

shining STAR

Balancing the new with the old,
a couple renovates and restores
a 19th-century farmhouse with
patience, planning, and
a little bit of magic.

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OPPOSITE Fresh flowers from Robinn and Doug McAllister's yard provide a natural accent to complement the home's neutral tones. "If I could, I would always have fresh flowers in the house," Robinn says. **THIS PHOTO** With its pared-down frame, a lantern-style chandelier contrasts with the all-vintage dining room ensemble pieced together from Robinn's antiques hunts.



ABOVE Balancing a renovation with a restoration, the McAllisters removed an existing ceiling to reveal the original farmhouse rafters, which add to the open, airy feeling of the white-dominated living room. Exposing this hidden treasure was a delightful surprise, Robinn says. **OPPOSITE** The slant-ceiling passageway to her upper-level home office gives Robinn her favorite interior view (especially when little Minnie is included). The couple created it to make way for needed ductwork. “We had to hide all that stuff,” Robinn says, “and we had to make it look good.” Her antiques business, Farmhouse 1418, found its name when the couple stumbled upon the home’s original address on a demoed wall. Shelves display favorite finds—and Robinn’s love of basket textures married with vintage wood and zinc.

Throughout their marriage, Robinn and Doug McAllister have never stayed in one place very long. “We moved every five to 10 years,” Robinn says. But the charms of this simple farmhouse, originally built in 1890, changed everything. After renting the home for a year, the McAllisters purchased the property with the intention of flipping it, having completed their own modern farmhouse up the road just months before. But good bones—and a good story—carry magic, and early on, Robinn surprised Doug by popping the question: What if we stayed? “The next thing you know,” she says, “I was ordering marble.”

The passing years had taken their toll on the once-stately 2,000-square-foot home in Boise, and the property was condemned then slated for destruction. In the nick of time, the structure was saved and, in 1970, the farmhouse was relocated to the little town of Star, where it remains today on an acre of land.

While the home had been previously renovated, the dated, green-tiled bathrooms and orange fir flooring “just weren’t our style,” Robinn says. And so began an 18-month project that revealed the original raftered ceilings (the “yummy stuff” as Robinn calls it), opened up a too-small kitchen, and added an upper level that includes a home office/command center for Robinn’s antiques business and pop-up shops, Farmhouse 1418 (@farmhouse1418 on Instagram).

The farmhouse—now expanded to 3,380 square feet—is a testament to the careful blending of new and old, with simplicity at its heart. Authenticity, too.





ABOVE Modern touches in the kitchen, including chic pendant lighting over the Carrara marble-topped kitchen island, balance antiques throughout the home.

"We were nervous about the marble," Robinn says. "It's so soft, but it will age with time, so it really suits the house." Custom floating shelves—one of Doug's favorite design choices—and a wall of clean white tile complete the parlor-to-kitchen renovation. **OPPOSITE LEFT** Having known she wanted to own an old home for much of her life, Robinn says, "I had a lot of time to plan." The butler's pantry was one of those long, drawn-out ideas that's now a reality—and home to her extensive ironstone collection.

After removing some interior walls and doors for a more open floor plan, the McAllisters reinstalled some of the original farmhouse doors on sliding tracks, adding flexible privacy. A section of a demoed farmhouse wall found new life as a living room coffee table, and hardwood floors were kept and painted white wherever possible. Handpicked plank flooring was installed (by the McAllisters themselves) when the original wood couldn't handle another round of finishing.

But renovating a 19th-century farmhouse came with its own set of quirky design obstacles to embrace—and to creatively overcome. When adding the upper level, the roofline prevented easy installation of heat and central air. "The ductwork had nowhere to go," Robinn says, but the couple met that challenge with creativity, shrank the size of the hallway, and now the slant-ceiling passageway is one of Robinn's favorite areas of the home. "When you turn the corner up there, you really see the new-meets-old idea," she says. "It's just such a wow moment."

Their house is still a work in progress, but the McAllisters say they're not in



any rush. "I've simplified my decor style over the years," Robinn says, "and now I fully embrace that open and airy feeling. I wait for the right pieces to come along." And over time, the right pieces have found their way: Vintage bedside tables and French baskets keep the authentic farmhouse feel alive—as do the custom floating shelves and butler's pantry that display Robinn's longtime ironstone collection. The two added a subtle modern tilt with streamlined pendant lighting, smooth white tile backsplashes, and furniture with simple silhouettes.

"This home is so special," Robinn says. "I'm a registered nurse and my husband sells insurance, and I still think, *How do we have a home like this?*" Those who drive by the house and stop to ask the McAllisters if they're interested in selling are out of luck. "This is my forever home," Robinn says, "and I've never been a forever-home kind of girl." □

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TOP Relocated from Boise, this rescued 1890 farmhouse now shines brightly in Star, Idaho. While the McAllisters plan to plant more trees soon, for now, simple landscaping and a single picturesque magnolia tree frame their home. **ABOVE** Robinn and Doug's farmhouse love story started long before they bought the property in 2018. Years before, Doug spotted the house and came home to tell Robinn that he'd found her dream house. "Every time we drove down the main road," Robinn says, "Doug would point and tell me, 'That's it! That's the house I was telling you about.'" Fast-forward to finding out their offer had gone through: "I was skipping, of course!" Robinn says.

"ONCE I GET THAT
perfect piece,
 I DON'T HAVE A HANKERING TO
 CHANGE OR ADD TO IT."

—HOMEOWNER ROBINN McALLISTER



RIGHT With twice-annual trips to the Round Top Antiques Fair in Texas, Robinn stocks her shop and finds a few keepers for her home too, including a vintage table that serves as a commodious nightstand. Under it, she tucks an old French basket for odds and ends. A chunky knit blanket and plush flokati-style rug add cozy layers. **BELOW** Bumping out the guest bath during the renovation made room for a new linen closet. The shiplap backing gives it farmhouse character. Vintage swimming pool lockers and glass containers corral necessities while reinforcing Robinn's simple, purposeful style.



OPPOSITE "After all these years," Robinn says, "I really want to live simply." Quiet simplicity reigns in the mostly white guest room, where ocher throws draw the eye with a couple of pops of rich, earthy color. **TOP** The McAllisters prove that high style can come in tiny parcels. "The bathrooms were quite small, so we had to get creative with the spaces," Robinn says. In the primary bathroom, a tidy freestanding tub takes center stage, offering luxury and sculptural appeal. **ABOVE** Texture prevents a white palette from going cold. In the guest bedroom, a nightstand's mottled paint, washed linen bedding, and a simple bouquet bring visual warmth.

