

# KENTUCKY HOMES & GARDENS







# French Country Meets *the* Bluegrass

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Surrounded by 90 acres of farmland, this custom-built house is far enough out in the country to get away from it all, and close enough to the city of Lexington for the homeowners to be in the midst of it all.

By: Kathie Stamps · Photography: Walt Roycraft





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1. Situated on 90 acres of Bluegrass countryside, this 6,600-square-foot home was designed by renowned Country French architect Jack Arnold. Surrounded by horse farm fencing, the exterior is made of Owens Corning stone.



She's a little bit country, having lived on a farm in North Dakota when she was a girl, and he's decidedly a city person, but Char and Alan are both very happy in their new Kentucky home.

When they moved from California in 1999, they looked all over the United States, from Montana to North Carolina. They had almost settled on Asheville, N.C., but had plane tickets to Lexington. On a lovely spring day they flew into Blue Grass Airport and one look out of the airplane, at the beautiful Bluegrass countryside, was all it took to decide on Kentucky as the place to be.

"Our intention was to go really big and get five acres," Char said. "We ended up getting 90."

She likes old and he likes new, so they built a new house that looks old, using a Jack Arnold plan executed by Lexington builder Padgett Construction. Arnold is an architect based in Oklahoma, known for his Country French residential plans. Fortunately, the homeowners both like stone, which is one of the hallmarks of Country French design. The father-and-son team of Tom and Greg Padgett started on the house in August of 2000. A year later every detail of the 5,000-square-foot home was completed and the homeowners moved in.

It wasn't very long before they decided the house was a work in progress. A few years later they had Padgett Construction add another 1,200 square feet in the form of a family room and a covered patio. In 2008 an arena was built on the land. Char rides horses (another plus for living in Kentucky, of course). She has a couple of Friesians and a Spanish PRE (Pura Raza Española), that utilize three of the 30 stalls on the property. She is out riding one of her horses almost every day.

"It is so beautiful here," she said. "The Bluegrass is gorgeous." The homeowners have great views from every room of their home, which is one of their favorite aspects of this house. "Beautiful sunsets and sunrises, we get them both," she said.

In the fall of 2010 the homeowners were ready for another addition, this time to extend the master suite by adding a sitting room, along with renovating the master bath and closet. "One of the things I wanted was heated floors," Char said of the master bath. The master closet is big enough for both of them. It has a window seat, a built-in ironing board that easily pulls out and slides back into a drawer, and a separate linen armoire.

The sitting room addition extended the house into the yard a bit. "We call this our morning room," she said. "We really live in this room." A wall of built-in shelves and cabinets in the morning room house a computer and plenty of books, while the fireplace in front of the couch keeps the couple cozy as they watch TV.



A pond, stocked with fish, is another beautiful view from the windows in this room.

Char worked with interior designer Joe Richardson, vice president of Hubbuch & Co., on space planning and new furnishings for the master suite. "We just tried to keep in sort of that rural European French Country effect with the natural cottons and linens, and decorative pillows," Richardson said.

Sharing the two-story home with the couple are two very important members of their family, an English Setter named Higgins and

**2. & 3.** The formal great room is perfect for entertaining, as it flows into a hallway and open kitchen, and into the family room. Sit-down meals for 40 are not uncommon for the homeowners. Window treatments in the great room and throughout the house are as open as possible, to showcase the spectacular views of the farmland.







a rescue dog, Maddie, who is mostly a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. Hardwood flooring throughout the main level of the house is a practical detail for the dogs and a strikingly attractive feature for the entire décor.

The hand-notched ceiling beams in the kitchen, family room and formal great room were cut, distressed and stained on site. "These are one of the things Padgett does well," said the homeowner. "They're very good at things like that."

There are guest rooms upstairs, two of which are connected with a Jack and Jill bath. Particularly noticeable on the second floor are the angled ceilings. One of the guest bedrooms looks like it was carved out of the attic, but the design was intentional. "The ceilings in the rooms are all different sizes," Char said. "We don't have many box rooms, which I like."

Country French plans are more complicated to build because there isn't much repetition in the construction. "Every time you turn a corner it's different," Tom Padgett said. "There are so many unusual details."

When it came to the basement, Alan wanted a log cabin. Complete with an antler chandelier and fishing trophies, the walls of the man cave look exactly like a log cabin.

"We searched around and found a mill in eastern Kentucky that would make that product," Greg Padgett said. The white pine logs







4. The family room was added to the back of the house in 2007. To carry the Country French architecture inside the home, the décor has rustic ceiling beams, a wrought-iron chandelier, rich brown leather furniture, and crisp white window treatments

5. Unusual ceiling structures are one of the telltale design details of Country French architecture, as seen in the master bedroom. The walls are a deep russet, with white trim on the arched doorway leading to the morning room. The large floral linen pillows and window treatments add a punch of brighter color.

6. The double sinks and dressing bench have marble countertops in the master bath. An arched doorway leads from the master bedroom into the bath, and there is another series of arches to the linen closet area and master closet. A pretty, floral linen was used for the valance at the window.



7. Next to the granite shower is a Japanese soaking tub. Made of copper, it is smaller than a regular tub, but very popular in Japan and on the west coast.









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8. Featuring hand-notched ceiling beams, marble countertops and custom-built cabinets, this kitchen is a cook's dream. The homeowner particularly enjoys her Viking gas range and new (quieter!) Bosch dishwasher.





were cut to 3.5 inches in thickness, then stained after installation. The basement also has a guest bedroom and storage rooms. "One can never have too much storage," Char said.

The homeowners have collected artwork and Oriental rugs from their trips to Europe and Asia, and although they have traveled the world, this California-turned-Commonwealth couple says the Bluegrass is one of the nicest places they've ever been. "It doesn't get any better than Kentucky," Char said. "You can't beat Kentucky."



## HOUSE CREDITS

### ARCHITECT:

*Jack Arnold*

### BUILDER:

*Padgett Construction*

### INTERIOR DESIGNER:

*Joe Richardson, Hubbuch & Co.*

### EXTERIOR STONE:

*Meade Concrete Products*

**9.** Called the morning room, this space was added to the house in 2010. Woven grass shades filter the bright sunlight while the homeowners enjoy their morning coffee. A narrow console behind the sofa accommodates additional lighting for evening reading and watching TV.

**10.** The master bedroom is flanked by two sitting rooms. This antechamber, with its white built-in cabinets and shelves, leads from the formal great room's hallway into the master suite.