



HOME INTERIORS

Texas Hill Country Haven

INSPIRED BY THE UNIQUE STONE HOMES BUILT BY
EARLY GERMAN SETTLERS, THIS LEGACY RETREAT MARRIES
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE WITH TIMELESS TEXAS STYLE.

By Allyn Hulteng
Photography by Ric J Photography

TUCKED DEEP IN THE HEART OF SOUTH Central Texas is a region fondly referred to as Hill Country. Unlike the rest of the republic, which is relatively flat, the land here morphs magnificently into a sea of rolling hills punctuated with limestone ridges, wooded ravines, and natural springs due to a geologic anomaly known as karst topography.

When Warren and Jane Williams began searching for a haven away from the hubbub of their native Houston, time and again they ventured west, back to the serene Hill Country — where eventually they found their place at Boot Ranch.

“The first time we drove through the gates of Boot Ranch, we rolled down the windows and took in the fresh air, the sound of cicadas, and the star-filled sky,” Warren says. “It was beautiful.”

At one time a working ranch, Boot Ranch is now a private community offering Texas ranch-style living alongside a Hal Sutton-designed championship golf course, mere minutes from Fredericksburg.

Founded in 1842 by German immigrants, the town is dotted with historic homes built out of locally quarried limestone. The unique Germanic stone architecture is mirrored throughout the hilly region.

Evoking old Germanic style, this Texas Hill Country home features three individual structures built from native limestone and accented with wood shingles and gridded windows.



Following a homeland tradition, these early German settlers typically built a large family home on their deeded property out in the country, and then a second, smaller home on a lot in Fredericksburg. Called “Sunday houses,” the small homes in town served as a place to stay when family members came to buy supplies or attend church.

To honor that legacy, the Williamses envisioned building a home that looked like it could be the original ranch house from the 1880s. Warren’s brother Gary, an architect in Fredericksburg, was intimately familiar with the area’s history and unique architecture. Drawing inspiration from these early dwellings, Gary conceived the idea of constructing three separate yet related structures.

“I wanted the aesthetics to suggest that the main house was built at one point, with an outdoor gathering area and a Sunday house added later,” Gary says.

Large with two stories, the main house anchors the estate. The exterior was constructed using native limestone and heavy timber supports. Wood shingles on the roof and gridded windows also harken back to the old Germanic style.

THIS PAGE: Wood floors reclaimed from the Old Crow Distillery in Kentucky accent the limestone walls in the great room. A large driftwood horse sculpture in the front entry pays homage to the equine history of Boot Ranch. **OPPOSITE:** Resembling early *fachwerk* construction, a stone accent wall with an arched doorway and wood beams adds a historic element to the kitchen, which features a modern island.





The master suite features a bed draped in a moiré silk coverlet with faux fringe that falls to the floor and a half-moon shaped rosewood desk and chair from India. The spa-like master bathroom pairs modern amenities such as an oversized shower with vintage accents like a clawfoot tub.

Outside, a landscaped courtyard encircled by a limestone wall leads to the Sunday house, or guest home. Like the main house, the exterior is constructed out of stone. The importance of detail continues inside, where stone walls and hand-hewn timbers echo the past, as does the hand-rubbed, oil-finished wood floor reclaimed from the Old Crow Distillery in Kentucky. “Every detail was intentional and speaks to history,” Gary notes.

Although Warren and Jane wanted the home to have an aged appearance, they also wanted all the comforts and amenities of a luxury retreat. And it was important that the interior feel warmly inviting. Working with the owners, interior designer Jody Simonson used a blend of natural materials and textures in selecting furnishings.

She started in the great room with a richly colored hand-knotted rug to anchor the space. Atop the rug, a leather sectional with hair-on-hide and lamb’s wool throw pillows offers a place to relax, while the equine art speaks to the property’s ranching heritage.

The heart of the home is the kitchen and dining area. Here, a low box-beam ceiling creates a more intimate space. Wall cabinetry finished with a crème-colored glaze contrasts with the ebony island. On the far side of the dining room, the limestone wall with the arched opening is reminiscent of *fachwerk* construction, a technique used by the early German settlers in which timbers are used to frame the stone walls.

Upstairs in the master bedroom, Simonson set the scene from the floor up. “When designing a room, I always start with the rug,” Simonson says. “This Oushak-weave rug is a transitional interpretation of a tribal design.” The gray, rust, and gold threads complement the many ribbons of color that flow through the wood flooring. To top the bed, the designer chose a moiré silk coverlet with faux fringe that falls gracefully to the floor. In the corner is a half-moon shaped rosewood desk and chair from India.

For Warren and Jane, their rustically elegant retreat in the Texas Hill Country is a dream fulfilled.

“You work hard your whole life to get to the point where you can sit back and relax,” Warren says. “And that’s what this is, a place for us and our kids to enjoy.”

Resources

Gary Williams | GMW/Architect
Fredericksburg, Texas, 214.336.6468

Jody Simonson | Parigi Interiors
Boerne, Texas, 210.326.7404, www.parigiinteriors.com

Rustic Elegance
Kerrville, Texas, 830.257.4716, www.rusticelegancetx.com

