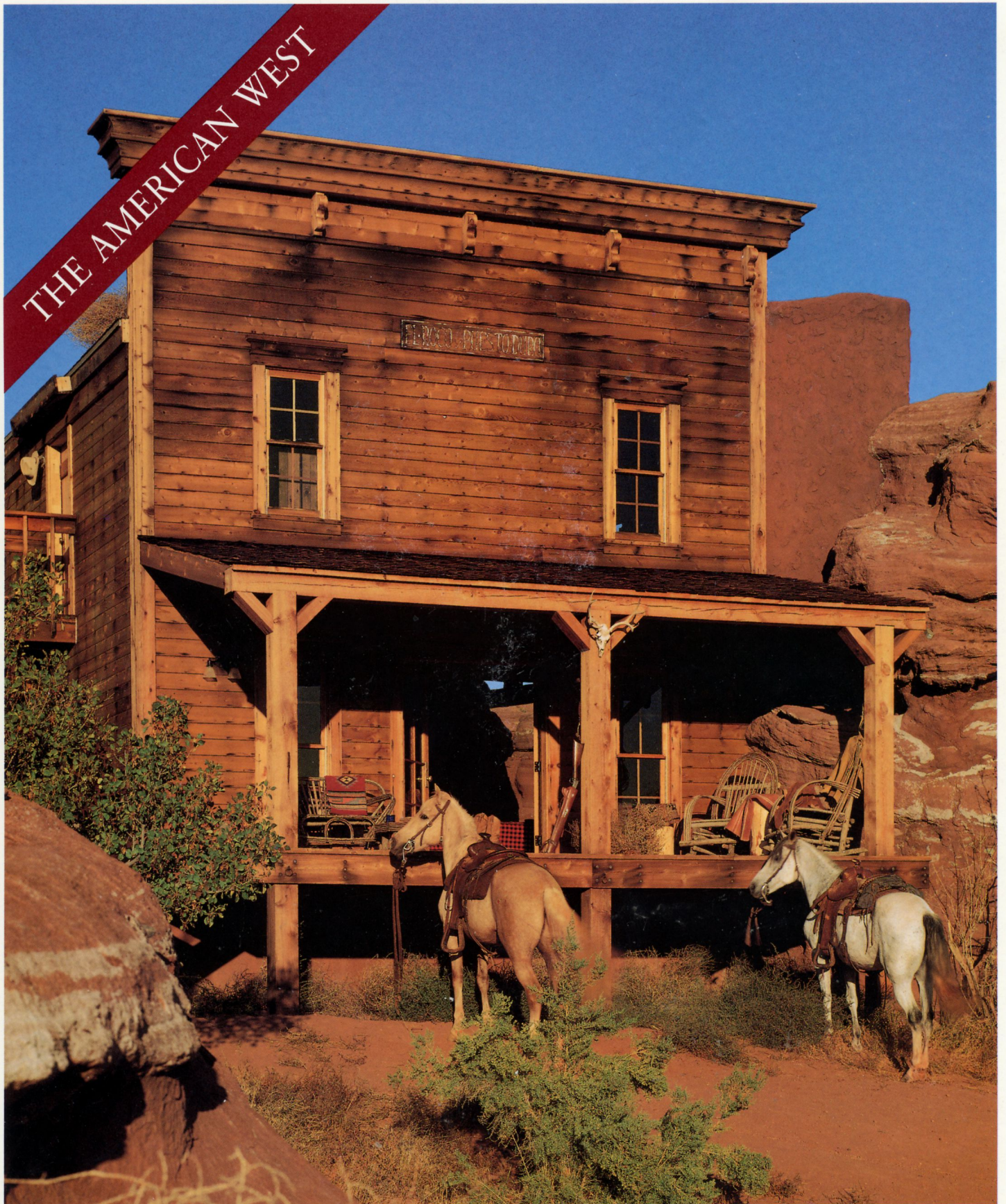


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Barn Raising in the Santa Ynez Valley

*California Collectors Donna and Ken Fields
Adapt Old Buildings to a New Setting*

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"We wanted to retain the integrity of the eighteenth-century New England hay barn and the log houses from West Virginia, while converting them into a home to best display our antique American furniture and folk art," says Donna Fields (opposite) of the Santa Ynez Valley, California, residence she shares with her husband, Ken. "It was a logistical challenge to dismantle them and move them here."



BARNS FIGURE AS prominently in American mythology as they do in the American landscape. Tales suggest an architecture constructed between sun-up and sundown by neighbors nourished by one part square dance, two parts pie. Beguiled as they are by such stories, American folk art collectors Donna and Ken Fields came to measure barn-raising time in seasons, not in blinks of the eye. While they

ABOVE: "The barn is designed with a central hall plan but without divider walls," says Fields. "Therefore the entrance hall is part of the overall open living space." Above the door is a Pennsylvania pediment. A 19th-century boot scraper rests on top of the 19th-century American cupboard, at left.



"There was a lot of concentration on the placement of windows, in order to bring in the most light but not violate a traditional aesthetic," says Fields. "Keeping the authenticity of the barn was important, and yet we wanted to capture the views." ABOVE: A 19th-century wood Indian trade sign from Maine is set on a Shaker blanket chest in a living area corner.



acquired their hundred-and-fifty-acre property in California's Santa Ynez Valley the very day they spotted it, more than four years passed before they lived there in that symbol of rooted simplicity: the barn.

A designer as well as a collector and private dealer, Donna Fields says that no matter how many times she walked through the land, no matter how many architectural solutions she pondered, it never felt right to build a conventional house. "I wanted something that looked as if it grew out of the ground, something that belonged," she says. "All of a sudden it came to me: What about an antique barn?"

Once the solution hit, the couple



"There is no finish on this barn whatsoever," says Donna Fields. LEFT: "The focus in the living area is the architecture and the antiques." In the foreground stands a 19th-century carousel figure of a deer from Christie's. Ralph Lauren fabrics on the wing chairs.

ABOVE: "Center stage in the living area is the large walk-in fireplace that I've always wanted to have," notes Fields. "It was built with serpentine rock." The 19th-century American carved eagle bears its original gilt.

"The house is situated on an incredible spot with mountains and rocky outcrops all around. We didn't want it to intrude on nature," Fields says. "The idea of something man-made coming in and not blending in with the environment worried us."

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