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# HomesFriday

## Move-in day brings excitement for ranch homeowners

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With their move-in date right around the corner, Jim and Julie Keller couldn't be happier about their decision to build a new ranch at The Reserve in St. Charles, a community of semicustom homes being built by Meritus Homes.

Not only is Julie a teacher locally, Jim works in downtown St. Charles and the couple has lived in the West suburb for more than 25 years. With a daughter and new grandchild nearby, moving away was never an option.

"We were ready to downsize so we started researching existing houses in the area and even considered renovating our current place," said Jim. "But we realized it would be much more disruptive and time-consuming to rehab than to build from the ground up. So we chose new construction."

"Plus, there's nothing better than having a clean state and being able to pick out all the finishes we want," said Julie.

The Marquis ranch at The Reserve in St. Charles was the perfect layout and location for the Kellers' needs today.

"A key factor in choosing the Marquis was that all the main living areas are on one level," said Jim. "And we were able to customize to get the open-concept layout we wanted."

With 2,610 square feet of space, the Marquis ranch boasts an expansive feel thanks to 10-foot ceilings and an open layout. The gourmet kitchen with center island flows into the family room, creating a generous gathering place while the dining room is nearby, ideal for entertaining.



A lookout lower level and big backyard are favorite features of the Kellers' new home at The Reserve in St. Charles.

"We host a lot of family dinners and holidays so having a big dining area that was comfortable but not formal was a must-have," said Julie. "We're incredibly pleased with how beautiful the space turned out and how perfectly it fits our needs now and will in the future as our family — hopefully — continues to grow."

Tucked off the kitchen and steps from the pantry is the laundry room, loaded with plenty of storage. On the opposite side of the Marquis, the master suite has a private luxury bath with corner soaker tub and separate shower, plus walk-in closet. Both secondary bedrooms have walk-in closets, too. A den adds flex space — as a library, office or study area. A full basement and two- or three-car garage complete this luxury ranch.

The Kellers were able to make some structural changes to the standard floor plan to create the true open-concept layout they wanted. They also

expanded the center island in the kitchen and upgraded to quartz countertops to create a statement piece where family and friends will be able to congregate. The couple also chose the vaulted ceiling option in the great room to visually open the room even more and created a huge walk-in shower in the master bath for a luxurious spa ambience. They upgraded to a three-car garage and deep-pour basement, too.

"We chose a homesite that has a lookout lower level and, with the higher ceilings, the basement has so much potential for us to finish it in the future," said Jim.

In addition to the Marquis and another ranch plan, Meritus Homes offers two-story designs at The Reserve in St. Charles to meet a variety of households and lifestyles. Overall, homes have 2,491 to 3,716 square feet of living space, three or four bedrooms, two to 3½ baths, and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

An expanded center island is a statement piece in this Marquis ranch from Meritus Homes.

two- or three-car garages for base prices that range from \$519,900 to \$569,900. For those with a desire to move quickly, a Marquis is under construction and ready for March/April delivery. It is priced at \$589,900.

Because of the large homesites that provide big backyards and its location in highly rated St. Charles Unit School District 303, The Reserve in St. Charles is home to many families with young children. However, the neighborhood also has retired couples who have been attracted to the ranch homes.

As new homebuyers, Jim and Julie appreciate the friendly and welcoming ambience at The Reserve in St. Charles. They have seen joggers and walkers out on the

paths. While just a few minutes from the Randall Road shopping corridor and the village's quaint downtown, the community feels like an escape.

"Thanks to the large homesites and the fact that we overlook wetlands and lush evergreens, we really feel like we are away from it all when we're actually close to everything," said Julie.

This is the fifth new home Jim and Julie have purchased so they were quite familiar with the building process.

"The entire staff at Meritus has been great to work with," said Julie. "The sales and construction team made sure we understood expectations so there were no hiccups along the way. They're knowledgeable and have a genuine

interest in us ... and all homeowners in the neighborhood."

"This went very smoothly," Jim agreed. "The home is well built and the quality of the finishes are high. Overall, we have been very impressed."

A decorated model is open at The Reserve in St. Charles so home shoppers can see the stylish design and feel the superior level of construction first hand. The sales office is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

To visit, 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).

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