



FROM THE Ground Up

A Maryland couple builds a home near
Estes Park that **HONORS THE LAND** they fell
in love with.

Story by KIMBERLY BEEKMAN
Photography by EMILY MINTON REDFIELD



AMY OWENS WANTED the curved entryway walls of the Estes Park home she shares with her husband, Stephen, to feel like a “warm hug.” Indeed, their house, artfully built into a ridge atop 60 acres bordering Rocky Mountain National Park, is everything they are: amiable, unpretentious, joyful and full of wonder—a testimony to the idea that a space is the material reflection of its inhabitants.

Their home’s design was dictated by two mandates: to be a comfortable gathering place and to honor the land that surrounds it. Family and friends are most likely greeted by the homeowners themselves from the front balcony—or “waving deck,” as they like to call it—where Amy and Stephen love to relax with a glass of wine and watch the forest after hiking, road biking, mountain biking or skiing.

The couple, who have three grown children, met in their hometown of Cumberland, Maryland, and connected quickly, once they discovered they had worked very close to one another in Allenspark and Boulder. “We always knew we were going to go back and have a place there, and we took a decade to find a property that suited our needs,” Stephen says.

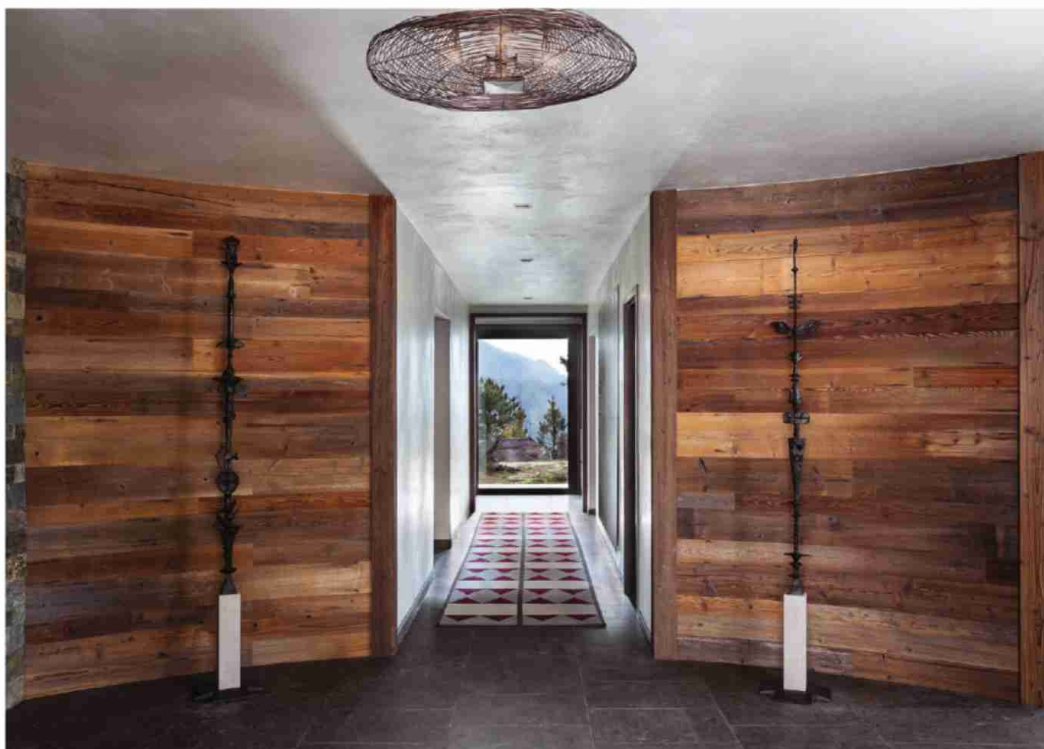
Then, in 2013, they came across this property, bordered by Rocky Mountain National Park on two sides. “The view ... you can’t unsee that. It got into our hearts,” Amy says. From that moment on, that view of Longs Peak—its unforgiving, snow-coated flanks presiding over the green, forested valley—acted as the driving force of the design.

Initially they planned to work with the existing home on the site, but it became clear that it would be more cost-effective to start over. (They donated the materials from the old home to the local community.) They brought in Doug DeChant and Adam Harrison from Shepherd Resources Inc. out of Edwards to design the new structure. “We were amazed,” Amy says. “The whole design team came up to the home and spent several days there, walking the land and getting to know us and how we live.”

