



## Oakhaven Farm - Texas Hill Country Paradise!



This 16-stall horse barn with office, tack and lounge coexists along with a round pen, staff residence, run in shed, hay barn and storage facility.

A quick note from Horse Havens Feature Editor, Susan Rubin... many thanks to John Blackburn of Blackburn Architects, PC, specialists in Equestrian architecture, for providing us with this interesting tour of Oakhaven Farm located near Austin, Texas.

This month we travel just south of the Circle C Golf Club in Austin, where some pretty lucky horses call Texas Hill Country home. Sitting on 60 landscaped acres and surrounded by Indian wildflowers, oak trees and brush, Oakhaven Farm is a horse and nature lover's dream come true!

The afternoon sun and overhanging trees cast a warm glow speckled with broken shadows on Debbie & Will Graves stone and timber barn. From early morning pancake breakfasts, lazy afternoon barbeque or fabulous sit-down dinners, this barn is the Graves' pride and joy. Designed to fit within the rural Texas landscape and constructed from "Austin stone" unearthed directly

from the property, the Graves wanted a barn where work, play, and even weddings were all part of the grand picture. In fact, later this Fall, a dear friend will walk down the barn aisle and proclaim her wedding vows! "I just love hanging out up there", says Debbie excitedly. The new barn boasts a cedar trellis supported on cedar logs similar to the main house; providing the perfect place for Debbie to relax after a long day of riding. Watching her horses in the adjacent paddocks or her daughters riding in the outdoor arena is oh-so-comfortable from under the sprawling outdoor palace.

With experience boarding their warmblood horses at nearby stables, the Graves' family chose an "equestrian" architect to fulfill their every "stable" desire. Accessibility and ease of daily tasks are one of Debbie's favorite aspects about the barn. Designed with wide aisles and passageways, the family can spend quality time together

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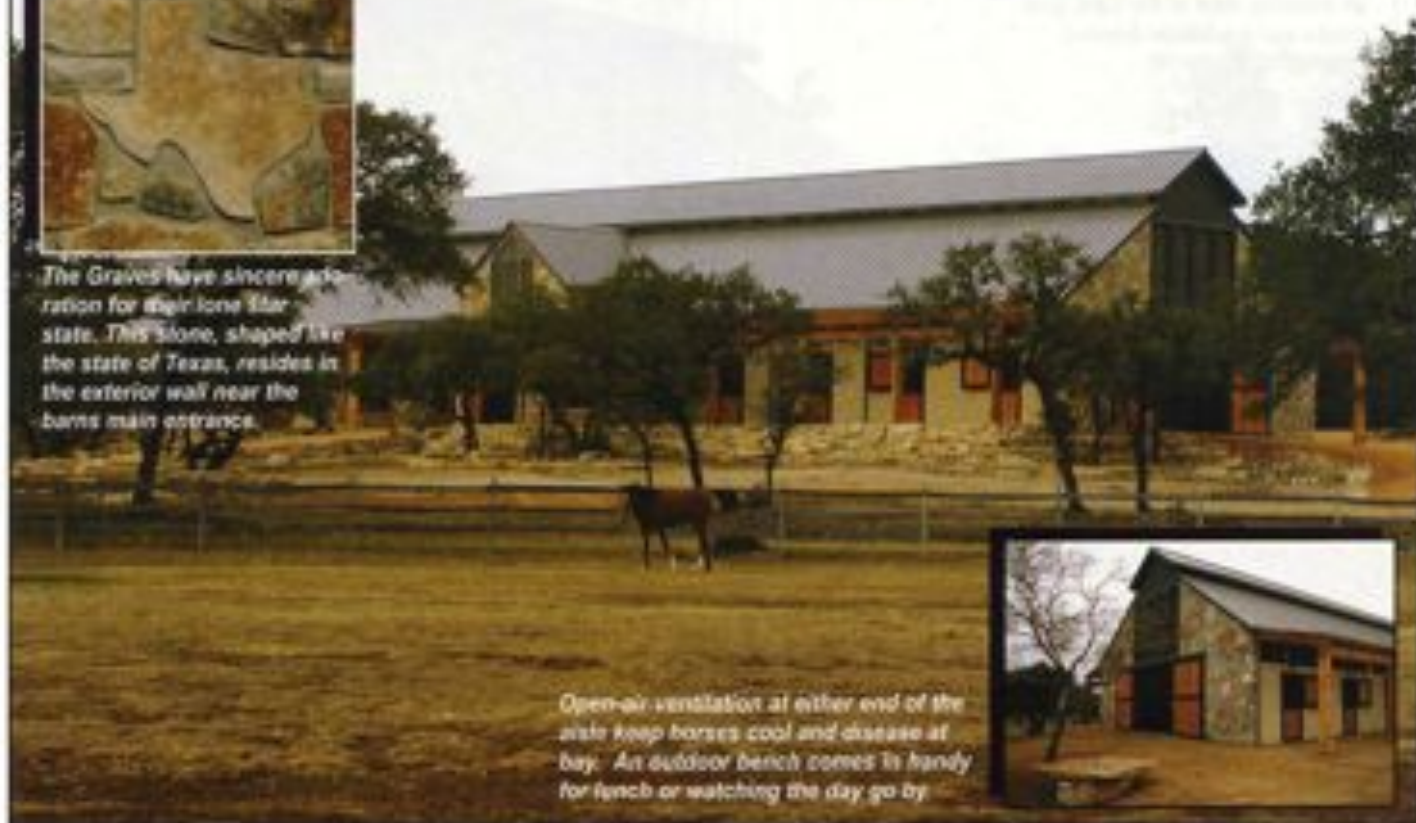
Natural light infiltrates this barn. Custom fabricated, wire mesh stall panels and window screens, as well as exterior wood hinged Dutch doors, allows these horses a great view.



