

BY
CJ LOTZ

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ALISE O'BRIEN

A HOME FOR ALL SEASONS

Where family and
finery coexist.



You could say it was love at first sight—or, at the very least, love before the drywall went up.

“We stumbled upon it,” says one of the owners, a local businessman who grew up in the area, “and when we saw the progress that was being made, we decided to start a conversation with the builder. The house checked a lot of boxes for us.”

He says his wife loved the open floor plan from the family’s first home in Clayton, but the couple wanted a larger yard and more space for the kids to run around. “We wanted a house where we could plant ourselves during our free time and slow down a little,” she says. “When we lived in Clayton, it felt as though we were constantly on the go. We wanted to change the way we were living.”

The owners worked with a team to help bring their wishes to life. Architect Lauren Strutman designed the spec house, whose main floor alone measures more than 4,000 square feet, to feel cozy and timeless despite its size and new-build looks. “The doorways provide definition between the rooms,” she says. “They were framed to be thick and deep, reminiscent of an older, more substantial residence.”

Strutman worked with builder Slavin Runyan Homes, which was responsible for the home’s fine details and craftsmanship, including the crisp wainscoting, the beamed and coffered ceilings, and the custom wide-plank American walnut floors finished onsite. The interior designer Ken Stückenschneider, of Stückenschneider Decoration & Design, made the family the focus of his work, using fabrics such as the chenille corduroy on a set of club chairs that are conducive to having kids in the house. “Most all the fabrics are made of natural fibers like mohair, wool, and linen-and-cotton blends,” says Stückenschneider. “I design most homes to feel like men’s suits or classic tailored clothing.”

His palette—light gray, pale sky blue, and cream, balanced with white trim—reflects the family’s desire for tranquil surroundings. “Ken tied each room together but allowed the spaces to maintain their own feel and personality,” says the homeowner. Custom lighting, artwork, and furniture yield a sophisticated yet family-friendly environment.

Like many families, this one spends a lot of time in the kitchen. Cabinet designer Kathleen Israel of Accent on Cabinets masterminded a kitchen plan that’s both beautiful and functional. “Rather than having a door style that is overbearing, with moldings and decorations, we kept a clean look that will never go out of style,” she says.

In this generous and welcoming space, seating abounds. A massive island of solid walnut





with a waterproof finish is a casual snack spot, and just beyond sits the largest kitchen table Stückenschneider has ever commissioned. More than a dozen people can sit at the 16-foot-long piece, built by Christborn Furniture of Middletown, Missouri. It's where you'll find the kids finishing homework or the extended family swapping stories over dinner. "There's always some project going on there, and usually stuff strewn about," says the owner, "but when the family comes over, it gets cleaned up and we either have a sit-down dinner or a buffet." A breakfast room and dining room are just steps away from the kitchen.

More generous spaces—including an office, a mudroom, and a large laundry room—abound on the first floor. A well-curated collection of art includes work by local printmaker Tom Huck in the family room and a piece by painter Peter Manion in the kitchen. A painting by Ted Collier, commissioned by the family, is the focal point of the entry hallway. "It feels great to support the people in your community and to offer them an opportunity to do what they love," says one of the homeowners.

The downstairs also includes a master suite retreat, dressed in the aforementioned shades plus tan and American walnut to add warmth. The room's subtle wall color serves as a screen on which the dandelion chandelier casts interesting shadows at night. Just beyond? The pool house, designed by Susan Bower of Mitchell Wall Architecture and Design.

"The interior millwork of the pool house is a modern take on traditional clapboard siding," says Stückenschneider. The varying geometry of the shelves is a perfect way to hold plants and bring a touch of the garden into the space.

"I love seeing this family gathered around the kitchen table, the parents helping the kids with homework or preparing a meal while the dog jumps in circles around the activity," says Stückenschneider. "The calm palette and tranquil mood of the house counteract the busyness of modern life."

The house does seem tailor made for all of life's seasons. ■