

PHOTO BY JASON TINACCI

---

By Melissa Castleman Eastwood Photography by Jason Tinacci

---

# PARADISE FOUND

CLINT EASTWOOD'S  
LATEST ROLE IS ALL  
ABOUT COMING HOME.

---

**C**lint Eastwood likes to finish what he starts. Take flying. He began flying Bell 47 helicopters back in the 1960s, but he never got a license. That bothered him. It bothered him enough that 18 years ago he went through the whole training process again to become a pilot. "When you're up there flying, it's just away from everything, away from all the other cares in the world," notes Eastwood, who has stuck with helicopters through the years and currently flies an A-Star B1 model. "It's just a great feeling."

But the man known for his cool, appraising stare onscreen has a practical side too. He points out that his helicopter is "a useful tool." It's how he managed, despite once-impassable back roads, to scout all 2,005 acres of the thickly forested property he owns in California's Monterey Peninsula.

That property, called Tehama (a Native American word for "abundance of nature"), plays a key role in a story that Eastwood started 37 years ago and is finishing now. He bought the land almost four decades ago because he remembered it from his army

days, when he was a Korean War draftee going through basic training at nearby Fort Ord. He knew then that he'd like to make his home there one day if he could. At age 76, he's doing just that.

Eastwood's house, one of just 88 that will go up in Tehama, has a low-density plan, with 85 percent of the land permanently allotted as natural open space. "A lot of modern environmentalists want everybody clustered," Eastwood points out. (*Clustered* and *clustery* soon emerge as bad words in his lexicon.) "I tend to favor not putting high density

on the land. That's why we set 88 as the lot amount that would be forever. So there's not going to be a big cluster there of people living on top of one another, and there will be a little elbow space, a little room for wildlife and everything else to exist along with it."

Animals come up often when Eastwood talks about the place he'll soon be calling home. When asked what sort of film score Tehama would have if it were a movie, Eastwood says Bach "to symbolize the wildlife, of which there is an abundance." He's a musician and has created the themes to many of his own films,



---

"When you're up there flying, it's just away from everything, away from all the other cares in the world. It's just a great feeling." —Clint Eastwood

---

and he doesn't miss a beat before adding that composer Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite* would also be on the Tehama soundtrack.

Tehama sits high up on a hill above Carmel Bay and its cloak of sea fog, which means that more often than not there's nothing to get in the way between the land and the sun. (The property's Web site includes this thought: "At some point in your life, you just want a little more sunshine.") Sunshine is more than something to bask in at Tehama, however. Solar panels line the roofs of the community's clubhouse and new fitness center, ready to generate electrical power for everything from homes to the golf carts.

**E**astwood calls himself a conservationist. "I grew up in the Depression when everyone was trying to conserve energy, et cetera," he explains. Consequently he has taken great pains to make as light a footprint as possible on his land. Mike Waxer,

vice president of Carmel Development, the company that is putting Eastwood's vision for Tehama into action, notes, "I don't think I've ever heard the words 'How do we maximize profit?'" Instead, Eastwood always asks, "How do we do the right thing?"

Wind generators are also in the works at Tehama, but not ones that resemble the futuristic white scarecrows of Palm Springs and elsewhere. Tehama's will look more rustic, and

architects are currently working on designs that will blend in with the landscape. The property has two on-site water-treatment plants that provide both high-quality bottled water that's delivered to homes and the tertiary water used to irrigate the golf course. "People downstream will actually have more water in their aquifer system than if we weren't here," notes Waxer.

With sustainability in mind, the clubhouse features local, lightweight Carmel stone, which lot owners have the option to use in facades and fireplaces. "That releases a lot of material that would have been trucked down," explains Waxer, "and since you have a material that's from the site, it's much easier to integrate the home into the site." He points out that "Frank Lloyd Wright said the same thing, only the materials he was using



in his time are wildly expensive in ours." Not so of Carmel stone, which the Tehama developers are making available to homebuyers at half the price of stone brought in from outside.

For landscaping, Eastwood and the developers are encouraging lot owners to use native trees and native grasses, which have been successfully reintroduced to the property despite experts' predictions that it would be impossible to do so. A native-plants nursery was one of the first residents at Tehama, and it has amassed a large collection of trees raised from the seeds of endangered Monterey pines and local Coast live oaks. Going local reduces the risk that diseases will spread via trees hauled in from off site.

Even the Jay Morrish-designed golf course took shape from sustainable principles and a view toward trekking lightly on the land. "We just all agreed we weren't going to try to play God and start moving mountains around," Eastwood emphasizes. "Whatever nature gave us, we had to deal with it—and we did. Instead of cutting down trees, we moved trees around." The result is "the kind of place where you

---

**"We just all agreed we weren't going to try to play God and start moving mountains around." —Clint Eastwood**

---




Clint Eastwood isn't thinking short-term for Tehama. "It's a chance to do something that's nice with a piece of land and set it up for perpetuity," he says. "It's forever, just like it is."



Tehama and its golf course sit on 2,005 hilly acres between Monterey and Carmel. "You get an isolated, nature kind of feeling from it," says Clint Eastwood. "But by the same token, you're very close to conveniences."



his own family included, have several parallels. "It's very much the same. You have some plan in mind, and you go about executing it, trying to make it the best it can be," Eastwood explains. "A lot of it changes as you go, but for the most part you try to stay with the plan. And you put it together piece by piece, the way a movie's made too."

The end result in each case is also the same. Both provide an escape. In the case of Tehama though, it's permanent. 

---

Then again, it would probably also involve playing a few holes of golf with some friends "because I do like to play."

---

can think," he says. "My work takes me all around the world, and this is always a great place to come back to. Carmel—the Monterey Peninsula—is a favorite place of mine, so I'm either up the hill or down the hill."

The film director in Eastwood surfaces when he describes his ideal day

at home. "It might be going around looking at what's going on, checking on things," he says. Then again, it would probably also involve playing a few holes of golf with some friends "because I do like to play."

It turns out that making movies and making a place for people to live,