

# NORWEGIAN WOOD

Hidden in the forest, this traditional Scandinavian cottage brims with handmade furniture crafted from foraged materials

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I grew up in the countryside surrounded by woodland, so coming here feels a little like returning to my childhood home,' says Heidi Thorvik of this tarred-timber cabin, which she and her husband Vidar bought five years ago. Tucked away in a forest in Sigdal, Buskerud – a municipality in central Norway – the mountain bolt hole is the perfect holiday retreat for the couple and their two sons, David (14) and Elia (11). The family's main home is in Oslo, which is less than two hours' drive away.

The simple design of the cottage, which was built in the 1970s, is typical of the region, but what sets it apart is its striking location. It sits on a conifer-encamped escarpment beside a lake and offers the family a taste of outdoor life. They hike across the meadows and fjords during the summer and ski on the mountain's slopes in the winter. 'It's wonderful to sit on the doorstep and listen to the birds in the trees,' says Heidi.

A colour therapist by profession, Heidi also writes books about handicraft and is an accomplished carpenter. She learnt the skill from her father, who specialises in renovating old buildings using traditional techniques. He made much of the furniture that is integral to the cabin's rugged charm: the cabinet in the living room, for example, was built from forest timber.

Heidi sells her own accessories, which she makes using recycled materials, through her website, Vølt. Her skill is evident throughout the cottage: she has added her own creations to the pieces made by her father. 'I've tried to use simple, authentic materials. The house is surrounded by nature and I think it's important to express that,' she says. 'I found lots of old wood beneath the cottage when we were first exploring the area, so I made the benches, stools and shelves from that. We've used the remainder of the timber to construct a treehouse in the garden.'

These handcrafted objects blend beautifully with vintage treasures that date from the 1970s and 1980s. Heidi is a serious collector and loves hunting in dusty antiques shops and markets. 'We found the coffee table in the town of Kråkenes. It's solid wood; I painted the framework and hand-polished the top,' she says. 'The dining table and chairs are made in Jæren, on the west coast of Norway, which is where the name "Jærstol" chair comes from. The wood-and-wicker design is similar to the one in Van Gogh's famous Chair painting.' Vidar is also a collector: he unearthed the sculptural vintage floor lamp by Jieldé that takes pride of place in the living room.

The naïve rusticity of the home's decor is far from clichéd country style, though. The interior is a fusion of pine boards, raw timbers and natural fabrics subverted by smoky accents of charcoal grey. The panels in the bathroom are also painted in this strong shade, creating a dramatic backdrop. Linens draped at the windows and over the beds soften the furniture. Heidi has used thick sheepskins to add a cosy layer to hard-backed chairs and the seating area that has been built in to the concrete fireplace. 'We constructed a contemporary inglenook as a focal point,' she says. 'There is something quite magical about sitting by the fire surrounded by a view of the forest and lake.' voelt.no; seig.no

Living room The pine boards that clad the walls and floors of the cabin are softened by a large 'Mags' corner sofa by Hay. The silver floor light is a vintage design by Jieldé. It overlooks a 'Jærstol' chair that is part of homeowner Heidi's collection of vintage pieces  
Stockist details on p182 □





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Living room A poured-concrete  
inglenook creates a snug seat by the fire.  
The vintage dining table is positioned  
at the heart of this open-plan space.  
Trainspotters sells similar lights  
Stockist details on p182 □





**Kitchen** The homeowners have painted the cabinets and tiles in a strong shade of grey (try Farrow & Ball's 'Railings'). The only new additions are an Ikea sink and a worktop made from poured concrete (try Concreations). Bedroom Society Limonta offers a good collection of bed linen. For a similar pendant light, try Muuto's 'E27' model. Stockist details on p182 [ED](#)

