



COWBOYS

INDIANS

Lone Star Living

TYLER BEARD TOURS THE STATE
TO SHOWCASE THE BEST OF TEXAS RANCH STYLE



It's interesting that most Texans seem uniquely comfortable both at home on the ranch and in a concrete city landscape. The popular ideal is to possess some "stretchin' room," some cattle, and a few horses. Texans today continue to astound and amaze passersby with their great diversity in home construction. Diversity best describes the geography, the climate, the culture, the architecture, and, most important, the lifestyles of the people of Texas.

One spectacular example of a Texas ranch is Dian and Harlan Stai's Mansefeldt. Driving down the winding road with Mansefeldt in sight, I could easily understand the personal pride that Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson felt for their ranch, Reata,

Editor's note: Tyler Beard is the author of The Cowboy Boot Book: 100 Years of Western Wear and Art of the Boot. Following is an excerpt from his newest book with photographer Jack Parsons, Lone Star Living: Texas Homes and Ranches [Bulfinch Press, (800) 759-0190, bulfinchpress.com], to be released in November.

photography by Jack Parsons



A grand conception, the commodious-yet-comfortable great room at Star Creek Ranch is a Dutch barn moved from its original Hudson River Valley location. Searing 30-foot whiplash ceilings are sliced by massive beams and a shapely fireplace.

in the 1956 motion picture epic *Giant*—a West Texas tale of a ranching dynasty driven by oil, cattle, and cash. The property has an air of autonomy, with a main house, a carriage house, barns, outbuildings, and a church—all structures original to the ranch. Yet once you're inside, the original Dietrich Rode House opens her arms and envelops you. Dian and Harlan invested millions of dollars, as well as lots of time, love, sweat, and tears, in restoring Mansfeldt, and today every inch utterly shines with pride and appreciation. The overall interior design is a tasteful integration of periods and styles; each room is traditional with a twist. The unifying aesthetic is a brilliant blend of warmth and livable grandiosity.

Another standout is Diana and Jack Gotcher's Star Creek Ranch. After moving to Fredericksburg, the couple originally

C
O
W
B
O
Y
S

An amalgamation of historical and indigenous building components were used to construct this one-level structure.

I
N
D
I
A
N
S

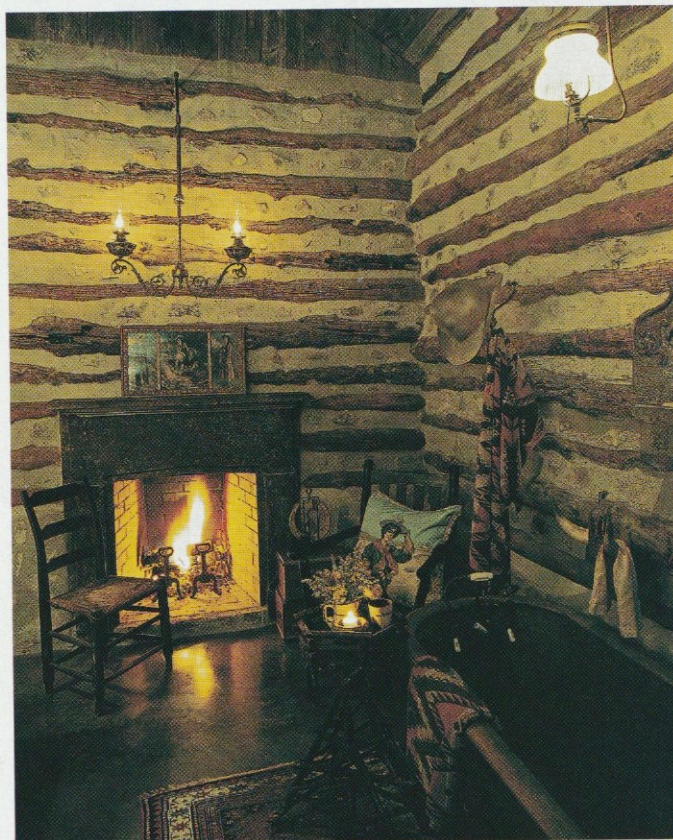
built a typical limestone-faced Hill Country home nestled in the hills west of town. But their bias for big, and Diana's penchant for barns, would soon get the better of them. On a fortuitous vacation to Vermont, they found the nucleus for their new home: a titanic Dutch two-story barn, an anchor structure that was built to last and included massive beams and timbered rafters. After a consultation with a Fredericksburg home design expert, Diane Lohman, a collaboration was struck. The result, Star Creek Ranch, is an interesting transitional style of architectural building. An amalgamation of historical and indigenous building components were used to construct this rambling one-level structure, carved out of stone, log, and imagination.

