

A CONCEPT FOR THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

Ridge House

A modern courtyard house, laid along a ridge, resolved to the western sun.



A long honeyed-limestone wall laid along the crest of a ridge: *closed and grounded to the east* where you arrive, dissolved into glass to the west where the land falls away toward the sunset, split at its center by a courtyard you pass through to reach everywhere, with *water at the door* that you hear before you see the view.

I

A WALL ON THE CREST

The sunset is the house's clock.

The ridge runs north to south, and its long slope falls away to the *west* — toward the low sun and the whole burning arc of a Hill Country sunset, sky to caliche horizon. That west slope is the reason the house exists. The east is the uphill side: the road, the arrival, the quiet earth of the ridge's back.

So the house does not sit *on* the view like an object on a shelf. It sits across the ridge like a low wall along the crest — a single long honeyed-limestone datum that reads, from the approach, as a piece of the ridge squared and warmed by the sun. You come up the east slope and meet stone. The house holds the earth behind it and gives nothing of the view away yet.

CLOSED EAST, OPEN WEST,
HINGED AT THE COURTYARD

The governing move is a section and a plan at once. The **east face** is closed, stone, grounded: long masses of Lueders limestone, deep and largely solid, punched with few careful openings. The mass anchors the house to the ridge, yet stays sun-gold, never austere.

The **west face** dissolves. Stone thins and gives way to full-height glass in blackened steel, held back under a deep overhang; the building lets go of its weight and hands the room to the view.

Between them, the **courtyard** splits the long wall at its middle — the still center you must cross to reach anywhere. Compression in stone, release to the sky, release again to the sunset.

THE ORIENTING FACT

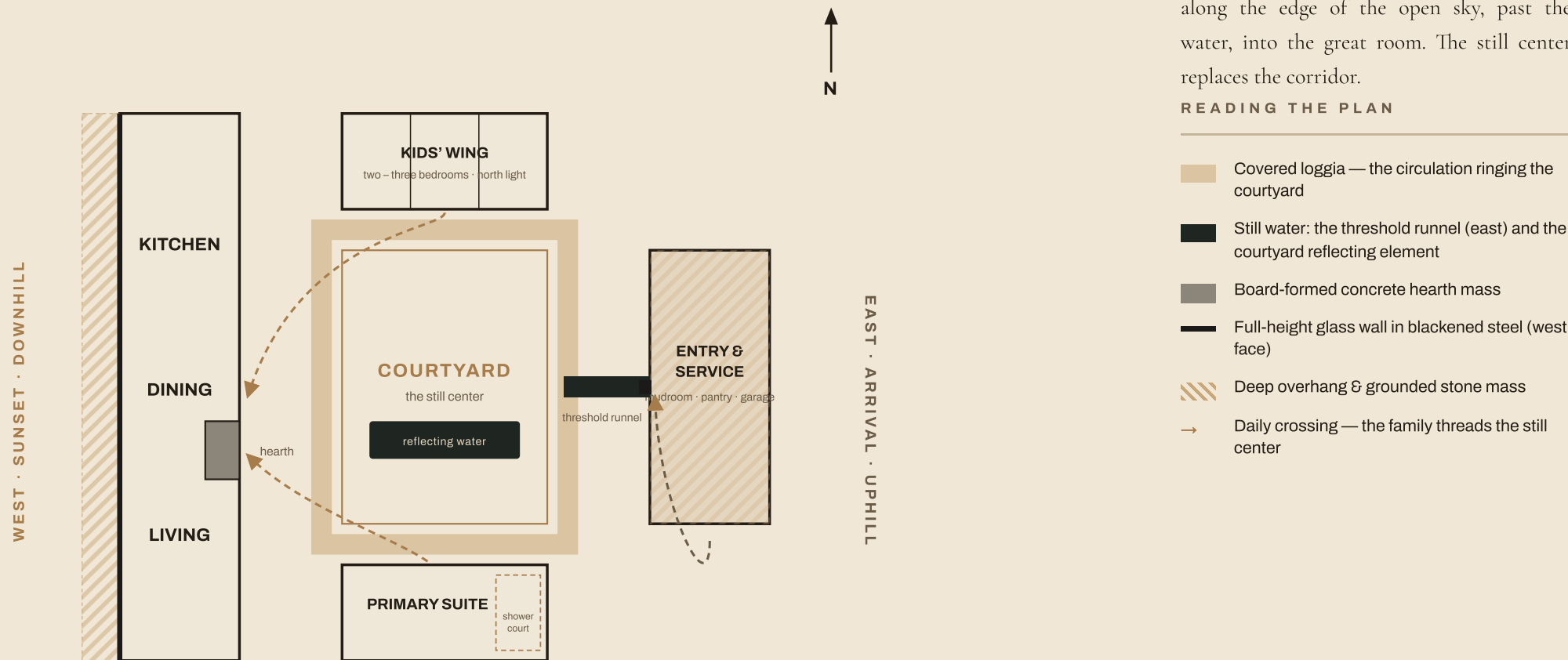
The west is always the bright side. The east and the courtyard hold the cool shade. Every hero is lit by the same late-day western sun — the one light that binds the building into a single house.

