



Masterpiece Challenge Winner:

Lancaster County Timber Frames, Inc. from Wrightsville, PA

About the Winning Selection

This hammer beam is one among several structural trusses built for a great room roof system by Lancaster County Timber Frames, Inc. (LCTF) It was crafted from #1 grade or better free-of-heart-center Douglas fir. The hammer beam has a 24' span and 12/12 pitch. The homeowners said that they chose LCTF after viewing the work of several nationally-ranked firms. "It was their approach to the hammer beam elegant, artful and yet incredibly strong that sold us Lancaster County Timber Frames," they added.

About the Winner

Lancaster County Timber Frames is dedicated to the revival of the ancient craft of timber framing and to the refinement and improvement of techniques and skills. The company is co-owned by Tony Zaya, Joe McCarthy and Dale Kretzing. LCTF has built frames for churches, businesses and corporate centers, libraries, schools and, of course, homes. Their work can be found as far away as New Mexico, Tennessee, Colorado & Massachusetts. Their fabrication facilities are located in Wrightsville, PA.

They're a small company, and proud of it. The people who sell our frames are the ones who design, lay out, carve and erect them. Each one is unique. They use only the finest material and secure an engineer's seal on all of their designs. All joinery is tight and fully housed. They build each home as if they are going to live in it and as if they are going to live forever.

About the Craft

A timber frame is a structure made of horizontal, vertical and angled timbers, sized according to function, joined into one another to form a self supporting unit. The terms timber frame and post-and-beam are not synonymous. All timber frames are post and beam, but not all post and beam structures are timber frames. The difference is in the method of joining the timbers. In timber frames, joints most often mortise and tenon are cut into the actual timbers, while in a post and beam, any method of connecting the pieces may be used.

Since timber framing is a method, not a style, almost any shape or form that can be imagined can be designed, carved and erected. And since the frame is self-supporting, no exterior or interior walls are needed for support. This permits the greatest flexibility when designing interior spaces. Open floor plans are most easily accommodated.

The Pagoda and the Golden Temple, both timber frames, both built in the seventh century, both still stand. In Europe, even the most humble barns, shops and homes, and the awe-inspiring Westminster Hall have prevailed for centuries. Sadly, it seems people today have forgotten that it was once common for a home to be passed on from one generation to the next, and the next. Those of us who build timber frames have not forgotten.

