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THE 2025 SPRING
ARTS GUIDE

THE COUNTRY HOUSE



Emily with the couple's Great Pyrenees, Blue (left) and Pearl, as well as a chicken from the backyard coop.

Enchanted by room to roam, an established farmhouse, and a slower pace, Emily and Mark Brown cultivate a homestead on the outskirts of Little Rock

WRITER TIFFANY ADAMS STYLIST ANGELA ALEXANDER PHOTOGRAPHER RETT PEEK



While the exterior remained as it was when purchased, the Browns worked with Stafford Fine Gardening on plantings like voluminous 'LimeLight' hydrangeas that frame the fenced entrance.

The road less traveled led Emily Brown to the rural property she and her husband, Mark, and their two children now call home. "I dropped my son off at school one morning, and something in me decided to drive west toward Paron and Ferndale," Emily says. She happened upon a "for sale" sign leading to this house and its attached acreage. As the owner of Little Rock women's boutique Tulips, Emily has a keen eye and was immediately taken with the find. Later that day, the listing Realtor happened to drop by the shop, all but sealing the fate of the purchase.

Having recently worked with friend and designer Krista Lewis on a makeover of their Pleasant Valley home (featured in the May 2016 issue of *At Home in Arkansas*), the Browns called on her for an opinion before inking the deal. "I remember thinking this is *so them*," Krista recalls. "The house and its architecture are what drew us in," Emily adds. "We say we traded a bathtub and big closets for land and a homestead situation."

Originally constructed as part of an orchard farm in the 1970s, Emily has heard stories that pieces of the frame were brought from New England and constructed here. It was known as Twigs Country Farm, a moniker the family carries on today.

Since its initial construction, timeless structural updates had

been made by the previous owners with the help of contractor MJ Herr. With the functional elements in place, Krista and Emily added layers of personalization through paint, wallpaper, and furnishings, making the house a true reflection of the family as well as the setting. "Krista recognizes the history and architecture of homes, not just the trends. She and I have a deep relationship, and I trust her vision for all of my projects," Emily says.

To this point, not everything in the house is new or pulled from a showroom line. Pieces from their previous home were used in places where they made sense, chairs and headboards were refreshed with new upholstery, and memory-rich collections, artwork, and game mounts are dotted throughout the spaces. "The older we get, the more we want a home that feels lived in," Emily says. "I want pieces that go with the style of what we're creating and not against the house," she adds.

In many ways, the family's homes have evolved with Emily's personal and professional style through the years. "She's not trying to completely reinvent herself with each home but it always stays fresh," Krista says. "It's a big blessing to get to live in the house, and I think it will be in the family for a long time. My kids definitely love it, and they want to come back to it," Emily adds. **AH**



COME ON IN

The back entrance leads into a small hallway lined with Pierre Frey's "Espalier," which depicts a grid of twigs—a play on the home's epithet. Krista topped the existing wooden bench with a custom gingham cushion that is laminated for durability. Wooden pegs make for a casual drop zone that neatly corrals hats, coats, and bags.



A PERFECT FIT

Built in the 1970s, the home's rooms are cozy yet comfortable and inviting. "They are not huge spaces, so we did have to get rid of some things in the move," Krista says. Notably, the Browns' long dining table was swapped for a skirted round version that fits in the square-shaped dining room. While the chandelier was already in place, Krista accented its traditional style with a printed botanical grasscloth wallpaper, antique urns on the sideboard, cane-back chairs with cushions made from an indoor/outdoor velvet, and a contemporary work by Nashville artist Kayce Hughes. "I especially love a round table because everyone can gather around it, and the skirt gives you the flexibility to change out the look down the road," the designer says.



WOODSY, BUT MAKE IT FEMININE

The living room's blue hue was inspired by an existing tile on the stair risers in the entry. Paired with a faux bois wallpaper on the ceiling, antelope-patterned sofa, and Emily's collection of Spode "Woodland" plates—pieces her mother-in-law gifts her for special occasions—there's a notably masculine tone in the space that is artfully punctuated with a girlish addition. "A pink couch with tassels works just as well here as it did in their previous house," Krista says. "I always laugh because Mark is game for anything. He is one of the manliest men I know, but he's like, *Whatever*; it's not threatening to him," the designer adds.