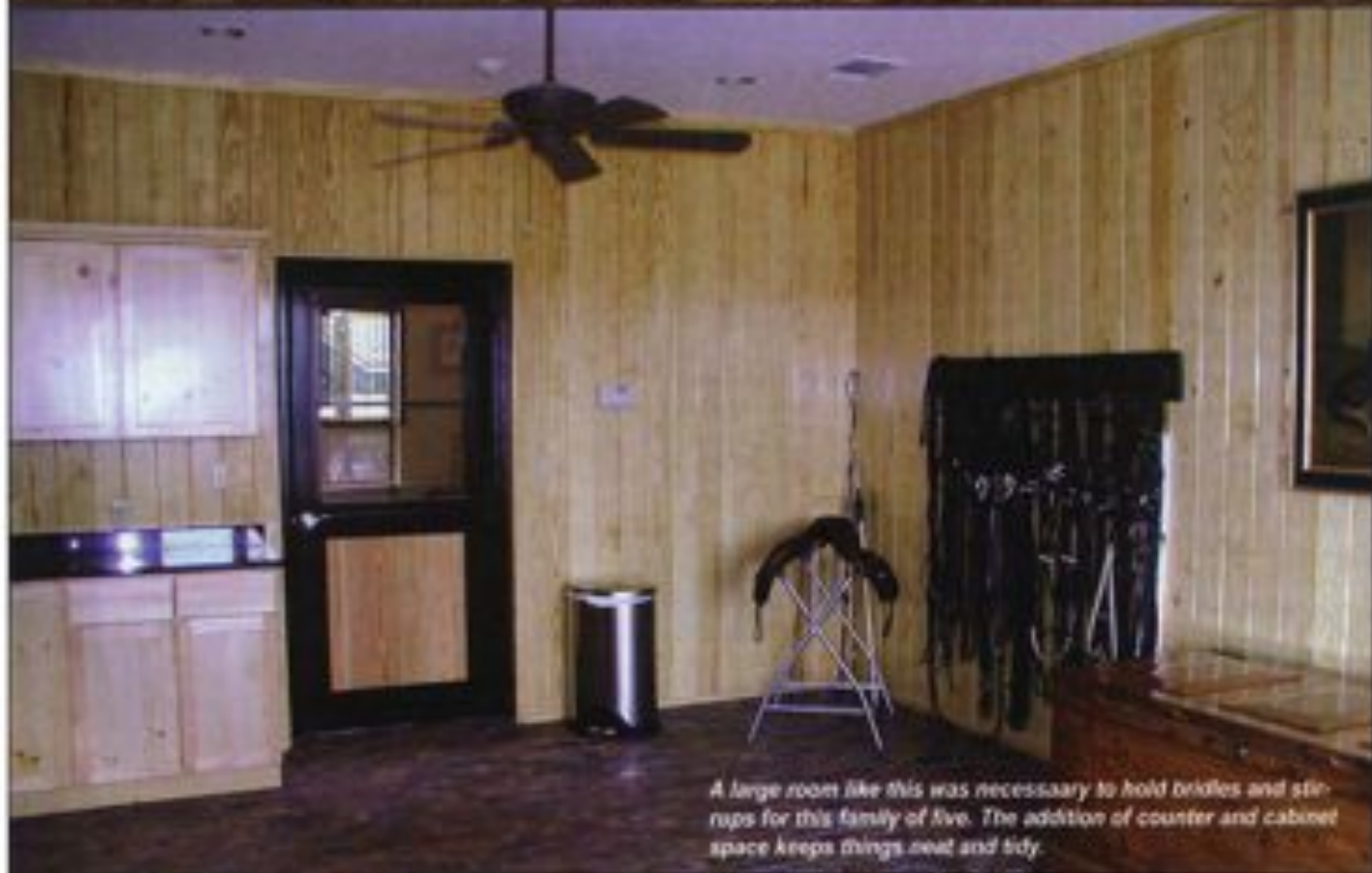
Stone exterior walls, a metal seam roof and rough timber works beautifully in Texas hill country.



