



# Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes

By Michelle Gringeri-Brown

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**Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes** By Michelle Gringeri-Brown

Atomic Ranch is an in-depth exploration of post-World War II residential architecture in America. Mid-century ranches (1946-1970) range from the decidedly modern gable-roofed Joseph Eichler tracts in the San Francisco Bay area and butterfly wing houses in Palm Springs, Florida, to the unassuming brick or stucco L-shaped ranches and split-levels so common throughout the United States. Authors Michelle Gringeri-Brown and Jim Brown, founders and publishers of the popular quarterly Atomic Ranch magazine, extol the virtues of the tract, split-level, rambler home and its many unique qualities: private front facades, open floor plans, secluded bedroom wings, walls of glass, and an easy-living lifestyle. From updated homes with high-end Italian kitchens, terrazzo floors, and modern furniture to affordable homeowner renovations with eclectic thrift-store furnishings, Atomic Ranch presents twenty-five homes showcasing inspiring examples of stylish living through beautiful color photographs, including before and after shots, design-tip sidebars, and a thorough resource index.

Atomic Ranch reveals:

Hallmarks of the ranch style

Inspiring original ranch homes

Ranch house transformations and makeovers

Preservation of mid-century neighborhoods

Adding personality to a ranch home

Yards and landscaping

Plus, a helpful resource section and index!

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## Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes By Michelle Gringeri-Brown Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #141032 in Books
- Published on: 2006-08-29
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.75" h x .83" w x 9.75" l, 2.83 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 192 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### From the Inside Flap

##### Atomic Ranch

At the close of World War II, during a time when the United States was suffused with optimism about the future, America began a love affair with the ranch house that lasted for the next twenty-five years. From the decidedly modern gable-roofed Joseph Eichler tracts in the San Francisco Bay area and butterfly wing houses in Palm Springs and Sarasota, Florida, to the unassuming brick or stucco L-shaped ranches and split-levels we see every day, midcentury ranches can be found all over the country.

Today there is a growing new enthusiasm for ranch houses and the midcentury furnishings that go with them. *Atomic Ranch* illustrates in stunning color photography the virtues of the ranch house, often decried as "cookie cutter," and shows why these homes worked so well for their first residents and still function beautifully today. With private front facades, open floor plans, secluded bedroom wings, and walls of glass that bring the outside in, midcentury ranches mix function, comfort, and style with ease. Instead of trying to turn your ranch house into a bungalow, Spanish adobe or two-story Tuscan villa, why not let it be what it was meant to be—a modest one-story house with a casual, comfortable lifestyle.

From updated homes with high-end Italian kitchens, terrazzo floors, and modern furniture to affordable homeowner renovations with eclectic thrift-store furnishings, *Atomic Ranch* presents plenty of inspiring examples of stylish living in America's favorite house.

#### About the Author

Writer Michelle Gringeri-Brown and photographer Jim Brown publish the quarterly magazine *Atomic Ranch*, which features ranch homes built all across America. Their first book, *Atomic Ranch: Design Ideas for Stylish Ranch Homes*, was published by Gibbs Smith in 2006. They live in Portland, Oregon, in a 1952 brick ranch.

Michelle Gringeri-Brown and Jim Brown publish *Atomic Ranch* magazine, a quarterly devoted to mid-century homes. Gringeri-Brown was the editor of *American Bungalow* magazine for nine years, and her freelance work has been published in *Westways*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Photographers' Forum*, and *Sunset* magazine's *View*. Jim Brown is an editorial photographer with degrees in photography and English literature. His photo-graphy has been published numerous times in *Motor Trend*, *Sunset*, *Motorcyclist*, *American Bungalow*, *Westways*, *Car & Driver*, and *Hot Rod*. They both grew up in postwar ranch houses and strongly support the preservation of this overlooked architectural style.

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One look at the Borsellino-Kafka house and you might conclude that it's a nice original home. It is and it isn't, as the before photos show.

Monika Kafka and Tom Borsellino had already lived in this San Jose neighborhood before relocating to Chicago. But work and a hankering for the sunny, casual California lifestyle pulled them back. Borsellino found a house and bought it with his wife's blessing but without her actually seeing it. He told her it needed a little work, and an early inspection indicated some dry rot and termite damage. Mostly it seemed to be suffering from claustrophobic '60s-meets-Asian decor.

When the couple, with a two-year-old and two-month-old in tow, pulled up to move into the house, the front facade had been stripped down to the insulation, and the baby's room was completely open to the street. It was 105 degrees outside, but an even more stunning 108 degrees inside. Kafka was not charmed.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Phyllis Granger:**

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**Theresa Nash:**

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