

This Old House

DECEMBER 2007

BONUS!
83
Holiday
Gifts

Where to Buy the Best

fireplace mantels, stair railings, hardwood floors, and more

SEE INSIDE

TO START AN EVERGREEN
FAMILY TRADITION

Plus:

Pick the right paint colors (P. 84)

Vintage-style kitchen design (P. 25)

Retrofit radiant heat (P. 51)

Christmas safety check (P. 22)

Our favorite contractor jokes (P. 82)

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AOL KEYWORD: THIS OLD HO

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put a big dent in your wallet, but if you're looking to make a statement, you'll find it here. *San Antonio, Texas; 877-442-5266; alamodesigns.com*

6 FLOORING

RARE EARTH HARDWOODS An importer of exotic hardwoods, Rare Earth has a loyal following among architects, but that doesn't mean it's off-limits to you. From its 60,000-square-foot production facility in Michigan, the company imports such species as bubinga, bocote, teak, and tigerwood and uses them to manufacture flooring and flooring accessories, inlays, and stair parts. Most of the wood comes from sustainable, managed forests. *Traverse City, Michigan; 800-968-0074; rare-earth-hardwoods.com*

7 METALWORK

CONANT CUSTOM BRASS Architects love Conant for the Vermont company's skill at restoration and custom metal fabrication. New and antique lighting is the specialty, but Conant's artisans can make just about any decorative accent you need in metal, from bookends to curtain rods. All the firm's metal products are guaranteed for life. *Burlington, Vermont; 800-832-4482; conantcustombrass.com*

8 SALVAGED LUMBER

URBAN HARDWOODS Harvesting lumber from managed forests is responsible, but rescuing city trees felled by storms or construction projects is the ultimate feel-good enterprise. Instead of ending up in the chipper

or the landfill, these downed trees go to Urban Hardwoods' Seattle mill, where they get turned into striking dining tables and coffee tables. If you're the hands-on type, purchase a slab of western walnut or chestnut and make your own creation. *Seattle, Washington; 206-766-8199; urbanhardwoods.com*

9 INSULATION

BONDED LOGIC Denim isn't just for dungarees and bib overalls—these days, it's also stuffing for your walls. Bonded Logic's UltraTouch insulation is made from 85 percent denim fibers, recycled from factory waste. A boron treatment gives the product fire resistance and keeps fungus and mold at bay. Plus, the stuff doesn't itch, so you can do the job yourself without worry or protective gear. *Chandler, Arizona; 480-812-9114; bondedlogic.com*

10 ANTIQUE GLASS

FAIRVIEW GLASS This Maryland-based company scours homes slated for demolition around Baltimore and metropolitan Washington, D.C., to salvage, recycle, and reclaim antique window glass, including wavy glass, bubble glass, and leaded glass. Just call up owner Albert Kreis, tell him the age of the glass you're looking for or the era of the house you're renovating, and he'll try to match it. Then Fairview will clean the glass, cut it to your specs, and ship it off to you. Most of the antique glass runs about 12 cents a square inch. *Frederick, Maryland; 301-371-3364; fairviewglass.com*



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11 ARCHITECTURAL PANELS

AMERICAN ACRYLIC You're renovating your '60s ranch, and the money is running out. Replacing the kitchen cabinets is no longer an option, so here's an affordable way to spruce them up: Remove the old door panels, paint the frames, and fit them with sheets of LUMAsite. A lower-cost alternative to frosted glass, the acrylic panels are reinforced with glass fibers for a soft, silken appearance, akin to that of Japanese rice paper. Panels, which can be cut on-site with a masonry blade, range in size from 3-by-8 to 5-by-12 feet. *West Babylon, New York; 800-627-9025; americanacrylic.com*