

CHARLOTTE URBAN

# HOME

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CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE





# Greener Pastures

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When Tracy and Greg Frey decided to build their dream home they didn't have to look far for the perfect location.

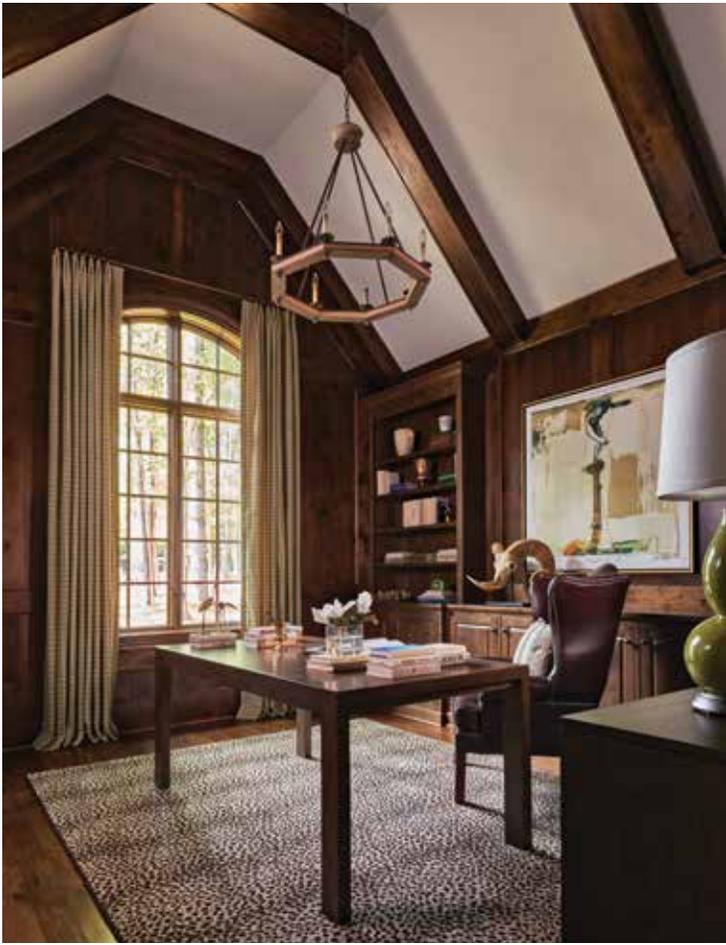
ALREADY RESIDENTS IN MINT HILL, they had seen the pastoral neighborhood and equestrian center at Cheval being developed nearby and decided to take a look. It didn't take but a few minutes to decide that this would be the perfect setting to build their family's ideal home. "Charlotte has a lot to offer when it comes to restaurants, night life and careers," says Tracy Frey. "Here, we get the best of both worlds." As they developed plans for the build, the broker for Cheval suggested that their new home would be a great fit for the upcoming 2015 HomeArama Tour in July. They assembled a dream team including Arcadia Custom Homes, Frank Snodgrass of Building Graphics Architecture and interior designer Traci Zeller and quickly got to work.

The Frey's were looking for a place that felt like an escape but also a great place to entertain with plenty of doors for open flow indoors and outdoors. Not to mention they are an active, outdoorsy family that is always on the go. When it came to floorplan, the Frey's were keen to keep an open-concept home for easy entertaining, but were also adamant about using every inch of space in the home. "We didn't want any wasted space throughout the home," explains Frey. "Long hallways that add to square footage and cost, but don't give you any functional space are exactly the things we tried to avoid." Frey continues, adding that they really wanted to keep their current *and* future family needs in mind while designing the home, including building a room over the two-car garage that can be used as a play room now, but is wired for a home theatre as their kids grow into teens.

Though Zeller was part of the process from breaking ground to completion, her vision truly took shape once the interiors were being installed. "I create crisp, classic interiors that make family-centered lives simpler and more stylish," offers Zeller. Which is exactly why she was a great fit for this family of four. "I understood how they wanted their home to look," says Zeller, "but also, how an active family would use it." Drawing inspiration from the homeowners' active lifestyles along with her own affinity for fashion, art and travel, Zeller was able to create a show stopper of a home that was also entirely livable. Zeller says she always starts her designs with fabric, because more than any other element, it adds a softness and warmth to a room. Selecting one multi-color pattern as a base helps her to create a blueprint for the rest of the home, varying the hues and intensity from room to room while maintaining a subtle cohesion, which was the perfect result in this classic home.

When offering advice to homeowners, Zeller suggests that investment pieces like rugs and upholstered furniture should be classic in form – for the Frey's home, she pulled most of her large pieces from the latest collection at Ethan Allen, which were integral to adding a timeless, but ultra-stylish look. "Ethan Allen specializes in creating icons of livable luxury, and that's what this home is all about," she says.

To round out the overall design, Zeller pulled vintage pieces from other favorite vendors like Matters of Style Marketplace, and regional artists Kerry Steele (represented by the Anne Nielson Gallery) and Lesli DeVito (represented



by UGallery.com), from which many of the equestrian themed artwork were custom made. "To me, art is fundamental. It creates a home that is authentic and grounded," she explains. She adds that she often uses vintage accessories in new construction homes to create a sense of history that they typically lack. A pool table in the recreation room added just the right amount of design-meets-function to make everyone happy. "How often can you say a pool table is 'gorgeous!'" laughs Zeller, "but it really is."

The Frey's couldn't be happier with the final product of their dream home and it was a hit at Homearama. "There is no way I could choose just one room to love in our home, but I have to admit that the kitchen and scullery are a true joy," says Frey. "It's clean, functional, open and pleasing to the eye. Plus I can see out back to the beautiful open pastures."