A departure from convention can be found in Ed and Joey Story's Ramshead Ranch. In 1995, Lake-Flato Architects was commissioned by the pair to build a most unusual "pod-style" ranch house—post-modern meets high-tech on the open range—an antithetically designed structure compared to the traditional styles of ranch homes throughout the state. From the highest point on the property, you can see for miles, and it's easy to be lulled into a deep Texas trance. The East-meets-West style creates a tantalizing visual palette, with collections of Asian and Mongolian artifacts blending harmoniously with Americana—cowboy boots, spurs, saddles, and Texana.

My own taste runs to traditional, and with a longing for untrammelled spaces to ride horses, raise longhorn cattle, and expand our company, True West, my wife, Teresa, and I bought a ranch, halfway between Star and Goldthwaite, and called it the Double TB Ranch (as in Tyler Beard and Teresa Beard). Now all



At Ramshead Ranch, San Antonio-based Lake-Flato Architects designed the house with its dramatic pools. This modern ranch house sticks close to tradition with the choice of building materials—buttery limestone and standing-seam metal roofs have adorned farm and ranch structures for more than 140 years. The round pool is actually a Texas-size pond for exotic koi fish.



Each of four log cabin guest quarters at Star Creek Ranch has a bath and a sitting room. An assemblage of cowboy details makes this a bathroom to spend time in.



This rusticated "branded" door was salvaged from the demolition of a farrier shop in Rising Star, Texas. Its second life is as a bunkhouse door at the Double TB Ranch. The weathered wrinkles, polished to a silvery patina, reveal its age.



The dining room at Lightning C Ranch has a dead-on sense of style. The spoils include a swing-low star-horn chandelier with suede hide shades, the Double D store's Buffalo Bill-inspired Wild West chairs, and a block-leg plank table above a classic hair-on cowhide throw rug.

we had to do was build a house, a barn, a corral, and a bunkhouse. We set out to create a unifying style for the ranch. We sketched ideas on brown paper and combined architectural inspirations gleaned from the cabins, ranch houses, and frontier forts of old John Wayne movies. The dominant design principle was to keep the ranch authentic and period—not a glint of the modern world. The trademark textures of the American West are everywhere and include an abundance of cowboy trappings—timeworn leather, rawhide, horn, hand-forged iron, blue gun steel, handmade furniture, and one-of-a-kind folk pieces.

Located 30 minutes south of Fort Worth, Judy and Dan Coates' Lightning C Ranch is a whole other world. As a Western artist and sculptor, Dan based the house and studio designs on the old native stone stagecoach stops that once dotted the Texas plains. This cow-town oasis reflects the idealized and romanticized vision of the American West. The style is a clever blend-

The trademark textures of the American West are everywhere and include an abundance of cowboy trappings.

ing of rustic ranch and urbane cowboy—in short, Sagebrush Victorian. This style, which reflects what the cattle-baron homes really looked like, includes a Victorian base imported from the East, laid on with generous portions of hide, horn, and cowboy-and-Indian artifacts and handcrafts.

And Texas style, of course, isn't restricted to the ranch. The private Dallas residence of Bill Lenox, co-owner of Bob's Steak & Chop House in Dallas and chairman and CEO of Antek's, and his wife, Marilyn, who holds the reins on Circle T Western Wear, is a contemporization of what they love and collect. Museum-quality Native American pottery and textiles blend with contemporary art, for example, while in another room Old World meets Old West. Equilibrium in domestic décor comes easily when partners are willing to decorate with passion and to blur the styles a little. The culmination is a harmonious exhibition of comfort and good taste.

The open spaces of Texas translate to freedom of expression and the notion that there is plenty of room for everyone to do their thing. Texans feel that going to extremes through building and decorating is a birthright. Whatever the personal taste, whatever the scale, home design inside and out has emerged as a vital form of self-expression—a monument to who you are, where you have been, and what you might yet become. Texas style is not one specific and constant motif but an exotic hybrid born primarily of the state's multiculturalism. The result is an unequaled heritage in home decorating and architecture.