

Triangle

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REDEFINED RANCH

BY EVAN BOST



IF YOUR GRANDPARENTS HAD A TRADITIONAL RANCH HOME, YOU MAY REMEMBER IT FONDLY.

It was probably characterized by casual, open living on one level with access to the outdoors via sliding glass doors onto a back patio or porch.

Architecturally, ranch houses typically feature a low-pitched hipped roof, a rambling L- or U-shaped footprint, and plenty of exterior windows. While they were popular in their heyday from the 1940s to 1970s, they faded from popularity in the late 1970s as homeowner needs and styles evolved.

Today's homeowners have a revitalized interest in ranch-style homes and their ease of one-level living but want to incorporate contemporary design features customary in large estate homes. As we listen to our client's needs during the home design process, we often find we can accomplish daily living on the main floor with a partial second floor for auxiliary bedrooms and recreation space. Sometimes, when the slope of a homesite commands a basement foundation, it makes sense for that auxiliary space to occupy a walk-out basement instead of a second floor. We call these ranch-over-basement homes.

We recently completed one of these homes in the luxury Destin community. At 2,651 square feet on the main floor, this open and airy home lives large by way of uninterrupted sightlines, crisp but warm materials, plenty of indirect lighting, and soaring fourteen-foot ceilings made possible by the lack of a second floor.

The added ceiling height allows for taller windows and doors, affording tons of natural light. Layers of dropped soffits soften the space. A ten-by-fourteen-foot-wide gliding glass door separates the family room from the screen porch, which doubles as a four-season room due to phantom screens. With the primary suite, secondary suite, laundry, study, and ample entertaining space on the main floor, the homeowners enjoy all the benefits a ranch has to offer.

Architectural details add interest to the home. A whitewashed cypress plank accent wall descends alongside a contemporary open riser staircase, reflecting all the natural light between the study and family room down into the 1,753-square-foot walkout basement level. Once you step foot on the swirled resin epoxy floor downstairs, you notice the industrial-commercial vibe. An expanded metal ceiling extends over the rift-sawn oak bar

THIS HOME'S LACK OF A SECOND FLOOR GIVES WAY TO FOURTEEN-FOOT CEILINGS, MAKING IT FEEL LIGHT AND AIRY.



and whiskey tasting corner, matching the angle of the stone-wrapped fireplace across the open living area. Two additional bedroom suites flank this entertaining haven, one of which shares a bathroom with the pool and spa area outside. A heated spa spills over into a lap pool and is accessible from the basement through another gliding patio door.

This ranch-over-basement home redefines how we think of ranch homes. It packs a lot of living space into an efficient footprint while working with the topography of the sloped lot to create a walk-out backyard oasis from the basement level. The exclusion of a second level allows this house to capture more natural light than it would otherwise, and it is a perfect example of how to rejuvenate a tried-and-true style and make it compatible for today's modern living. ♦

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