



# Country Refined

A NEW CONSTRUCTION IN RURAL PENNSYLVANIA DRAWS FROM ITS BEAUTIFUL BUCOLIC SETTING WITH SUBTLE, SOPHISTICATED INTERIOR DESIGNS THAT REFLECT THE HOME'S SURROUNDINGS RATHER THAN DISTRACT FROM THEM.

Just outside of Allentown, Pennsylvania, a young, active family of five with a love of the outdoors and wide, open spaces found an idyllic location to create their own county retreat. They wanted a home that would be functional for life with children and stylish yet understated so the indoor spaces would seamlessly blend into expansive views of the property beyond. Overwhelmed with where to begin, they brought on designer Lisa Furey in the early stages to help achieve their vision.

"We took it from blueprint to accessories over the course of three years," Lisa says. "It's on a big, beautiful lot with a fishing pond and weeping willow trees. They are a warm and loving family—very close and very family oriented—and they are casual and wanted low maintenance. I saw a cozy, light and bright home where friends and family could gather for all sorts of occasions."

Starting at the structural level, Lisa worked with architect Christopher Carrigan of Historical Concepts to incorporate traditional farmhouse elements throughout, such as reclaimed wood beams, exposed brick, and shiplap, while upholding an aesthetic that was both refined and hard-wearing. "The shiplap on the walls was selected because it looks good, but more importantly, because it's protected," Lisa says of its sturdiness and painted satin finish that can be easily wiped down.





The wide-plank, distressed white oak flooring was chosen for similar reasons. “The lighter the floor, the less dirt it shows, and the more matte it is, the less scratches show,” Lisa explains. “It’s very family friendly.” But it also serves as a beautiful base to the neutral color scheme that spans cool gray to warm brown interspersed with hushed blues and greens. “As a nature lover and minimalist at heart, I wanted to focus on the outdoors and take those colors inside,” she says. “There is nothing bright or shiny—it is all textured and muted color.”

With this emphasis on the scenery and thoughtful architectural foundation in place, Lisa approached the interiors with a careful finesse, filling the home with pieces that pointed back to these muses rather than pulling the spotlight from them. “We used mostly natural materials,” she says. “I did not want it to look too new, though most pieces were. My selections were made based on function, durability, practicality, and, of course, looks. I wanted the outside to shine—the indoors played second fiddle—so selections feel quiet, and nothing screams, ‘Look at me.’”

This begins in the airy, inviting entry, where many of the home’s structural features, such as shiplap and exposed ceiling beams, are introduced alongside eye-catching organic fixtures like a bluestone tabletop. The foyer leads directly into a sprawling open-concept space that includes the living and dining areas, as well as the kitchen and a sunroom—all of which are backed with sizable windows and French doors that showcase the scenic surrounds.

In the living room, comfortable upholstery is swathed in subdued blues anchored by slightly masculine notes of dark gray and brown leather, which lend a rustic touch. The sunroom just beyond echoes the same palette with a fittingly lightened-up feel.

The kitchen finds distinction within the open floor plan with unexpected dashes of industrial style, such as a rolled steel range hood and metal seating, balanced by inclusions that instill vintage charm, like the dining area’s dainty chandelier. The overall natural motif continues in brick accent walls, reclaimed wood open shelving, and an earthy olive green paint color on the cabinetry.







A coordinating pop of color amid the home's natural scheme, a deep blue Thibaut wallpaper makes a subtle statement in the butler's pantry while also furthering Lisa's durability goals thanks to its faux-sisal vinyl material.





Because the interiors were designed to take advantage of the exterior setting, Lisa describes this home as "indoor-outdoor," and the breezy sunroom captures that ideal perfectly as natural light floods the space, bouncing off of bright-white shiplap walls and a beaded board ceiling. A daybed draped in soft blue and cream linens adds to the dreamy aesthetic, while darker hues on woven furnishings and accents instill a grounding touch.





In the more utilitarian spaces, Lisa repeated many of the distinctive architectural features used throughout the rest of the cottage for continuity. In the mudroom, an exposed brick floor echoes accent walls seen elsewhere and offers a fitting drop zone for farmhouse comings and goings. She designed custom built-ins that harmonize in looks and provide functional storage between the mudroom and laundry room. Opposite: In the study, Lisa continued with shiplap walls but switched things up with a gray finish. A jib door leads to the primary bedroom for concealed convenience.





In the primary bedroom and bathroom, tranquil neutral tones gain interest and warmth from a rich mix of materials and textures, plus decorative details like artwork that reflects the country locale. “Some designers use a lot of bright colors and different fabrics and heavy draperies,” Lisa says. “We did not need that because the outside is so pretty. The architecture and millwork are so perfect. We didn’t need to distract from those things. We let them take front row.”

And the result is exactly what they set out to accomplish—a dreamy family farmhouse that is “comfortable, durable, and fresh,” as Lisa sums it up. “There’s nothing fussy and nothing too dear. It’s a warm and cozy country home.”