

HomesFriday

Customization drives sales at St. Charles community

Sponsored by Meritus Homes

Robert and Pana Bertolini were looking online for a new house when they saw a listing for a quick move-in home at The Reserve in St. Charles.

The couple drove out from Chicago and toured the property. Not only did they find the Meritus model beautiful, they realized they could actually build a home from the ground up and choose all the finishes they wanted. So they did.

"We found a plan that suited our lifestyle and were excited to make all our own selections so that everything would look exactly how we wanted it to," Robert Bertolini said.

The couple purchased a Dunberry at The Reserve in St. Charles. It is one of five floor plans from Meritus Homes at the new-home community.

Overall, the builder offers 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.

One of the changes the Bertolinis made to their new home was converting the living room 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," Bertolini said. "We thought, why have a room we don't use? So we added French doors to create an 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 and talk and unwind."

The living room flanks the grand foyer inside the Tudor-inspired Dunberry, with the dining room on the other side. A dual staircase leads upstairs from both the foyer and the kitchen.

The back of the home is where everyday living happens for the Bertolinis. 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. A full basement also comes standard.

On the second floor, 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-her 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.

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

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.

This was the Bertolinis' first time building a new home but they found it enjoyable. Overall, the construction process went smoothly and the couple never worried about timelines not being met or issues arising. They felt just the opposite, in fact — anticipation and excitement to be a part of the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

A unique feature of the Dunberry is 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.



A luxury master suite with private bath is a favorite feature for many Meritus homebuyers.

building experience.

"Everyone was so nice — the Meritus Homes staff and homeowners we met," Bertolini said. "We knew this would be a great place to raise our family."

The Reserve in St. Charles is a stark contrast from where the Bertolinis lived in Chicago, offering small town charm and a rural ambience. After growing up in West suburban Carol Stream, Bertolini was familiar with the St. Charles area. And when looking for a new home, the couple instantly fell in love with the wide-open spaces and relaxing vibe of The Reserve in St. Charles.

Unlike other more secluded parts of 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 minute drive to find a family dinner spot or spend a couple's evening out. Plus, the community falls within the boundaries of highly rated St. Charles Unit School District 303.

Even better, the Bertolini family can take advantage of recreational amenities right within their own neighborhood. They walk with their children to the park to play outdoors, and the big yards provide a great place for the children run around.

"There's even a hill behind our house where we took the kids sledding," he said.

Overall, the peaceful setting and preserved open space

make a gorgeous backdrop for the new homes at The Reserve in St. Charles. There's even a newly completed Marquis ready for immediate delivery for those with a desire to move in this spring. It is priced at \$589,900.

The Reserve in St. Charles is located on the west side of Route 31 between Red Gate and Silver Glen roads. To visit, take Route 31 and turn west onto Reserve Drive and proceed to the model and sales office at 775 Reserve Drive.

The decorated model is available to tour from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

For more information, call (224) 634-4054 or visit www.MeritusHomebuilders.com.

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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.