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# Homes Friday

## Buyers drawn to ranch at The Reserve in St. Charles

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Jim and Julie Keller first started looking for a new home about a year ago. They toured the model at The Reserve in St. Charles after driving past the community and reading about it in the newspaper.

They looked at existing houses in St. Charles and neighboring suburbs and even considered renovating their current residence, but they kept coming back to the Meritus Homes neighborhood.

"We thought ... why disrupt our lives by rehabbing our house when we can create the perfect new home with the Marquis," Jim Keller said. So they did.

"The entire staff at Meritus has been great to work with," Julie Keller added. "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."

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

"This went very smoothly," Jim said. "Our new home feels well built and the quality of the finishes are high. Overall, we have been very impressed."

One of the main benefits of choosing new construction over resale is the ability to personalize, and that was very important to the Kellers.

"Starting out fresh with everything new and just the way we wanted was key," Julie said.

The couple chose the Marquis, one of five floor plans Meritus Homes offers at The Reserve in St. Charles.

The Marquis ranch and two-story designs have 2,491 to 3,716 square feet of living space, three or four bedrooms, two to 3½ baths, and two- or three-car garages for base prices that range from

\$519,900 to \$569,900. There's even a Marquis under construction and ready for immediate delivery for anyone who needs to move quickly. It is priced at \$574,900.

With 2,610 square feet of space on a single level, the Marquis 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 and ideal for entertaining.

"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," Julie said. "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



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERITUS HOMES

Jim and Julie Keller personalized their new home at The Reserve in St. Charles, expanding the center island to create a statement piece.

the kitchen and upgraded to quartz countertops to create a statement piece where family and friends will be able to congregate.

The couple 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 ambiance. 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," Jim said.

Many empty-nesters like the Kellers have been attracted to The Reserve in

St. Charles because of the easy-living ranch plans. However, thanks to the big backyards and its location in highly rated St. Charles Unit School District 303, the neighborhood is home to many families with young children, as well.

As new homebuyers, the Kellers appreciate the friendly and welcoming ambiance at The Reserve in St. Charles. They have seen joggers and walkers out on the paths and several people have stopped to say hi. While just a few minutes from the Randall Road shopping corridor and the village's quaint downtown, the community feels like an escape.

"In addition to the large homesites, we overlook wetlands and lush evergreens, so

we really feel like we are away from it all when we're actually close to everything," Julie said.

"After 27 years, we wanted to stay in St. Charles because we have so many ties to the area," Jim said. "The Reserve in St. Charles gave us that option."

To visit community, take Route 31 and turn west onto Reserve Drive, which is between Red Gate Road and Silver Glen Road. Proceed to the sales office at 775 Reserve Drive. A decorated model is open 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](http://www.MeritusHomebuilders.com).



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