

# COUNTRY

Experience the  
luxurious side of  
farmhouse living.

BY KRISTIN DOWDING

Grandeur





Pitched ceilings automatically inspire a high-end, spacious atmosphere in a room. Wood beams anchor this kitchen ceiling, adding structure and drawing the eye upward.

PHOTO BY DAVID BADER



Farmhouses were born out of necessity and function, but their beautiful, basic style doesn't mean they can't be sophisticated. By merging elements from various design styles, you can have the simplicity of a farmhouse while still indulging in elegant features that will upgrade the feel of your home.

In his book, *Heirloom Houses: The Architecture of Wade Weissmann*, author Steven Stolman showcases architect Wade Weissmann and his work with homes that embrace history and character with an elevated style. "An entire new concept has emerged," he explains: "the imposing but lyrical structure, one with an exterior that appears as though it could have been built decades ago but with an interior that could not be more of-the-moment." This philosophy includes grounding the home in nature and celebrating its past.

#### NATURE'S CANVAS

"Architecture is at its best when it is at one with the environment," Stolman writes. Wade studies the surrounding area to ensure the home will look like it belongs. "I explore the slope of the land, the foliage, the soil, the exposure to wind, the available light, and any neighboring scenery or structures," he says.

Growing up, Wade spent time in his family's 1860s farmhouse, and it made him appreciate the magic of using local materials. "In architecture, simplicity is a virtue; but it requires the same attention to detail and integrity of materials that more ornate structures typically demand," he believes. Stone, wood, marble and other natural materials can not only add elegance to your home, but they also bring the beauty of outdoors inside the living spaces.

#### PRESERVING FARMHOUSE APPEAL

Larger homes with vaulted ceilings and an open floor plan are becoming more popular, as they'll effortlessly give you the high-end feel you want. "The traditional living room has become passé," Stolman writes. "Kitchens are now required to be multifunctional ... and baths have evolved into the realm of spa-like luxury."

One key way to keep farmhouse character in a grander home is through the details. Shop for vintage pieces, salvage elements of the original home if possible and stick to staple farmhouse fabrics. Of course, the best rule to follow is to only buy what you love. Describing Wade's homes, Stolman writes: "There is a sweet, homespun charm, even in the face of an influx of large, sophisticated houses."





PHOTO BY DAVID BADER

(top) The mark of success in creating a luxurious farmhouse is whether you've achieved balance. The exterior of this home is classic and simple. "A tractor wouldn't appear out of place, nor would a rusty pickup truck," Stolman writes. But the white siding and black trim give it a modern, classy feel.

(bottom) Create an outdoor living room that's as upscale as your indoor gathering spaces. Center your furniture around a fireplace, and stack firewood on either side for added warmth and texture.



PHOTO BY ALYSSA ROSENHECK





Shiplap ceilings evoke a boathouse aesthetic in this Midwest lake house. The exposed beams echo the dark flooring, providing a stark contrast with the white walls and ceiling.



## Tip

ADD INSTANT GRANDEUR WITH YOUR THROW PILLOWS. USE UPHOLSTERY FABRICS LIKE VELVET OR BROCADE TO BRING RICH DEPTH TO YOUR SEATING AREAS.



PHOTOS BY DAVID BADER

(above, left) This half-timbered home has a storybook look with exposed beams, views of the surrounding woods and charming nooks. "Warm wood is everywhere, bringing the outdoors in and creating a lyrical habitat for happy family living," writes Stolman.

(above, right) This bathroom mixes materials such as brick, tile and wood to marry the functional aspects of a farmhouse with an opulent aesthetic.



HEIRLOOM HOUSES: THE ARCHITECTURE OF WADE

WEISSMANN BY STEVEN STOLMAN WITH WADE

WEISSMANN ARCHITECTURE, PUBLISHED BY GIBBS SMITH,

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## Elevating ELEMENTS

Architectural features such as vaulted ceilings and expansive windows give any house an opulent feel, but they aren't always easy to come by. Here are some elements you can incorporate into your spaces that don't require a full-home renovation.

- 1. LIGHTING.** The most cost-effective option is to incorporate chandeliers throughout your home. Whether they're simple and modern or lavish and intricate, a chandelier is an art piece that's functional and visually appealing.
- 2. DARK WOOD FLOORS.** There's something about a darker stain that denotes luxury. If you already have wood flooring, you can sand it down and restain it instead of purchasing new flooring.
- 3. NATURAL MATERIALS.** Stone, marble and wood are earthy, beautiful and rich in texture. Use them throughout your home in elements such as a fireplace surround, countertops, beams or a backsplash for a high-end look that's one with nature.