With the Owens’ laid-back lifestyle and taste in mind, the architects crafted the home from »

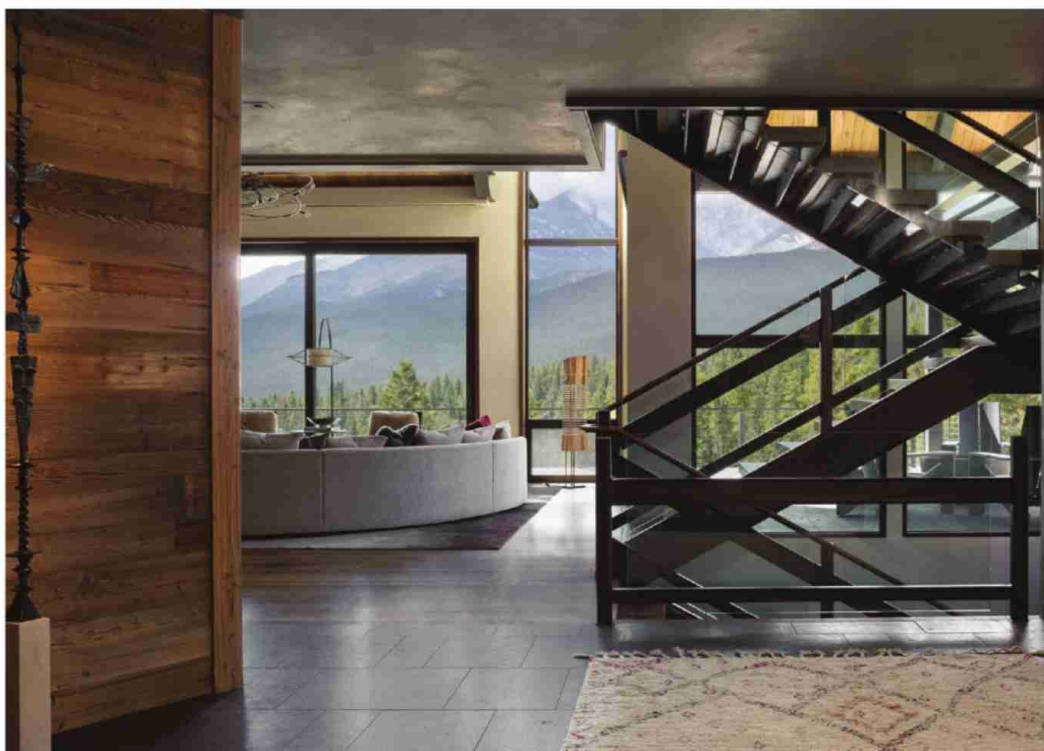
◀ *Rear Exterior* The deck’s outdoor kitchen features a wood-fired pizza oven and propane stove. Homeowner Stephen Owens uses the rock pathway on the left to haul firewood in his ATV. The Owens aimed to make their home as green as possible, so they installed solar panels on the southwest-facing roofs.

► *Entry* Curved, reclaimed-wood walls warmly welcome guests as they step into the home. The bronze sculptures are by artist Tom Corbin. "I got the one on the left for Steve," Amy says, explaining that it's a symbol of the evolution of man. When the home was near completion, Stephen surprised Amy with the counterpart on the right, called *Woman's Rites*.



"THE VIEW ... you can't unsee that. It got into our hearts." — AMY OWENS, HOMEOWNER

► *Living Area* The glass and steel "floating stairs," cantilevered off a center steel stringer, keep the space open, so as not to obstruct the view of Longs Peak. The curved couch from Bright Chair fosters conversation, and the center standing lamp by Hawaiian artist Paul Foeckler of Split Grain draws the eye toward the majestic peak beyond.





▲ **Kitchen** The island consists of a honed slab of walnut from a tree near the Owens' East Coast home; it sits atop a trunk from the nearby woods, which Liquid Metal Coatings covered in bronze. The countertops are leathered granite. The mirrored hood is a neat trick—it reflects the nature behind it and avoids too many straight lines. "It just kind of falls away," Amy says. The chef's kitchen is Amy's domain; she has her own baking pantry in the back. Heartwood Custom Woodworks in Eagle did the woodwork, including the cabinets.



▲ *Master Bathroom* A soak in the Wetstyle egg-shaped tub in front of the floor-to-ceiling window is utter luxury—the views make it feel almost as if you're bathing outside. Vanities with free-standing mirrors rest on either side.



▲ *Master Bedroom* A captivating photo of a horse, taken by artist Drew Doggett, presides over the master bedroom. "There's something about that photo that's just magnetic," Amy says. Elsewhere, gray neutrals, reclaimed wood and stacked stone lend a calm, understated elegance. The bed is from A. Rudin.