"Moody Blue"
Sherwin-Williams

THE COZIEST CORNER

In the fireplace nook, a club chair upholstered in "Chappana" by Thibaut with a ruffled skirt pairs with prints from artist Linda Fraser, all of which are in the same family of blue as the walls. The deer seen above the fireplace was harvested by the couple's son, Peyton. "Mark has one rule: We don't hang any mounts that are not from our family," Emily says, pointing to similar pieces throughout the house.



“I want pieces that go with the style of what we’re creating and not against the house.”

—Emily Brown, homeowner



FLORAL & FUNCTIONAL

In the primary bedroom, Krista recovered her clients’ headboard in an indoor/outdoor fabric and coordinated bedding in the same durable material, allowing them to live at ease with their dogs while also providing a quick style refresh. “We joke with Krista that she always knows to bring in items that are ‘bulletproof.’ She has the ability to make things very pretty but they can often be washed off with a water hose,” Emily says with a laugh. Adding to the femininity, florals show up on the window treatments (“Wisteria Vine” by Shumacher) and light fixture. Emily purchased the egg-themed artwork after a trip to Blackberry Farm led her to discover Aly M. Art.



FIT FOR A TEEN

The trim and walls in Emily and Mark’s daughter’s room were already painted pink, but Krista came up with a scheme that made it feel more like the teenage girl. “Millie didn’t want the pink initially, but I suggested we tone it down with this really pretty gray wallpaper to make it a little more grown up, and she was on board,” the designer recalls. A second, starry gold wallpaper on the ceiling ties in with the yellow in the quilt and the bedside lamps. The string of ribbons across the head of the bed are from horse show wins, while the felt art by Sam Sidney on the bedside features Albert Einstein. “Millie is dyslexic, and we’ve always told her Einstein was, too,” Emily says of the meaningful and inspiring work. “I love that it’s a modern piece that is juxtaposed with this traditional room,” she adds.



A LIGHTER FARE

In the kitchen, Krista painted the wood paneled walls in a shade of white to match the cabinetry. For functionality, an island topped with a butcher block counter was added to the center of the room. With the perimeter cabinetry and appliances staying in place, Krista and Emily focused their efforts on personalization through pendant lights with fabric shades and verdant barstools that bring in color.

BOOTH & TABLE

Adjacent to the kitchen island, the goal for the breakfast nook was plenty of room for teenagers. Krista dreamed up a custom pedestal table and banquette to fit the bill. Its traditional Colefax and Fowler "Bowood" fabric was laminated to stand up to everyday use by the crowd. A scalloped overhead fixture and sconces with fabric shades echo the green from the nearby barstools.

ARTFUL ADDITION

With blue being a thread throughout the living spaces, Krista was inspired to carry the hue onto the keeping room's fireplace surround. "I had seen so many Delft tiles and thought those would be perfect for this stove area, but I wanted them to be specific to their family," she says. She turned to Russellville-based ceramicist Winston Taylor for a collaboration that features the family in scenes around the house: Emily at the front door, Millie on her horse, Peyton and Mark fishing, hydrangeas, chickens, and their beloved pets. "It's so, so sweet. This is my favorite area of the house, and I love that the tiles look like they've been here forever," Emily says. Cozy chairs covered in a buffalo check fabric, stackable footstools, and painted green lanterns complete the space.





UNDER THE SURFACE

Just off the home's back entry is a winding staircase with a rope railing that leads to a wine cellar. Outfitted with stone, Krista dressed up the area with a floral, ruffled-edge bench and green scalloped sconces—a perfect perch to enjoy a glass from the collection. Emily notes the space is large enough to serve as a shelter for the entire family and their dogs during storms.

“She’s not trying to completely reinvent herself with each home but it always stays fresh.”

—Krista Lewis, designer



The Browns traded a hot tub for space for a round dining table on the screened porch. A comfortable sofa and wicker chairs with cushions in Pindler's "Quilt" pattern make for a year-round conversation area at the porch's opposite end.

Design Resources

INTERIOR DESIGN Krista Lewis, K. Lewis Interior Design **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** Stacey Stafford, Stafford Fine Gardening **ACCESSORIES, BEDDING, FABRICS, FURNITURE, LIGHTING, MIRRORS, RUGS, WALLPAPER, AND WINDOW COVERINGS** K. Lewis Interior Design **FRAMING** BK Moulding **UPHOLSTERY** Howard's Upholstery **WALLPAPER (INSTALLATION)** Lorita Herring