The Graves have sincere admiration for their lone Star state. This stone, shaped like the state of Texas, resides in the exterior wall near the barn's main entrance.



Open-air ventilation at either end of the aisle keep horses cool and disease at bay. An outdoor bench comes in handy for lunch or watching the day go by.



A large room like this was necessary to hold bridles and stirrups for this family of five. The addition of counter and cabinet space keeps things neat and tidy.



A view like this deserves another. This homemade stone table and chairs has an amazing view of the barn, paddocks and landscape beyond.



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without stepping on each other's toes or hooves.

Debbie and her two daughters, Laura and Amy, are the equestrians of Oakhaven Farm. Debbie, who began her riding career in 1993, enjoys hunter/jumpers; while both daughters are active in the juniors show circuit. The masculine side of the family offers great team support, with Jeremy cheering the girls who are always busy 'horsing' around. And, Willie, dedicated to his family's interests happily joins Jeremy on the sidelines. Both girls are planning to soon embark on their college adventures, so mom plans to turn her focus to the breeding and sales side of the horse business.

The Graves family is excited to continue and grow their farm which now encompasses a barn, round pen, hay barn, service storage facility and a guesthouse. Two colts in March and a filly in April are the latest of the four-

legged additions, which bring the happy herd now at nineteen! And as dreams continue to manifest, a new covered arena may be the next construction project.

One thing is for sure, from the entrance through the impressive barn entrance, Oakhaven Farm is surely paradise for all who are lucky enough to live there.

Certified Interior Decorator Susan Rubin owns and operates *Beyond the Barn*, an equestrian emporium in Wellington, Florida. Susan got the inspiration for Horse Havens while visiting many fabulous farms and horsey homes during her decorating capers. If you are interested in sharing your own "Horse Haven" with Susan for an upcoming feature, please feel free to contact her at *Beyond the Barn*, 13860 Wellington Trace #20, Wellington, Florida 33414 or call 561-333-5255 or email info and photos to [bsrubin@bell-south.net](mailto:bsrubin@bell-south.net).



This cedar trellis runs the length of both sides of the barn. Debbie wanted a place to sit back and relax after a long day. From this spot she can watch her daughters take to the jumps in the nearby ring.



Outdoors, wash and groom stalls are excellent for warm weather climates. These sturdy stalls allow room for both groomer and horse. Positioning of two wash stalls creates a stock in between for other purposes.





Hay is for horses, and this hay barn keeps it fire safe and convenient to retrieve by staff. Roll up aides allow ventilation and ease of accessibility.



The service storage building hides unsightly tractors and other farm vehicles and helps to create a courtyard feel as it is situated adjacent to the horse barn and hay barn.



Cedar siding and trim is on this two-stall run-in shed barn brings a sense of uniformity to all farm structures. This shed has storage for feed and hay out in the paddock.

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