

THIS NEW OLD HOUSE

Inspired by a *Southern Living* plan, this husband-and-wife team built their dream family farmhouse on a pine-filled property in Fort Mill, South Carolina

BY ANNA PRICE OLSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIE WILLIAMS STYLING BY KENDRA SURFACE



One for the Ages

"We love Federal-style architecture and wanted something that was very clean with a historical nod," says homeowner Mary Ludemann.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

As members of the *Southern Living* Custom Builder Program, New Old founders Mary and Troy Ludemann regularly work with *Southern Living* House Plans. They purchased Fox Hill (SL-1871) and collaborated with their firm's in-house architect to tweak it to suit their needs, like nixing the original two-story family room to add a guest suite upstairs and relocating a fireplace from an exterior wall to the interior to allow for more windows.



MARY AND TROY LUDEMANN WANTED AMPLE SPACE TO ROAM.

In 2019, they bought 7 acres in Fort Mill, South Carolina, about an hour south of Charlotte, North Carolina, and broke ground on a Federal-style farmhouse designed to look as if it had always been tucked behind the pines. As soon as the family moved in, delivery drivers began asking, “Was this house always back here?” They also wondered, “Is it super old?” The husband-and-wife duo behind New Old, a custom-home building company, knew then that they had accomplished their vision. “Those were the greatest compliments we could’ve gotten,” says Mary.

The exterior has a timeworn appearance thanks to a mix of materials—a cedar-shake roof, cypress siding, and Tennessee fieldstone (General Shale’s Honeysuckle) that is surrounded by warm ivory-colored mortar. The couple modified the Fox Hill (SL-1871) *Southern Living* House Plan, choosing to simplify the porch entrance and add stonework to the facade. “We wanted it to seem as if it had been expanded over several generations, like the original structure was made of stone and added onto by a family,” Mary explains.

The house has matured in the three years since the couple and their two children, Grey (now 18) and Ally (now 15), moved in. Their company’s office lease was up in 2020, so they converted the upstairs storage area of the barn into a home office. Then in 2021, after hosting several holidays for their big families but having no formal dining room, they moved the original kitchen

table for extra seating and added a marble-topped island. Just this past year, the property’s dirt drive was covered in pea gravel, something the couple had always dreamed of doing. “We’re ever evolving and growing into the space,” she says. “Many of our clients—and sometimes even my husband—want a house to be done the second they move in, but the best version of a home comes over time. It just gets better with age.”

Room for a Crowd
Mary (a builder) and Troy (a real estate developer) modified the floor plan to better fit them and their two kids—plus their three dogs, sometimes four if the grandparents’ Cavalier King Charles spaniel is sleeping over.





CREATE DYNAMIC GALLERY WALLS

For Mary, the mudroom felt like a blank canvas. When they first moved in, she emptied boxes filled with art from her travels, treasures from vintage shops around Charlotte, and sentimental heirlooms like her grandmother's spoon collection and just started hanging them. "It's the perfect spot to keep these fun little things that we've picked up over the years," she says. "There's no rhyme or reason to the way they're displayed, but every item has a story."

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MIND YOUR MATERIALS

Mary attributes the home's personality to the use of different elements. "My goal was to not feel trendy," she says. She relied on time-tested techniques and finishes throughout, which translated differently in each room. Buttboards, for example, were installed and painted to cover the ceilings and walls in the kitchen (below), foyer, den, and mudroom. Other spaces, like the living room (at right), were kept simple with drywall. "You can definitely add enough character with trim and cabinetry, but my challenge here was not going overboard," she admits. "I think it's important to make certain areas feel special but then have other places where your eye can just rest."





CATER TO THE WHOLE CREW

Sitting just off the kitchen, the den (below) is arguably the most used area in the house. It's also the moodiest, painted with Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe (No. 26). The deep gray shade with cool undertones picks up blue from the windows and ties into the rest of the home. The den is outfitted with charcoal plaid carpeting and two leather chesterfield sofas. Mary chose the color palette for two main reasons: She wanted the room to feel cozy, and it's the only space where the dogs are allowed on the furniture. "They can be part of the family, too, and not hurt anything," she says with a laugh.





PLAY WITH PATTERN

Mary loves wallpaper so much that she knew she was going to use Schumacher's Citrus Garden in her home before they even started building. She found a place for it in the downstairs powder room (above), near the mudroom. She also layered in Sanderson's Silvi Clouds in the laundry area (above right) as a nod to the Carolina blue skies outside and chose Morris & Co's Blackthorn wallpaper in Green to add a punch to the primary dressing room (at right).



REPEAT DESIGN ELEMENTS THROUGHOUT

While the homeowners didn't want to take the farmhouse style too literally, they were mindful of the property as a whole, with its house, barn, and lawns. To help create a cohesive effect, they took a simple X-shaped detail from the fence around the former pasture and replicated it on the three exterior doors of the barn, along the railing on the home's side porch, and inside on doors in the mudroom and laundry area (at left).





USE EVERY LAST INCH

Since the primary bedroom (above) features three walls of windows and a fireplace on the fourth, it has minimal furniture. Other than the bed, there's just a small seating area with two wing chairs and coordinating drapes (from Ethan Allen). Even the dresser is kept outside the room; it lines the 9-foot-long walkway to the primary bath (at left), which Mary describes as a "hardworking wet room" that's complete with tiled walls, an off-center tub, and plenty of built-in storage.