

Season's
Greetings From
**Livingston,
Montana**

POPULATION:
8,790

AVERAGE DECEMBER
SNOWFALL:
6.1 inches

NEAREST TREE FARM:
**Who needs a tree farm
when you have
the woods out back?**



COWBOY CHRISTMAS

A new build in Big Sky Country feels anything but thanks to reclaimed logs, thoughtfully handcrafted touches, and a uniquely rugged approach to revelry.

WRITTEN BY LAURA KOSTELNY PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUDREY HALL

HOW CLEVER IS THAT...
Sleigh Bell Garland

In lieu of a traditional garland, the Evanses 14-foot tree is trimmed with leather-and-sleigh bell "garland" reminiscent of horse-drawn sleigh rides. Antlers and simple ornaments made of red and clear glass and brown-flecked velvet complement the home's year-round decor.



COWBOY CHRISTMAS
ANTLER
EMBELLISHMENTS

Despite its soaring 25-foot ceiling, the log home's great room feels sufficiently cozy courtesy of soft textures (plaid pillows, tartan blankets, Navajo-style rug) and cabin classics, including a 60-inch chandelier by The Peak Antler Company (peakantlers.com). The massive Montana moss stone fireplace gets gussied up for Christmas with plaid stockings, an abundant garland, and a few more antlers. "Hanging greenery around Benny the bison's neck is a real Montana move!" says designer Jeremiah Young.

After 30 years of making treasured memories in other people's homes during annual family vacations to Montana, Victoria and Scott Evans decided it was high time to start creating them in a place of their own. Even before the couple purchased 20 acres overlooking the Absaroka Mountains in the quaint town of Livingston, they made it their goal to design lodgings that wouldn't stand out as the new home on the range. "We wanted a true Montana ranch—something that blended into the landscape," says Victoria. "The idea was to use all natural materials—hewn beams, Montana stone, wood siding, and some tin. The home had to look like it's been on this land for a long time."

They got their true ranch courtesy of builder Russ Drost of Battle Ridge Construction (battleridgeconstruction.com) and architects Mark Weirich & Associates (markweiricharchitect.com), who designed the home with massive 12- to 14-inch reclaimed logs that punctuate walls outside and in. Thanks to the array of rich leathers, classic plaids, Navajo-inspired rugs, and Western art layered throughout by designer Jeremiah Young of Billings-based Kibler & Kirch (kiblerandkirch.com), that sense of place and timelessness doesn't end at the front door. "This is a quintessential Montana cabin



filled with warmth and patina," says Jeremiah. "There are imperfections everywhere in the materials that show things were touched by human hands. It's what gives the house so much soul."

The five-bedroom cabin is now the go-to vacation destination for the entire Evans family, including kids Austin, Alexandra, and Luke. "In the winter, it feels especially cozy—we always have a fire going, and the great room is a fantastic place to sit and watch the snow fall as the occasional deer walk by," says Victoria. "Everything about this home is a lifetime dream come true."



TOP: American-made pieces come together in a corner of the living room, including a mirror designed by Jeremiah for Old Hickory Furniture (oldhickory.com). "I took one-inch hickory sticks from a bin in the factory and started playing around," he says. "Everyone sees something different in this piece—it could be Art Deco, Adirondack-y, tramp art, or even midcentury—but it's always rustic." **ABOVE:** Scott and Victoria Evans with children Alexandra (left), Austin (center), and Luke (back right) pose alongside dogs Cowboy and Mowgli. **LEFT:** A vintage strap of brass sleigh bells makes for a fun and festive alternative to ringing the front doorbell.

WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS IT WORTH?

Edward S. Curtis Photographs

Edward S. Curtis spent much of his life documenting Native Americans, publishing the images in his 20-volume work, *The North American Indian*. Many of his original silver gelatin photographs are in museums, but his photogravures can still be found for sale in galleries. Authentic prints are also available starting at \$250 (edwardscurtis.com).

**COWBOY CHRISTMAS
RUGGED STONE**

In the entry, hand-stacked Montana moss stone walls and circle-sawn oak floors set the scene for an antique student's bench, old-school sled, and vintage artwork, along with newer items like the unfinished pine dresser (furnitureclassics.com), which gets stocked with extra blankets come winter. The handcrafted lamp (peakantlers.com) casts a warm glow on the boughs of fragrant greenery dressed with 14-inch sugar pine cones. "Greens and huge pine cones—that's Christmas," says Jeremiah.



COWBOY CHRISTMAS
ROUGH-HEWN MATERIALS

This cabin was no place for a sleek new kitchen. Instead, Jeremiah opted for custom cabinet panels in rough-hewn wood paired with two-inch-thick solid oak countertops. “They’re going to take a licking and get better and better with time,” he says. The off-white vintage-inspired range and hood (*ilveusa.com*) complement the handcrafted porcelain tile backsplash and the pottery and dishware displayed on open shelving. Classic finishing touches include an apron-front sink and milk glass pendant (*visualcomfort.com*).