THE STILL CENTER

The loggia is the corridor. Honed limestone underfoot, ipe overhead, water held mirror-calm between the beds — the family threads this crossing a dozen times a day, and it stays cool and quiet in the shadow of its own masses.

FOUR WINGS AROUND A STILL CENTER

A house with almost no hallways.



The long limestone datum lies north to south along the crest. The courtyard is cut into its center, ringed by a covered loggia that is the circulation. To cross from a bedroom to breakfast, you step out under the loggia, along the edge of the open sky, past the water, into the great room. The still center replaces the corridor.

EAST TO WEST, ONE DATUM

The overhang is not a style. It is the instrument.

Eight to ten feet of roof oversail the glass on the west and courtyard faces. The depth is tuned to the western and summer sun: it shades the glass through the brutal afternoons, and lets the low winter sun, and the last horizontal minutes of every sunset, reach in beneath it. The house works its comfort by the position of the sun.



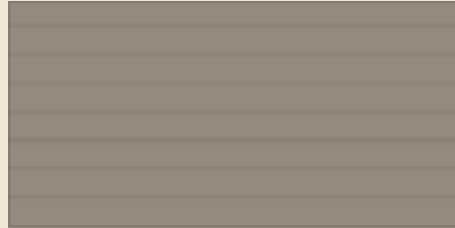
ONE BUILDING, ONE SET OF MATERIALS, EVERYWHERE

Every surface a hand or a foot touches is warm.



HONEYED LUEDERS LIMESTONE

The primary mass and the soul of the warmth. Large ashlar, honed matte, cut from the sun-warmed face. It holds light like held sunlight, and goes deep amber in the late west sun.



BOARD-FORMED CONCRETE

The secondary mass: the hearth, select walls, the base that meets the falling earth. Warm grey with the wood-grain of its formwork still visible. Mass with a fingerprint.



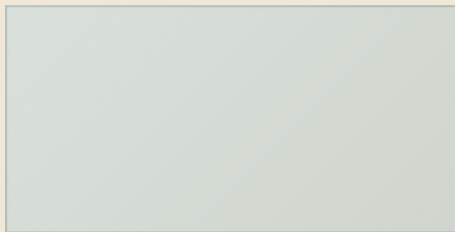
IPE SOFFITS

The underside of every deep overhang and the loggia ceiling. A dense, fine-grained hardwood that glows in reflected sun. The warm ceiling you look up into, in every shade.



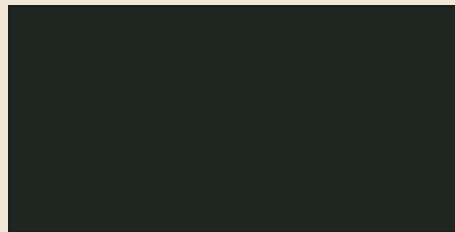
BLACKENED STEEL SECTIONS

Slender, dark, matte frames and posts for the full-height glazing. Minimal sightlines: the glass reads near-frameless, the steel as fine dark lines. The geometry-holder.



