



MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL

BY TIFFANY HORTON, HORTON DESIGN STUDIOS

PHOTOS BY KEVIN GOODMAN



Whether it's a house she's flipping or a business she is starting, Lauren Callaway Francis strives to create an end product that maximizes her vision. In her most recent remodel, she created both an amazing home and a unique neighborhood. "In 2020, I bought the ten acres across the road from this house with the intention of building a home someday for myself. Then, this property became available, and I didn't really know what I was going to do with it but bought the house and another almost 12 acres. I initially rented this house out while I was trying to figure out what to do. Eventually, Greg (Francis) and I were talking about it and thought it would make a wonderful subdivision," she explained. "We brought in Kayla (Woods) at MTG Engineering, and she was a huge help with laying out the lots in a way that allowed me to maintain the vision I had of keeping the trees and keeping the nature-inspired feel of the land."

Driving into the subdivision, Forest Estates, you immediately feel the importance of the role Francis gave to the existing landscape. Winding on towards the back of the neighborhood is the newly remodeled house tucked away, waiting to be discovered. The earthy charcoal of the siding and the German smear on the brick, accented by a touch of stone, give you the feeling the house has always been there, while also bringing a modern edge. The lake in the background further accentuates both the home and the neighborhood.

Upon entering the house, a cozy living area with extended ceilings welcomes you. This is one of the few rooms to receive minimal changes during the construction process. For the rest of the house, Francis opened up tight spaces, added necessary rooms, and even reworked a set of stairs that were rather treacherous.

The kitchen was opened up by extending some of the cased openings, dividing the kitchen from the living areas



and converting the former primary bedroom into the dining room. For the finishes, she chose a neutral brown stain for the white oak cabinets and simple white quartz for the countertops. In addition, because of the galley style of the kitchen limiting storage options, Francis added a large pantry and artfully extended a bank of cabinets into the dining area. The previous dining area, at the opposite end of the kitchen, is now a quaint sitting area with a small adjacent office.

Just off the sitting area is a large deck that connects to both the living spaces and the new primary suite. Coming back inside and through the kitchen, you will pass the powder bath and a breezeway to the garage. The breezeway has multiple large windows



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on both sides, allowing natural light to flood the space. The cedar walls and black brick pavers make practical choices for its simultaneous role as a mudroom.

The theme of bringing in nature continues into the primary suite, where Francis added a feature wall of windows and French doors out onto the patio, allowing the surrounding landscape to encompass the room. As you head back across the house and upstairs, you will find three sizeable bedrooms, two more bathrooms, and a shared area perfect for a playroom, sitting area, or homework space. The upstairs bathrooms showcase personality through moody tile surrounds and elegant wallpapered nooks.

It is clear by her theme continuity and boldness in finish selection, that Francis is not afraid to make choices that push the boundaries of style if they also add clarity to her vision for a space; it's a philosophy she seems to portray in her life and her work. When asked what advice

she would give other women starting a business, or even to her younger self, she said, "The advice I would give is to do exactly what I did—pray. And when you feel like you're in a rut and you feel like you need to go to the next level, just sit down with God and He is going to open a door for you. It might not be tomorrow or a week from now. It may take a little bit longer, but if you stay faithful and rely on God, He'll open a door for you, and His path is unlike any you would have ever laid out for yourself." 🙏



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