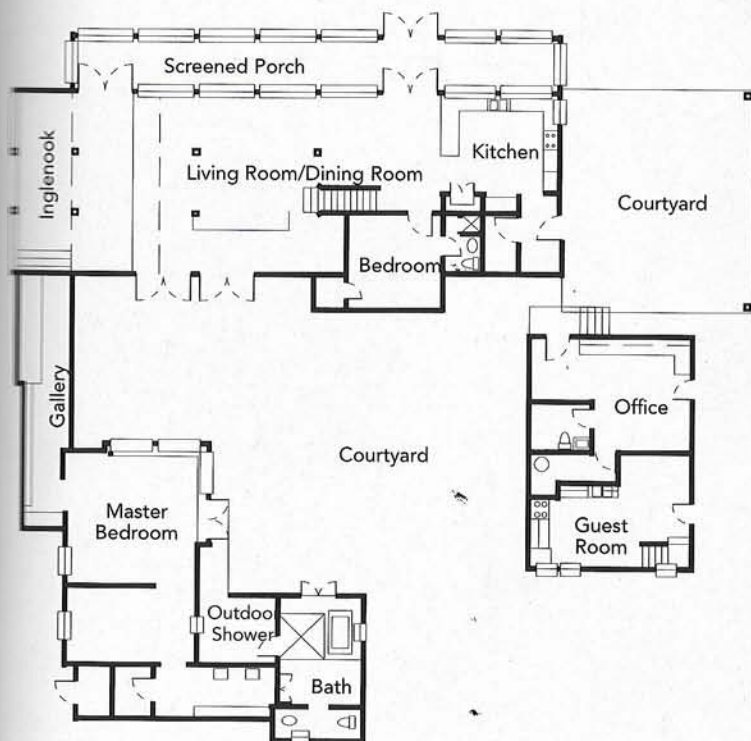


"paneling" of cold-rolled steel (see box, page 69). "We slipcovered them," he says. And everybody knows slipcovering saves money.

But that doesn't mean the renovation was slapdash. When you renovate, Kimberly says, "you end up doing something to every surface in the house." The couple also built an addition containing a new master bedroom and bath, which is about as offbeat as the old construction. The door to the bedroom is corrugated metal; the floor is waxed concrete; and the ceiling is canvas, a kind of indoor tent designed by Kimberly, made by a local sailmaker and hung by Dan. In the bathroom, Kimberly hung an ornate gilt mirror, but for faucets she chose "the things you attach hoses to outside a house." Says Santini, "She had the self-confidence to know that this renovation was going to work."

RENOVATION CHALLENGE "In the master bath, the valves I connected to my antique brass spigot were intended for outdoor use and not made with the integrity needed to prevent leaks. So the faucet always drips," says Kimberly. "The good news is that our cat, Lizzie, uses the puddle it creates in the tub as her personal watering hole."

The master bathroom is new—but it reminds Kimberly of the summer camps she attended (apparently a very happy camper!) as a child. Industrial sinks (opposite, right) are paired with metal hospital cabinets obtained when a local air force base shut down. **Previous spread (bottom right):** In the master bedroom, an old movie-theater-poster frame contains a mirror.