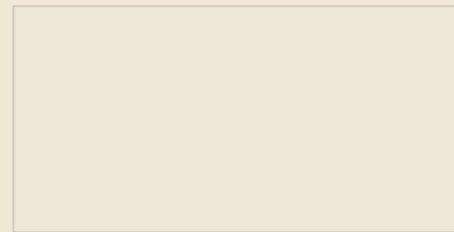
LOW-IRON GLASS

Extra-clear, no green cast, full-height on the west and courtyard walls. The view reads true and the sunset arrives uncorrupted. Glass dissolves the wall; it never tints the sky.



STILL DARK WATER

A dark-bottomed limestone runnel at the door, a longer reflecting element in the courtyard. Mirror-calm, no jets. It makes sound only where it slips over a honed lip.



WARM CHALK-CREAM PLASTER

Interior walls in a warm cream, never a cold white. The soft-spoken counterpart to the stone, in the register of a room built to be lived in.



WARM OAK & SOFT GOODS

Wide-plank oak where stone gives way, matte underfoot; linen and un-dyed wool in feet-up upholstery; patinated bronze hardware. Deep quiet, nothing shiny.

Glass and steel hold the crisp modern geometry; stone and wood carry the warmth. Nothing austere, nothing chalk-cold. The steel earns its one coolness by being minimal.

RELEASE, AND ARRIVAL

The house gives everything it *withheld at the road.*

Horizontal amber light pours in under the overhang, raking across warm oak and the board-formed hearth. The last minutes reach in low; the glare stays outside. A family's favorite hour.

WATER AS SOUND BEFORE
SIGHT

You hear it
before
you see the
view.

A long, still, dark-bottomed runnel runs at the door, deep in the cool shadow of the overhang and out of the western glare. It cools the air in the shade, catches and throws the last light, and marks the exact seam between the hot outside and the calm within.

The mirror takes the warm ipe soffit above and the honeyed wall beside it; the water makes its one sound where it slips over a honed limestone lip.



EAST TO WEST, THE EXPERIENCE OF THE HOUSE

Compression in stone, release to the sky, release again to the sunset. *The courtyard is the pause in the middle that makes the final release land.*

1

THE APPROACH

You come up the east slope. A long, low limestone wall on the crest, deep-shadowed under its overhang, offering weight and a single dark recess where the door must be. No view yet.

2

THE WATER

At the entry recess, in the shade and out of the glare, the still runnel runs at the door. You hear it before you have seen anything of the west. Sound before sight.

3

THE COMPRESSION

You enter through stone. Low, held, quiet: a stone-lined entry that keeps the view withheld one moment longer, the way a held breath makes the next one count.

4

THE COURTYARD

The entry delivers you to the edge of the still center: sky opens overhead, the loggia runs the four sides, and you read the whole house at once, the great room glowing ahead to the west.

5

THE SUNSET

One move west from the courtyard, the great room's full glass wall gives you the falling land and the whole western sky. The house has been withholding this since the road. Now it gives everything at once.

A piece of the ridge, squared and warmed by the sun.

Ridge House

A modern courtyard house for the Texas Hill Country, resolved to the western sun.

THE HOUSE, IN SIX CONSTANTS

A *courtyard* house — the still center, passed through to reach everywhere.

On a *ridge* in the Texas Hill Country.

Long views *west*, for the sunset.

Limestone and glass: masses hold the ridge, glass dissolves toward the view.

Deep roof *overhangs*, cutting the western sun.

Water near the door, heard before it is seen.

This concept book was composed as a single designed object: the parti, the plan, the material palette, and the four hero moments, paced as an architectural monograph. Display and titling set in Fraunces; text and captions in Cormorant Garamond; running furniture in Archivo. Drawings authored as vector. Renderings lit by one late-day western sun.