



Texas

FAMILY STYLE

Two sisters joined forces to bring their father's drawings of a dream home to life—complete with string lights, backyard barbecues, and one not-so-secret swimming hole.

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MEET THE READER
Lisa Hilderbrand
Austin, TX
Lisa, an interior designer, worked with her sister, Amy, to realize their father's vision for this beautiful ranch.



The back porch is home to an outdoor living room, bar, and kitchen for plenty of poolside entertaining options.

Exterior

There was never any question as to where the pool would go. “We knew all along that the house would open to a large pool and covered patio,” says Lisa. Four pairs of big French doors allow floor-to-ceiling views of the action—and of spectacular Texas sunsets. Adirondack chairs (weirsfurniture.com) offer a relaxed spot to take it all in.

Kitchen

Because of the home’s open concept, it was important for this space to multitask as both a serving area/buffet and an extension of the living room. The cabinets (and the smart appliance-concealing cabinet panels) are made from a custom white-washed oak. The Caesarstone countertops and backsplash (Organic White; rstoneworks.com), metal stools (overstock.com), and silver-leafed wrought-iron pendant lights (curreyco.dealers.com) make for a handsome trio. And the long-horn? Well, when in Texas...

ROCKS RULED the 12 acres that reader Lisa Hilderbrand’s parents, Claire and Dale Smith, purchased in southwest Austin 10 years ago. But her father was undaunted. “These huge, heavy boulders were everywhere, but Dad had an incredible vision for the land. He got a tractor, cleared the stones, and really shaped it,” she says. That once-rocky terrain even inspired the ranch’s name, Stepping Rock. “Babbo,” as the grandkids called him, also had plans for a rotting warehouse at the top of a hill. “It had been built purely for storage and was completely unfinished with cement floors, one light, and a spigot for a hose,” Lisa says. Sadly, her father passed away before he could renovate the space, so Lisa and her sister, Amy Lackey, decided to take on the project. Using the original plans their dad drew, Lisa worked on the design, while Amy managed the construction process. “It really was a family collaboration,” Lisa says. Now the six-bedroom home offers plenty of room for the extended family to hang out under one roof. Most important, though, is that it’s a dad’s dream, realized. “My father would absolutely love it,” says Lisa.





Seapearl
Benjamin Moore

IN WITH THE OLD

The mantel is crafted from wood found in the property's barn.

Living Room

A new stucco fireplace is the centerpiece of the large living area, which is further outfitted with what Lisa describes as "take-a-beating" materials: wood-plank laminate flooring (Pergo Max Premier; *lowes.com*), leather furniture (*weirsfurniture.com*), seagrass rugs, and a stone-and-steel coffee table (*fourhands.com*). "Things get dirty out here—we didn't want anything too precious," says Lisa.

Porch

Texas heat is no joke—"The sun can really roast you," says Lisa—so it was important to have a deep covered outdoor "room" with comfortable seating (*thosbaker.com*) to provide relief. "Someone's always watching the kids in the pool while keeping an eye on a football game," says Lisa, whose family cheers for the Longhorns and the UVA Cavaliers.



IN WITH THE OLD

The chandelier is made from a vintage woven basket that Lisa found while antiquing in Round Top.



Backyard

With an abundance of little ones (up to five kids at any given time!), plenty of room for recreation was a priority. Here, Patrick, 6, engages in a friendly round of cornhole with his dad, Eric. Later, Patrick checks out a round of checkers between cousins Robert, 8, and Tucker, 9, at one of the three outdoor picnic tables (*homedepot.com*). No cause for concern: The happy hour beverage of choice is IBC Root Beer.

A gooseneck light (barnlightelectric.com) provides a permanent pop of sunshine.



Bunk Room & Bath

"The sky is darker out here in the country," says Lisa. "The kids are so tired by the day's end—they basically sleep where they fall." Most nights, that's on custom-made bunk beds with striped bedding (potterybarnkids.com) inspired by the University of Texas's iconic burnt orange. Awash in blues and yellows, the bunk-room bath is equally light and bright with its bold mirror (serenaandlily.com) and unforgettably sunny sink (build.com).



Guest Room

This colorful space shines bright thanks to a barn light (barnlightelectric.com), blue striped bedding (overstock.com), and punchy coral pillows (johnrobshaw.com). An antique pine washstand with a marble top serves as a stately nightstand. A small iron-stone pitcher is the perfect vessel for the wildflowers scattered around the property's 12 acres.



Barn

In addition to the unfinished warehouse, which became the main house, Lisa says the property came with a "mess of a barn." Her father restored it and now it's home to eight stalls, a tack room, and a feed room that caters to her mother's horse, BB (shown here with Boone, 11), and partner-in-crime Smokey, who is adored by Margaret, 5.



Rescue horse BB stops to greet the property's dotting visitors.

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