

# HomesFriday

## Family-friendly ambience draws family from Chicago

After visiting The Reserve in St. Charles, the decision to move from the city out to the West suburbs was a quick one for Robert and Pana Bertolini. Almost immediately, they chose to have Meritus Homes build them a Dunberry at the new-home community.

"I never expected my wife to be so quick to say let's do it," said Robert Bertolini. "But we were so in love with the neighborhood, we signed right away."

The Reserve in St. Charles was a stark contrast from the Bertolinis' previous neighborhood in Chicago. It offers small-town charm and a rural ambience. Growing up in West suburban Carol Stream, Robert was already familiar with the St. Charles area. Then when looking for a new home, he and his wife instantly fell for the wide-open spaces and relaxing vibe of The Reserve in St. Charles.

"Everyone was so nice, from the homeowners we met to the entire Meritus Homes

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staff," Robert said. "We knew this would be a great place to raise our family."

A bonus — the community falls within the boundaries of highly rated St. Charles Unit School District 303. But unlike other more secluded areas of the Fox Valley, The Reserve in St. Charles is close to the city's quaint downtown and the Randall Road corridor so everyday conveniences are nearby. It's only a few minutes drive to find a family dinner spot or spend a couple's evening out.

Right within their own neighborhood, the Bertolinis can enjoy natural and recreational amenities such as ponds, bike trails and a park. They can walk with their children to the park to play outdoors, and the big yards provide a great place for the children to run around.

"There's even a hill behind our house and we can take the

kids sledding," Bertolini said.

At The Reserve in St. Charles, Meritus Homes is building a limited number of semicustom single-family homes — and 70% are already sold. The Dunberry is one of five floor plans, which include ranch and two-story designs with 2,491 to 3,716 square feet of living space, three or four bedrooms, two to 3½ baths, and two- or three-car garages. Current base prices range from \$519,900 to \$569,900 for these customizable homes.

For those with a desire to move quickly, a newly constructed Marquis floor plan is completed and ready for immediate delivery. It is priced at \$589,900.

One of the biggest reasons why Robert and Pana chose the Dunberry plan was because of its double garages. On one side of the home is a side-load, two-car garage while on the other side is an additional one-car garage, perfect for storage.

"With this layout, we can keep the children's bicycles, sports equipment and even our outdoor tools safely away from the cars," Bertolini said.

Inside, the design boasts a grand foyer flanked by the dining room and living room, which the Bertolinis converted into a more functional space.

"When I was growing up, the only time anyone used the living room was for formal entertaining, otherwise it was off limits," he said. "We thought — why have a room we don't use? So we added French doors to create an



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

The luxury master suite in this Meritus home at The Reserve in St. Charles is a private retreat.

office so I can get work done from home. And we decorated it so that it can also serve as a cozy area to sit down, talk and unwind, as well."

The back of the home is where everyday living happens. The open kitchen adjoins the breakfast area, which is separated from the family room by a decorative half wall. Tucked off the main living space for privacy is a den and powder room. Added features on the first floor include a spacious laundry room and dual staircase from the foyer and kitchen. The Tudor-inspired Dunberry also has a full basement.

Upstairs, one of the bedrooms has its own bath and walk-in closet while the two additional bedrooms share a hall bath. The master suite has his-and-hers walk-in closets

plus a deluxe bath of its own. In fact, the master bath is a favorite feature for Robert and Pana, especially because it offers views that include St. Charles landmarks.

"Just this morning, my son came into the room and we saw the sunrise — it was a vivid orange. Just incredible," Bertolini said.

This was the Bertolinis' first time building a new home but they found the process enjoyable.

"The only thing we ever stressed over was, did we make the right choices for our selections?" Bertolini joked. "We picked a gray exterior elevation with a lighter brick, for example. When we saw the combination on the house it turned out to be exactly what we wanted."

Overall, the construction

process went smoothly. The couple never worried about delays.

Home shoppers who are looking to build their own new home this spring can see the stylish designs and feel Meritus Homes' superior level of construction firsthand at The Reserve in St. Charles, where a decorated model is available to tour. The model and sales office are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

To visit the community, take Route 31 and turn west onto Reserve Drive, which is between Red Gate Road and Silver Glen Road. Proceed to the model and sales office at 775 Reserve Drive.

For more information, call (224) 634-4054 or visit [www.MeritusHomebuilders.com](http://www.MeritusHomebuilders.com).



This cozy eating area is just as comfortable for morning coffee as family meals.

70% SOLD

## The Reserve

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Minutes from charming downtown St. Charles, a peaceful setting and preserved open space set the backdrop for the gorgeous new homes at The Reserve in St. Charles. Located within top rated schools in District #303.  
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**860 HILLDALE LANE**

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**\$579,900**



THE RESERVE IN ST. CHARLES IS LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF RT. 31 BETWEEN RED GATE AND SILVER GLEN ROADS.  
Model open Monday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.