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Fox Valley charm makes The Reserve an easy choice

Growing up in Carol Stream, Robert Bertolini was familiar with the West suburbs and Fox Valley area. So when it came time for him and his wife, Pana, to move out of Chicago, St. Charles — with its hometown charm and rural ambience — was a natural choice.

After browsing listings online, the couple came upon a quick move-in new home at The Reserve in St. Charles. They drove out from the city to take a look and instantly fell in love with the property.

"I never expected my wife to be so quick to say let's do it," said Robert Bertolini. "But we signed right away. We knew this would be a great place to raise our family."

The couple was attracted to the new-home community's relaxing vibe and wide-open spaces, which were a stark contrast from the urban lifestyle the Bertolinis had in Chicago.

The Reserve in St. Charles offers estate homesites with big backyards along with neighborhood amenities such as bike trails, ponds and a park. In fact, the couple often walks with their children and loves to watch them play and

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run around outdoors.

Beyond the neighborhood's borders, the Fox River and its bike trail and river walk are nearby, offering more recreational opportunities. Plus, the quaint downtown district is just a few miles away.

Unlike other more secluded parts of St. Charles, The Reserve in St. Charles is close to the Randall Road corridor, as well, 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. Plus, the community falls within the boundaries of highly rated St. Charles Unit District 303.

At The Reserve in St. Charles, Meritus Homes is building a limited number of semicustom single-family homes — more than 70 percent 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 \$524,900 to \$574,900 for these customizable homes.

For those with a desire to move quickly, a Dunberry is ready for delivery within 60 days. Located at 1025 Reserve Drive, it is priced at \$624,900 and includes 10-foot first-floor ceilings, eight-foot doors, a wood staircase, and luxury owner's bath. A fireplace adds a cozy feel to the family room. Dual zone heating and air conditioning provide consistent comfort throughout the home. A 10-foot-by-18-foot deck extends living areas outside. A deep-pour lookout basement will make it easy for the new owners to finish the lower level.

Although the Dunberry quick move-in home is loaded with amenities, buyers who purchase now still have time to choose finishing touches, appliances, cabinets, plumbing fixtures, counters and lighting.

Robert and Pana chose the Dunberry plan, in part because of its double garages. On one side of the home is a side-load two-car garage



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

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

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," said Robert.

Inside, the timeless 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," said Robert. "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, 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 for 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 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.

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

"The only thing we ever stressed over was ... did we make the right choices for our selections?" Robert 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 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 building experience.

"And the Meritus Homes staff was so nice," said Robert. "Moving here has been a wonderful choice."

New-home shoppers can see the stylish designs and feel Meritus Homes' superior level of construction first hand at The Reserve in St. Charles, where a decorated model is available to tour. They also can view the Dunberry quick move-in home.

The model and sales office are 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.



The Dunberry is ready for quick move-in at The Reserve in St. Charles and buyers can still select their interior appointments.

70% SOLD

The Reserve

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- Deep pour lookout basement
- 4 bedrooms, 3-1/2 baths
- 10-foot first-floor ceilings
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- Fireplace & 10 x 18 deck

\$624,900 Current price before upgrades

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Model open Saturday – Wednesday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Closed Thursday and Friday)

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