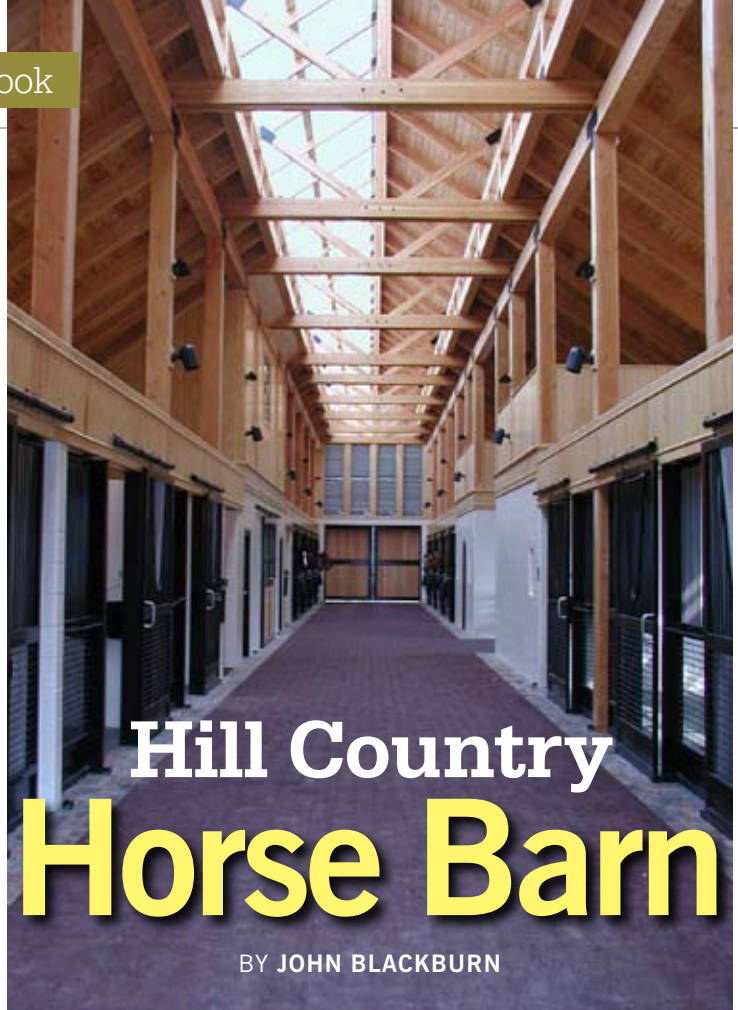


STABLE PLAN



Hill Country Horse Barn

BY JOHN BLACKBURN

The design for Oakhaven Farm grew out of the natural beauty of the Texas Hill Country. The farm is designed to allow the owners to easily and efficiently manage their daily farm work, while providing them with beautiful and peaceful spaces in which to relax and enjoy their horses.

At Oakhaven, indoor comfort and the natural beauty of the outdoors are integrated seamlessly. Owner Debbie Graves dreamed of a space for her horses that would let them “feel like they were standing out in the open, under a big shade tree, during their time in the barn,” yet gave them a safe and healthy environment in all seasons, especially the hot Texas summers.

The 16-stall barn is positioned to take advantage of prevailing breezes, and designed with a steep roof and continuous ridge venting, so it remains cool and minimizes the risk of disease for the horses. It also boasts a skylight that runs the length of the barn, letting in ample natural light and reducing the farm’s demand for electricity.

Outside the barn, unique design features make the entire farm accessible and comfortable for year-round enjoyment. A deep, cedar-timber trellis runs along both sides of the barn, serving three purposes: it lends shade to the horses’ stalls, creates a shaded walkway around the barn, and it provides a venue for watching sunsets.

Natural Austin stone, found locally, is used throughout the property in the construction of the buildings and in innovative landscaping. A

table-and-chairs set, assembled from rough-hewn stone, creates the perfect picnic spot by the barn, and stone benches provide seating for viewing the activity in the combined hotwalker and round pen.

The Graves made the most of the natural resources available on their farm, collecting rock from their land to build a storage shed and to landscape the property. Native cedar was harvested for trail fencing and mulch. These materials match the local stone and cedar timber used in all of the buildings on the property.

The cost of a barn of this size could range anywhere from \$300,000 to \$1 million or more, depending on the materials, finishes and other amenities used. Using local materials and stone collected straight from the site both reduces costs and contributes to the farm’s one-of-a-kind appeal.

A barn of similar design, with the important health and safety features found in Oakhaven, could be designed with a variety of other materials, depending on the location and the owner’s needs.



John Blackburn is an architect whose portfolio includes hundreds of equestrian projects, ranging from barns and arenas to complete training facilities. He has offices in San Francisco, California and Washington, D.C. To learn more about Blackburn’s work, visit blackburnarch.com.