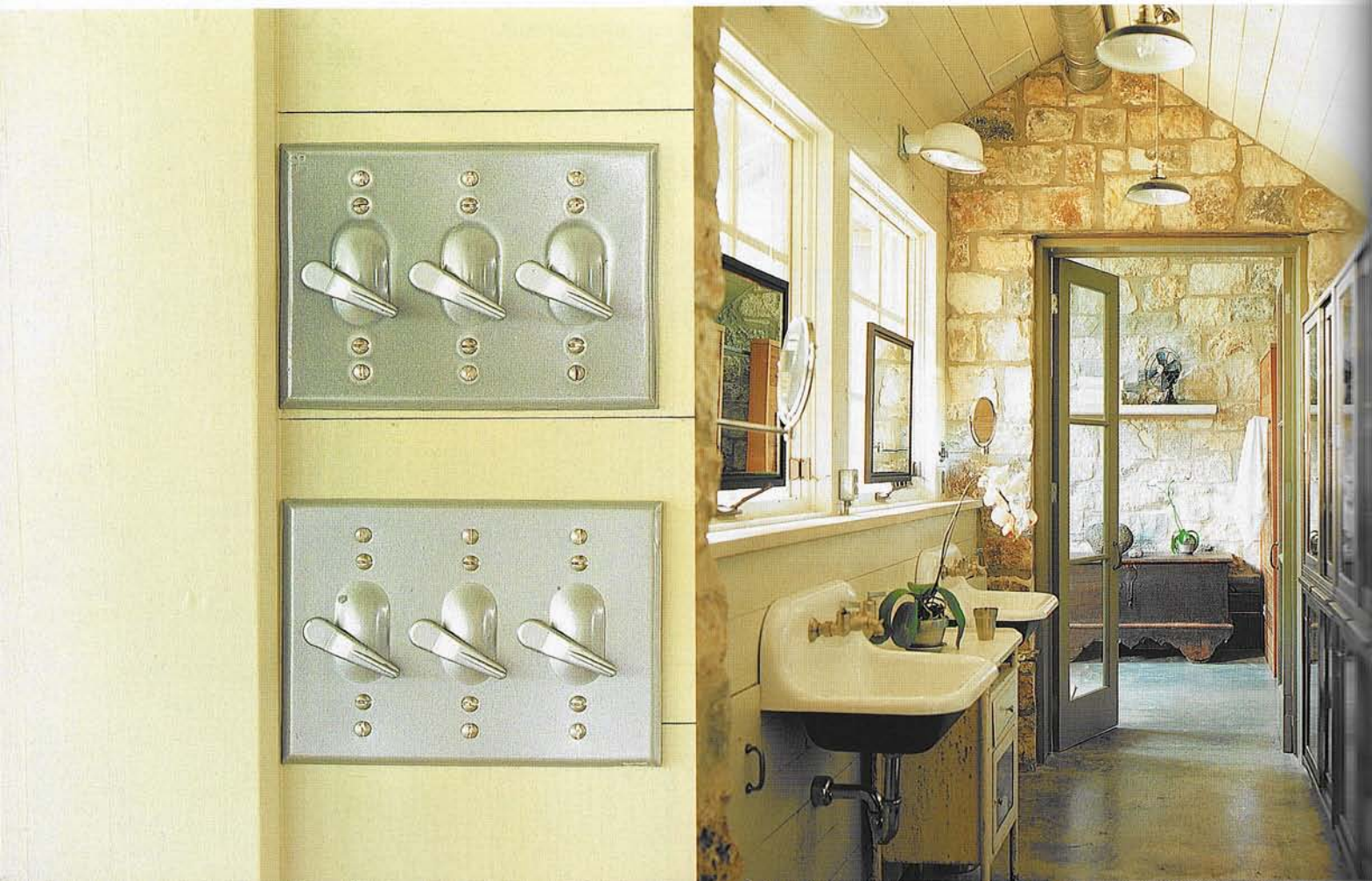


Below (left): Light switches throughout the house were meant for outdoor use (they're weatherproof), but Kimberly Renner chose them for their look and feel.

best pine, just medium grade. And, he said, "we let it shrink for a month or so before we painted it. That caused a mix of tight gapping and wide gapping, which is part of the aesthetic." Most of the pine was covered with two coats of white enamel, creating a "neutral backdrop for the objects Kimberly brought into the house, including chairs from a filling station waiting room. In the kitchen, Lawrence covered the knotty pine cabinets (previously shellacked) in white paint; the white, he says, is a unifying element of the design.

When the renovation began, the couple didn't have children. But while construction was underway, two sons (now three and four) were born. "Although the decision to make walls from pine was design-based," Kimberly says, "I now understand the value of a kidproof material. Toys can't dent it and neither spaghetti nor crayons can stain it."

Perfection wasn't the goal. When Lawrence removed part of a wall separating the living room and foyer, pipes from the upstairs bathroom were suddenly exposed. There was no way to move them; instead, he covered them with galvanized-metal sleeves, which complement the





before

What the Pros Know About Cold-Rolled Steel

Says Kimberly Renner, "We reduced what was a floor-to-ceiling wall opposite the front door by several feet, making it more of a partition over which light could flood into a living area." But no ordinary wall would do for her. So Lawrence sheathed the partition in sheets of quarter-inch-thick cold-rolled steel, available at any metal fabricator. **The sheets, which aren't structural, were simply bolted to studs.** Then the material was waxed and buffed, which, Kimberly says, "gives it a deep, marbled luminescence." This nontraditional material—at least in a residential setting—lends an industrial elegance. "Guests love to touch it," says Kimberly.

What the Pros Know About Barn Doors

Increasingly popular with people who have never owned a barn, these sliders have an advantage over pocket doors: They don't have to fit into hollow walls. That means less construction, and allows for thicker doors. Kimberly's door is made of galvanized metal, but almost any material will work. Barn-door hardware, which must be hung from studs, can cost less than \$100, or more than \$1,000. The track can be hidden behind a valance, or left exposed (as in the Renners' bedroom). **Good hardware is designed to help level the door after installation, for a perfect slide.** One problem: There's no way to hang art on the wall the door slides past. San Diego architect Jennifer Luce has a solution: "Hang art on the door," she advises.



The foyer wall—which once reached the ceiling—was cut down to six feet, exposing pipes that lead to the second-floor bathroom. What remained of the wall was covered in steel sheets.







WHAT THEY HAD AN ODDLY CONSTRUCTED POST-AND-BEAM HOUSE IN AUSTIN, TEXAS, WITH POTENTIAL ONLY THEY COULD SEE. **WHAT THEY WANTED** A KIDPROOF HOME WITH MATERIALS AND FIXTURES THAT REFLECT THE OWNERS' "BACK TO CAMP" AESTHETIC—AND LOVE OF RECYCLING.

A quirky house requires quirky furniture. **Opposite:** Seating is from a filling station waiting room; the new rosewood parsons table sits beneath an Ingo Maurer chandelier. Tiny, outdoor-style spotlights ensure that ceiling beams remain on view at night. **Above:** A discarded industrial prep table became the kitchen island.

HOW THEY GOT IT There's no denying that the house Kimberly Renner bought was odd. "I didn't really know what she saw in it," says Mell Lawrence, the architect Kimberly and her husband, Dan, hired to make the building livable. Fern Santini, the couple's interior designer, says, "I'm a pretty good judge of what's possible, but I didn't see it here." But Kimberly, a former director of Austin's recycling program, prides herself in turning trash to triumph. "She's a junker of the highest order," says Santini.

The house would be Kimberly's greatest challenge. The building, in thick woods outside of Austin, was the creation of a weekend builder. He imitated the post-and-beam construction he saw in magazines, but he made his posts and beams out of two-by-sixes nailed together—presumably, Dan says, because, working alone, he couldn't lift real beams. As a result, the house had a crafty, old-world quality. Says Lawrence, "It was built in the 1980s, but it looked more 1880s." He isn't being kind.

And yet many of the "posts" and "beams" had been covered in Sheetrock. Playing to the house's strengths, Lawrence stripped off as much of the Sheetrock as he could, making the interior more barnlike. And then he hid the remaining Sheetrock behind pine boards laid horizontally. Channeling Kimberly's spirit, Lawrence says, he didn't buy the



LOST
AND
FOUND

