



Amy Studebaker Design suggested a black-and-white color scheme for this modern farmhouse.

OLD MEETS NEW

Written by J. O'Brien / Photographed by Alise O'Brien

It took this St. Louis family five years to find just the right property for their second home. But once they did, they immediately knew it was right for them.

"We were looking for a piece of land where our family could go for retreats and to be away together in the Augusta-Defiance area," says the homeowner. "When we found our spot, we knew it was perfect at first sight: 170 acres of rolling hills, high vistas, and farm grounds that were once home to the Osage tribe as well as the Boone family. In fact, after we closed on the property, we learned that Nathan Boone, the youngest son of famed frontiersman Daniel Boone, was a former owner."

The fact that the property lacked a house only added to its appeal, because it gave the homeowners a clean palette from which to work. "We wanted to capture something that would have a modern feel, but also look like it could have been structurally built back in the day," says the homeowner. They hired an architect, Jeffrey Hancox, who had worked on similar projects in Colorado. "We designed it to look like the floors were torn out and redone, with some of the structural beams exposed.

There's timber truss construction, and it's all shiplap – there's not a piece of drywall in the house – in keeping with the time period."

Another couple referred the homeowners to Amy Studebaker Design to help bring their dream of a modern farmhouse to life. "When we first approached this project, the main vision for the space was to create a home that would be functional for entertaining family and friends," says designer Amy Studebaker. "We loved working with the architect to create a vacation home that had ceilings with beautiful architectural interest, giving the space an industrial and modern feel."

Amy starts every new project by meeting with the homeowners to get a sense of their vision. "For this particular home, we knew that we wanted to lean into a very modern, industrial style, which is unlike most of the homes that we design," says Amy. "After meeting with our clients, I am able to take the aesthetic that the clients want, and from there, I draw inspiration from various sources, whether that's magazines or thinking of previous places I've visited. It's all about trying to pull design elements together that speak to the feeling in the home we are trying to create."



Industrial elements – like the exposed ductwork and steel banister – inject the farmhouse with a modern aesthetic.



Material choices like use of shiplap and secondary stone wall pay homage to the property's history.



Elegant brass fixtures catch the light in the dark blue kitchen, designed with both entertaining and family life in mind.



One of the homeowners' favorite pieces is the large dining table where they regularly gather with family and friends.



The view from the front porch captures the rolling landscape that originally drew the homeowners to this spot.

In the breezeway, a formerly country-style benchette was given a modern makeover with fabric wall panels and gold sconces.

Here, the trick was to create a space that felt rustic enough to be a hunting lodge yet refined enough to entertain – all while accommodating the demands of a family of six enjoying country life. From the rugs to the flooring, materials were carefully selected to fit the aesthetic while also being able to sustain hard wear. Throughout the home, white shiplap walls, black trim, and exposed beams create a clean look that straddles the divide between farmhouse and industrial. Shades of dark blue – from the kitchen cabinets to the living room furnishings – echo the sky outside while softening the space. Medium browns and leather furnishings round out the natural palette, providing texture and warmth.

"Amy and her team really helped us with the material selection. We were leaning towards a cypress material for the exterior; they helped us select a white-and-black color scheme, which has really served us well," says the homeowner, who also

notes that "there are a lot of really cool touches [throughout the home]. One room, which we called the hunt room, was built using reclaimed wood and tin from an old barn."

Another highlight includes a large painting of Daniel and Nathan Boone meeting with members of the Osage tribe, commissioned by Missouri painter and historian Bryan Haynes. In deference to the property's history, it hangs in the home's main room in a frame made from an old walnut tree that had to be cut down on the property.

"The homeowners had great ideas and descriptions of what they were wanting right from the beginning," says Amy. "This helped to guide us in the right direction in terms of choosing design elements for the home. They were on-site, checking in periodically, so they were able to really see everything come together and get excited about the finished home."



Primary bedroom is bright and fresh.



Black trim and a black and white patterned floor in the guest bath are soothing.



The bunk room, with its hidden loft, is one of Amy's favorite parts of the project.



Of course, part of any good design involves providing homeowners with ideas they hadn't thought of – and which sometimes gently push them out of their comfort zone. For example, Amy and her team came up with the idea of covering a wall with stone. "It starts from the lower level and goes all the way to the roof," says Amy. "Even though this was a new build, I loved the idea of this stone wall feeling like it was original to the home and that there was some history there."

"I wasn't so sure – I thought it might look heavy," says the homeowner. "But now, I don't think the house would have been right without it." Amy and her team also encouraged the homeowners to put a fireplace across from the entry and were pivotal in sourcing some of the defining pieces in the home. "We love the kitchen table, for example, which is something they brought forward that we could have never found on our own. Now, the great room with that fireplace and table is our center of gravity when we're out here."

Amy, meanwhile, says that one of her favorite spaces in the home is the bunk room. "There is a hidden loft in there that I just know is fun for any young guest staying at the Barn Home!" The two built-in bunks are cozy yet spacious, with sconces that look like vintage lanterns and a top railing that resembles an x-shaped farmhouse fence.

Looking back on the project, Amy notes that "what stands out the most for me is designing a home that is completely different from our other projects. I love being able to design for any kind of style, so doing something more in a modern barn style is a breath of fresh air!"

As for the family, they enjoy that their vacation home is refined enough to entertain while still being a country home at its heart. "It's comfortable; we can come in from being outside and take our boots off right where we are," says the homeowner. "What we love the most about it is the combination of being out there, the history of the place, and that we were able to build that is unique and unencumbered by traditional styles of a home." 