THERE'S A GOOD STORY
BEHIND THOSE...
Landscape Paintings

By Montana artist Clyde Aspevig (*clydeaspevig.com*), the quartet depicts four consecutive months (June, July, August, and September) in a nearby section of Paradise Valley.



COWBOY CHRISTMAS
HICKORY FURNITURE

Jeremiah's color thread of rustic red continues into the nearby dining room, where the hickory log chairs (*oldhickory.com*) are dressed with wool plaid and Native American-inspired fabrics (*ralphlauren.com*). “I love how this reads as red, white, and blue, but it's actually a warmer, neutral tan,” says Jeremiah. Leather seats accented with nailhead trim add to the room's refined ruggedness. Above the large trestle table is an iron-and-leather strap chandelier by Montana blacksmith Frank Annighofer (*woodandironworks.com*).

“There are imperfections everywhere in the materials—the custom metalwork, the hewn beams, the primitive cabinetry—that show things were touched by human hands. It's what gives the house so much soul.”

-DESIGNER JEREMIAH YOUNG



COWBOY CHRISTMAS
WOOL CURTAINS

Antelope sightings, anyone? Located just off the kitchen, the tucked-in breakfast nook offers pristine Absaroka Mountain views from its comfortable custom banquette. The privacy afforded by the wool curtain ("Sacred Mountain Blanket" by Ralph Lauren) also makes it the perfect place to sketch out a holiday shopping list. (Spoiler alert: Everyone's getting snowshoes.)

A CHRISTMAS STORY POSTER: PICTURELUX/THE HOLLYWOOD ARCHIVE/LAMY STOCK PHOTO; DOWNTOWN LIVINGSTON COURTESY OF THE LIVINGSTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Christmas from Coast to Coast
Ranch Revelry

Homeowner Victoria Evans talks outdoorsy candles, huckleberry candy, and other wonders of a happy holiday out on the range.

The Decorating Begins: At the start of December

Tree Tradition: Our new ritual is having my husband go into the forest and cut down a hand-picked Christmas tree.

Best Santa Sighting: Santa always makes an appearance at the Livingston Christmas Stroll (*livingston-chamber.com*). The town is all decorated with lights and there is a huge Christmas tree near the Livingston Depot Center.

Go-To Holiday Scent: I love the Noble Fir Garland candle by Voluspa.

Countdown Style: I usually buy a chocolate-filled advent calendar.

Movies on Repeat: We love to watch *A Christmas Story* or *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Music on Repeat: The old classics by Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, and Tony Bennett are our favorites. But, of course, I always like to throw some Mariah Carey in there, too.

Eggnog or Mulled Wine: Neither. For us, it's hot chocolate with marshmallows or red wine usually bought at Matt's Old Fashioned Butcher Shop & Deli (*mattsbutchershopndeli.com*).



Noble Fir Scented Candle
\$26; *voluspa.com*



Glass Ornament
\$20; *oldworldchristmas.com*



An Edward S. Curtis photograph has a place of prominence between built-ins lined with red-bound books.

Beloved Bookstore: Wheatgrass Books (*wheatgrassbooks.com*) is a cute little bookstore with some great finds, and Sax & Fryer Co. has been around since 1883.

Baking Tradition: My daughter's apple pie is my favorite!

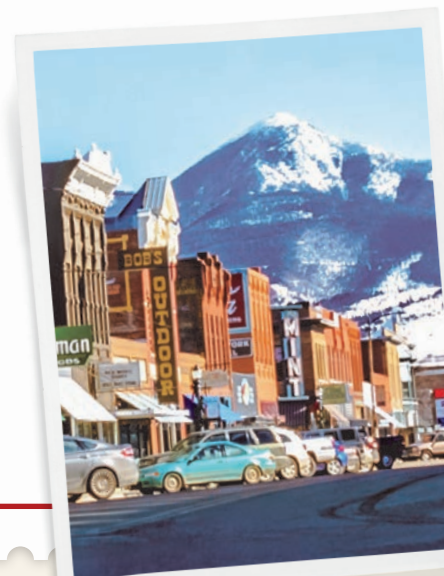
Christmas Eve Festivities: Since our kids were little, I've been giving them their own special ornaments and we usually open one gift each.

Pajama Preferences: Much to my children's dismay, I do enjoy buying matching flannel pjs.

Stocking Stuffers: I've started giving everyone local huckleberry chocolates, a Montana favorite.



Huckleberry Chocolates
\$25; *poshchocolat.com*



Lined with shops, galleries, and saloons, downtown Livingston comes alive at Christmas. "It feels magical," says Victoria.



Woodland Advent Calendar
\$60; *llbean.com*

Ohio Travel Sleigh Bells
\$35; *amazon.com*

