

STYLE

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FROM GARDEN
TO GLASS

new airline in
NOCO

NEW LIFE
FOR JESSUP FARMS



Photos: AJ Schroetlin



warm and welcoming in WILDWING

By Lynette Chilcoat

When the new home one commissions to be constructed is on a street appropriately named Majestic View Drive, the panoramic vista plays prominent within the home design.

“The layout of this house is quite unique,” says Mike Schroetlin, proprietor of Schroetlin Custom Homes, who custom built the house in the WildWing development near Timnath.

Throughout the home, owned by John and Shannon Troka, western views sweeping across an expanse of open water to the rise of blue mountains beyond are highlighted.

From the curb, the exterior has the appearance of a grand alpine lodge. As a welcoming prompt, the wide front walkway meanders across lovely landscaping toward a covered porch reminiscent of carefree days. To the side, lush lawn gives way to a modest courtyard. The tableau is complemented by a fire pit and two outdoor chairs facing the legendary Front Range scenery worth more than gold itself.

Situated on an acre lot slightly east of Timnath Reservoir, the setting has a country look with a contemporary feel. Red-winged blackbirds flit in and out of cattail stalks along the shoreline while ducks and geese dot the lake’s pewter surface, paddling lazily in the middle distance.

The construction phase is ongoing in the neighborhood, with only a few structures per cul-de-sac. The ratio of buildings to open space

gives each home an elegant estate-like quality.

Yet a house is more than timber and stone and stucco, as is evidenced when John Troka opens the front door, willing to show the domicile he and Shannon share. Dressed casual and cool in shorts and leisure shirt, Troka’s easy handshake and smile are inviting.

Inside the foyer, which is a spacious hub for the flowing layout of the house, a curving stairway leading to the garden-level basement is in evidence. Glass doors offering a sneak peak to the back slate patio and fenceless emerald lawn lie in a direct line from the front entrance.

Turning to the left to enter a great room with a spacious floor plan including kitchen, dining, and living areas, the house gains a sense of seclusion. Like an oasis amid the increasing bustle of metropolitan craziness stretching from Cheyenne to Colorado Springs, this mini-manor, with its subdued deeply rich earthen tones, speaks of a soft place to land.

“I had the luxury of retiring early,” says John Troka, who was the chief financial officer of a Denver corporation. The Trokas lived in Littleton for several decades, whereby Shannon spent those years as a stay-at-home mom, a task which John vehemently praises.

John and Shannon capitalized on their two sons leaving home as a catalyst to create their dream retirement nest. “We wanted everything functional for the two of us, and everything we needed, in essence, is on one floor. We wanted something that would be with us



Photos: Marcus Edwards





John and Shannon Troka and Mike Schroetlin

for the next 20 to 25 years as our last house and tried to think ahead of what we might need or want.”

They built the classic 3,600-square-foot home for their immediate needs, but also with an eye toward what might come in handy in the future as the possibility of physical limitations set in. Not to mention, hoping their family will expand with time, they designed the entire bottom level as guest quarters for their sons. The Troka’s eventual vision is to be able to receive visitors of the grandchild kind.

“The main element that makes this a home to me,” says Troka, who drafted the layout himself and then had it approved by an architect, “is the great room. It’s big enough we can all be in here at once.”

A round dining room table is bordered on the west by towering arched windows. Mere feet away, the feature of glass walls is repeated in the living space. Vaulted ceilings lend height. A northern wall has a big screen television in the left corner, built-in bookcases on the right, and a fireplace in between. The Troka family takes center stage above the stone mantel in a framed portrait. A strategically placed couch and cushioned armchairs allow a person not only cozy comfort, but a way to take it all in.

“The mountain guy in me said I’d love to live on a lake,” Troka mentions as he gazes in that direction, “while at the same time I have an awesome view of Longs Peak, which has special meaning for me. Both my wife and I think it’s so quiet and peaceful here. Which is probably due to the density of houses—they are zoned far apart.”

“We tried to incorporate things we like, yet kept it really

functional. Little things like making sure the kitchen cabinet knobs and hinges were in the right place, to bigger issues like utilizing the space beneath the great room window seat cushions as storage,” adds Troka.

Head down the hallway from kitchen toward garage to find an enclosed pantry large enough to hold typical shelving units as well as a freezer and household equipment.

A little further on, next to the garage door, is a built-in bench and set of storage cubbyholes, but not with a simple utilitarian look. The overall composition gives the impression of fine furniture.

Inside the garage, tucked off to the side, a handcrafted wooden kayak is polished to a sheen. John admits to building the watercraft himself in the spare time he now enjoys.

Circling back behind the kitchen is a laundry room, which serves double-duty as Shannon’s craft room. Open the opposite door, and like magic, the main foyer reappears. Walk a few feet across to the master bed and bath, where another fireplace is set luxuriously at the foot of the king-size bed. Complete the loop of the upper level by once again turning west into an in-home office.

Not surprisingly, the main feature is a long, sturdy desk facing—what else—that majestic view.

Lynette Chilcoat is a freelance writer living in Loveland. A native to Colorado, she takes advantage of the outdoor adventures the region offers as much as possible, as well as enjoying the distinctive artistic lifestyle within the community.

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