

*Written by Rebecca Juretic*

## HOW THE TEIXEIRAS ACHIEVED THEIR LOOK

Allan & Cee Teixeira use recycled & reclaimed elements to create a living space that's both rustic & elegant. Historically, the heart of a cattle ranch was the main ranch house, where both family and ranch hands would live, socialize and gather for communal meals.

Today, the home of Allan and Cee Teixeira serves much the same purpose.

The Teixeira family, which operates farms in the Santa Maria and Imperial Valleys, dreamed for years of living on a working cattle ranch. In 1999, their wish came true when they purchased a 2,000-acre ranch in Arroyo Grande.

Much like ranching families of the past, the Teixeiras' three grown children have also built homes on the property. Cee and Allan's home, however, is the social hub of the ranch; its doors perpetually open to an endless ebb and flow of family and guests.

Cee and Allan worked with two San Luis Obispo firms, Habitat Studio architects and Semmes & Co. general contractors, to create their vision of an Old World rustic home that is both comfortable and well-suited to entertaining. The main challenge, according to Cee, was creating "a new home that's filled with old character." That meant using some recycled and reclaimed materials to add a rustic feel, as well as products and clever design tricks that replicate an Old World look.

In decorating the interior of her home, Cee employed a traditional style that emphasizes comfort over pretense. Durable materials stand up to wear and tear caused by the family's many guests, as well as by their seven grandchildren. Rustic yet elegant decor seems to echo the home's pastoral setting -- something Cee and her family never tire of.

"To wake up each morning and look out our bedroom window ... I haven't quite gotten past the awe of it all," said Cee. "We feel so incredibly blessed."

\* To give the home the appearance of an Old World farmhouse, Cee and Habitat Studios architects designed rooms to be irregularly shaped, rather than perfectly rectangular. "It looks like the rooms have been added on to over time," said Cee.

\* The Teixeiras often entertain large groups -- sometimes of 40 guests or more. Having a huge formal dining room was impractical, so Cee opted for a large room that functions as a hearth room for intimate family gatherings and can accommodate extra tables when entertaining more people.

\* The home is built from Insulated Concrete Forms (ICF), which are hollow Styrofoam blocks filled with concrete. In addition to providing a high level of insulation, resistance to termites and moisture and earthquake resistance, the thickness of the walls adds to the Old World feel of the home.

\* Cee mixed heirloom pieces that have a rustic style with new, traditional-style furnishings. Disparate elements work together because she used a very narrow color palette throughout the house: mostly yellows and burgundies.

\* Exposed ceiling beams made of recycled wood are a key element in the home's look. The beams were reclaimed from a sheep-shearing shed in Australia and were purchased from Recycled Lumberworks ([www.oldwoodguy.com](http://www.oldwoodguy.com)).

\* When searching for flooring options, most of the tiles Cee liked cost around \$17 per square foot. She then found a company called Alpha Concrete ([www.alphaconcrete.biz](http://www.alphaconcrete.biz)), which supplied concrete brick pavers that mimic the look of rustic, used brick. It ran the Teixeiras \$3.55 per square foot.

\* Cee and Allan wanted a substantial hearth, even though air pollution regulations required the installation of a small, modern fireplace. Semmes & Co. was able to build a structure that resembled a very large, old-fashioned walk-in fireplace into which they inserted the modern fireplace.