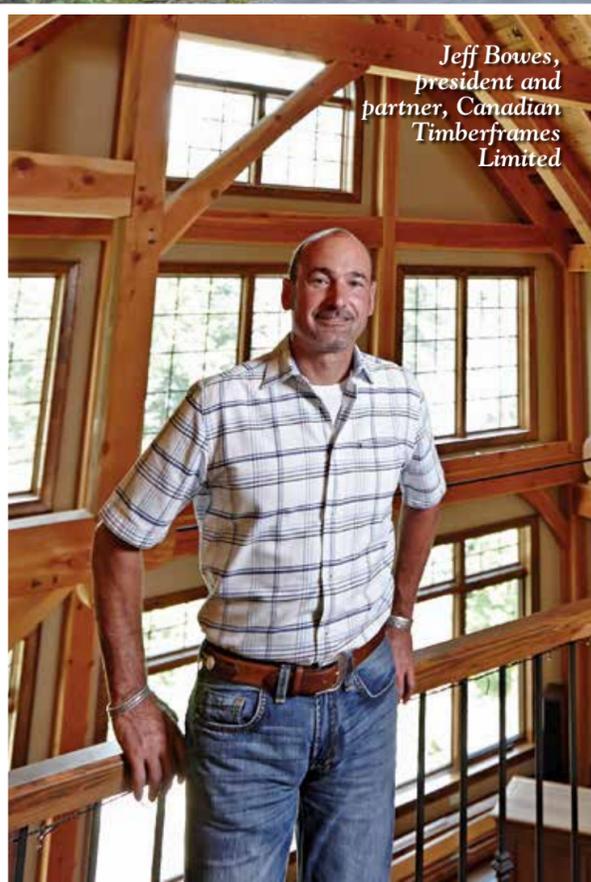


# AT ONE

# with the trees

Jeff Bowes,  
president and  
partner, Canadian  
Timberframes  
Limited



Best recognized by their soaring great rooms and large walls of windows that allow for unobstructed views, timber frame homes are versatile structures that accommodate an array of styles. “The benefit of timber frame construction is its ability to integrate larger, more open spaces,” says Jeff Bowes, president and partner at Canadian Timberframes Limited. “Timber frames let you remove interior structural walls for better sightlines of Muskoka’s stunning vistas while being beautiful in their own right.”

**Aesthetics**  
The rustic feel of a timber frame home complements the Muskoka landscape and naturally bridges the view from indoors to out. “It has incredible natural appeal,” says Jeff. “Well-crafted timber frame homes have a rustic

elegance that you won’t find with other building styles.”

Whether they are built in traditional, lodge-style grandeur or with sleek, modern lines, timber frame homes are dramatic and artful. Part of that is due to the process used to join the timbers. You might not think of heavy timbers as having fine detail, but they do. They are engineered to fit together with exceptional accuracy and can be customized to each project.

“Canadian Timberframes was the first timber frame company in Canada to use CNC technology

for precision milling starting in 1999,” says Jeff. The company uses traditional mortise and tenon joints and authentic joinery which give the structure a smooth, clean finish.



## Bring the outdoors in with timber frame construction

Even though soaring ceilings are a hallmark of timber frame design, it can be incorporated in lower-ceilinged rooms with beautiful effect.

If you are renovating, timber frame elements can also be integrated into existing structures to create interesting visual appeal. By joining timber frame components to a conventional house frame in a timber-frame hybrid, you get the beauty of timber framing where it can be appreciated most. Trusses, entryways, porches, balconies and fireplace mantels are some of the more common applications. Timber frames can also be used for add-ons like sunrooms and carports, or for external structures like greenhouses and pergolas.

### Strength

A timber frame creates a strong exterior shell that eliminates the need for interior walls. That opens up a world of design possibility—walls can be placed wherever

you desire or you can leave them out entirely for a large, open space.

Watching a timber raising drives home the stability and strength of the structure. Tall and majestic before the walls are even added, a newly-erected timber frame looks as though it has risen organically from the earth.

Built to last and to withstand the elements, timber frame structures have been shown to withstand incredible pressure, including earthquakes of up to 7.5 on the Richter scale. While that’s an unlikely concern in Muskoka, their strength will also withstand a more common threat: storm-felled trees.

### Quality

There’s a reason that timber frame construction has been around for more than two thousand years. The technique dates back as far as 200 B.C. by some estimates and was long favoured for its durability. Well-designed and constructed timber frame structures will last for centuries, depending on the wood used.

Douglas fir is one of the most sought-after woods for its tight grain, fewer knots and ability to take greater loads. “We’re seeing a shift throughout the industry that started with architects and now builders and homeowners have taken note. Douglas fir is becoming

more prized for its richer, more luxurious feel,” says Jeff.

It’s also one of the most sustainable and energy-efficient building materials available.

### Sustainability

“We take our responsibility for our forests seriously,” says Jeff. The company’s Douglas fir is harvested from sustainably-managed forests near their facility in Golden, B.C. The logs are dried and milled in-house for the best quality, and waste materials are never wasted. Secondary slabs and boards are graded and used for stairs, trim, siding and decking. Shavings and sawdust are given to local ranchers and the remaining materials are used to generate electricity for Kicking Horse Mountain Resort.

“We use as much of the log and its by-products as possible,” says Jeff. “That, combined with well-managed forests ensures that there is minimal impact on the ecosystem.”

Timber frame construction also lends itself well to energy-efficiency by minimizing thermal bridging—areas of poor insulation that result in heat loss. Unlike conventional framing, a timber frame is completely on the inside of the building. The roof and wall systems designed and manufactured by Canadian



Timberframes completely envelop the timber structure with no interruption in insulation, leading to greater energy-efficiency.

The open design of timber frame construction also allows for more windows which, if south-facing, increase the passive solar capability of a home in winter months. And

in the summer, overhangs can decrease this solar gain when the sun’s angle is higher.

Most people choose to build a timber frame home primarily for its aesthetics. But as a durable, sustainable, renewable material, it’s an easy choice, naturally. **DS**

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