

# BLUEGRASS BEAUTY

At first glance,  
it looks like  
an untouched  
piece of  
Kentucky history.  
Move inside,  
and this classic  
farmhouse  
feels anything  
but old,  
blending authentic  
details with  
modern luxuries  
and an eclectic,  
ever-evolving  
sense of style

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**EXTERIOR**  
**ROOTS RUN DEEP**

Like the oaks that line the home’s drive, the porch and copper roof look like they’ve been part of this picture forever—but that’s not the case. “Everyone felt that something was missing without a porch,” says interior designer Matthew Carter. “But we wanted to stay true to the home’s origins and keep it simple—just a farmhouse that feels like it has been added onto over time—nothing too fancy.” A side porch was also built, and the paint color was changed from pale pink to a buttery hue. For a similar look, try Navajo White (SW 6126) by Sherwin-Williams.

# ALTHOUGH ONE CAN HARDLY PICTURE A MORE

ideal home for an accomplished horsewoman and breeder than this 350-acre farm near Lexington, Kentucky, it's not quite what the owner originally set out to purchase back in 1985. "I wasn't looking for a major farm—just an old, pretty house with a bit of land around it—maybe 30 acres, not 350," she says. Yet the property's rolling hills and winding creek, which brought her back to her childhood in eastern Pennsylvania, sold her before she even set foot in the mid-1800s farmhouse that had been kept within the same family for generations.

Despite the house's hereditary charms, it would be a labor of love to make the place livable, starting with electrical and plumbing updates, turning a bedroom into a second upstairs bath, and relocating a tiny kitchen. It wasn't until she married in 2003 that the need for an addition became clear. "There were a lot of things that worked pretty well for a single person but not as well for two," she says. For instance, a shortage of storage space meant that things were always piled here and there.

Still, it took more than a decade—and



## DINING ROOM

### BALANCING ACT

One update that can change everything is swapping in a more substantial and interesting mantel, like this piece found at an antiques store and bleached and waxed for a modern finish. "The mantelpiece that was here before was too dainty. This one has beefed-up proportions and can hold its own with the other elements in the room," says Carter. These include colorful artwork, a built-in corner cabinet, and tall bird-print floral curtains (Pavillon de Bidaine by Manuel Canovas) trimmed with red fringe.

KITCHEN

WHAT’S OLD IS NEW AGAIN

“We wanted it to feel like a kitchen in a country house, one that seems like it could have always been here,” Carter says. Cabinetmaker David Gregory was able to use glass from the home’s old windows for the cabinets, lending authenticity—and allowing the owners’ frequent guests to easily locate a cup or plate at breakfast. Another brilliantly preserved detail: The formerly exterior window above the sink now overlooks the newly added side entry.



“My biggest pet peeve is when rooms look too perfect. I want them to feel **COMFORTABLE** but not overly **MATCHED.**”

—Matthew Carter



multiple architects’ drafts—for the couple to commit to their renovation plans. The upside to the long wait: They got exactly what they wanted once the project wrapped up in early 2016. Working with Lexington interior designer Matthew Carter and Louisville architect Tim Winters, the couple added a first-floor master suite—with that much-needed closet space—and a family room that’s ideal for spending time with the guests they host during horse sales and events. Both feature ample windows and French doors, offering glimpses of the mares and foals outside.

These and other improvements, from a laundry room to a new front porch, were all done with a mind toward honoring the home’s long history—incorporating exterior brick walls and shutters into added-on rooms, bringing in reclaimed wood flooring and beams, and playing up aged texture over sleek newness. “The house has been here a long time, and I think it’s important to respect that,” the owner says. At the same time, Carter helped weave in her passion for animals, travel, and fine art throughout the colorful interior. “It’s a horse farm in Kentucky, but we wanted it to look a little more eclectic and collected than that,” he says. The result is rooms that balance tradition, comfort, and personality—and a home that’s now as uniquely enchanting as the meadows that surround it.



ENTRY HALL

STRIKING BRIGHTS

Safe beige would hardly set the tone for such a character-filled home—Carter advocated for an unexpected pop of apple green (Churlish Green [No. 251] by Farrow & Ball), though the homeowner initially expressed skepticism. “I always say, ‘It’s just paint. It’s easy to redo,’ ” says Carter, who loved how the color also brought light and levity to the windowless space that’s shaded by a front porch. “It’s not like you’re stuck with it if you mess up.” Sure enough, the bright hue proved to be magical once it was balanced by a pair of deep orange French pottery lamps, a green-laced antique rug, and traditional side chairs in a tomato-colored Kerry Joyce flora-and-fauna print.

**FAMILY ROOM**

**COOL & COLLECTED**

At the heart of the addition is a space made for gathering. “We could have done one sofa and a few club chairs around the fireplace, but it was more interesting to back it up and use two different coffee tables to ground a pair of seating areas,” Carter notes. Built-ins display favorite books and souvenirs, while mixed fabrics add coziness. “Start with one pattern you love, and go from there,” says Carter, who drew inspiration from the turquoise, green, and salmon fabric (Les Indiennes Multicolor by Quadrille) used on the matching club chairs.



**LIVING ROOM**

**ART & SOUL**

“I designed this room to feel as eclectic and collected as its art,” Carter says. The pieces range from a big, vivid Western panorama popping with bright red and orange over the sofa to a modern ballet painting above the mantel. The room’s elegant old bones and fine artwork are loosened up with shell pink walls (Setting Plaster [No. 231] by Farrow & Ball).





**MASTER BEDROOM**  
**SERENE DREAMS**

Piling on textures and details turns a newly built room into a lived-in haven, starting with reclaimed wood beams. “They are a great way to lend permanence to a space and break up painted drywall, which home additions tend to have a lot of,” says Carter, who applied a subtle glaze to prevent the walls from feeling too “new” and modeled the door moldings after those throughout the house. The headboard and bed skirt are made of a lush pattern (Tree of Life by Robert Kime) and topped with a graphic appliquéd bedspread by Leontine Linens.



**GUEST BEDROOM**  
**OLD, NEW, &  
LOTS OF BLUE**

This fresh guest space illustrates a few more visual tricks that help blur the lines between modern and vintage. “We wanted to do more than just an upholstered headboard, so I had the turned posts added to give warmth to the room,” Carter says. A striped flat-weave rug uses crisp modern lines to tie together a batik hemp headboard (Coquina by Jasper Fabrics) and contemporary floral-print linen curtains (Oxus by Carleton V Ltd.). A framed antique textile hangs over a coordinating settee. [SL](#)

