



From top: The material palette of the house, situated on 35 acres of Colorado ranchland, complements the surrounding landscape; past and present come together in the kitchen, where contemporary McGuire bar stools pair with a backsplash crafted from a 50 million-year-old fossil.



CRESTED BUTTE

HOME ON THE RANGE

By reinterpreting a parcel of land with respect for its setting and creating a traditional Colorado ranch home with a contemporary riff, Dallasites Lewis and Janet Shaw exemplify how developers can keep the past in hand while embracing the future.

By Becca Hensley

Texans love their ranches—even if those homesteads lie up north in Colorado. Dallas resident Lewis W. Shaw II—founder, chairman and CEO of real estate development firm Jackson-Shaw—and his wife, Janet, have made a habit of visiting Colorado’s less trammled Crested Butte for more than three decades. If that beloved ritual isn’t enough to prove their allegiance to the pine-studded, wildlife-rich terrain and the region’s laid-back vibe, their purchase (along with a partner) a decade ago of a circa 1893, 2,100-acre ranch surely demonstrates their devotion. “Nature did not want this meadow to be destroyed with buildings and the unnatural creation of golf greens and fairways,” says Lewis, who had long admired the river-fringed meadow for the peace and simplicity that Crested Butte represented for his family.

With his history of working with locals, such as builder Steve Cappellucci, to erect log cabins, Lewis knew he wanted to keep his development ranchlike and authentic. In collaboration with Basalt-based CCY Architects, CONTINUED...

PHOTOS BY JAMES RAY SPAHN/COURTESY OF WILDER ON THE TAYLOR

From top: A. Rudin sofas in Great Plains fabric provide cozy seating in the living room; a stone fireplace adds warmth to an outdoor space featuring pieces by Sutherland Furniture.



...CONTINUED Lewis envisioned a community ranch expanse composed of 35-acre homesteads, each with 1-acre envelopes for homes. He called his project Wilder on the Taylor (wildercolorado.com). “The idea was to share the experience and heritage of Colorado ranching,” says Lewis, who was determined “to protect and perpetuate” the 126-year-old property situated between Gunnison and Crested Butte. The development gives plot owners private fishing access to 2 miles on the Taylor River, Rarick Creek and several ponds. A network of hiking and biking trails; master guides for fishing and horseback riding; and a base camp for socializing and community dining add to Wilder on the Taylor’s largesse. Key to the project are Shelly and Don Sabrowski, the 24-year veteran ranch managers whose presence represents the soul of the property.

As for the Shaws’ own home, completed in 2017, they’ve set the standard with their Taylor River retreat. The couple began with a cozy cabin called Bird House, meant to be a sanctum while they considered plans for the main residence. But the cabin—a perfect marriage of contemporary elements and rough-hewn ambiance—ended up setting the mood for the larger domicile. Eventually, the house that emerged set clean lines and top-of-the-market amenities (such as heated floors) inside Colorado ranch-inspired bones. The Shaws brought in Aspen’s ID Interiors and continued working with Cappellucci and CCY principal Chris Touchette to complete the look and mood. The past and present are expressed in features such as classic painted cabinetry in the kitchen mixed with more modern brushed white oak cabinetry elsewhere. In some areas, vintage-style double-hung windows artfully combine with floor-to-ceiling glass. In the great room, cantilevered above the river, a window wall frames the vistas, and above the Thermador stove in the kitchen, a 50 million-year-old fossil serves as a backsplash—a sure celebration of old and new. ■