



**YOUR GUIDE TO
BUYING REAL ESTATE
IN THE HILL COUNTRY**



WELCOME TO THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

The Texas Hill Country is no longer a secret enjoyed only by Texans. Gorgeous natural surroundings, an emerging employment hub, and thriving culture have turned the area into one of the most popular places for Texas Hill Country homes. With the eclectic and thriving city of Austin 45 minutes to the north and the culturally diverse San Antonio 30 minutes to the south, New Braunfels enjoys the natural beauty of the Hill Country and convenient proximity to two dynamic cities. As more and more residents and visitors flock to San Antonio and Austin, the Hill Country has been discovered by the nation as much more than a scenic spot to visit and a pass-through to larger cities. New Braunfels is an historic and beautiful city in the heart of the Hill Country, and it's also the second-fastest city in the nation for its size.

A few reasons why New Braunfels is the ideal location for your Hill Country Home:

STUNNING NATURAL BEAUTY

People typically have the same reaction when they first see the Hill Country: "This is Texas?!" With rolling topography, sparkling lakes and rivers, twisty oaks, and abundant greenery, there is always something beautiful to see.

ABUNDANT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

It is no surprise that New Braunfels has been a vacation retreat for Texans for generations. From hikes that wind through wooded areas and up rolling hills to take in panoramic lake views, to miles of bike trails offering varying levels of difficulty, to the adventurous watersports offered on Canyon Lake and the famous tubing on two New Braunfels rivers, the area is a recreational haven.

FUN

Pack a picnic lunch and head out to one of the local parks for a day of smiles. Or maybe zooming down one of the waterslides at Schlitterbahn is more your speed. You can't beat a day of shopping, dining, and strolling the quaint, historic streets in the town of Gruene minutes away, especially if it ends with dancing at Gruene Hall, the oldest continually operating dance hall in Texas.



TEXAS WINE TRAIL

The secret is out. Texas wines continue to grow in popularity and reputation, with ongoing recognition from important outlets and international competitions. Huffington Post called the Texas Wine Country “The New Napa,” and the Texas Wine Trail more than lives up to that name with 51 unique local wineries throughout the Texas Hill Country, including New Braunfels. Dry Comal Creek is an award-winning winery known for its Black Spanish Wine as well as fun, romantic, and educational events all-year-round, and is located directly across the street from Vintage Oaks.

QUICK DRIVE TO TWO MAJOR US CITIES

Prefer a calmer way of life in a growing city that maintains a small-town way of life with nearby big-city convenience? New Braunfels is convenient to not one, but two dynamic cities, making it one of the most well-located places to live in Texas. Whether you work in Austin or San Antonio, or you just like the idea of having access to two thriving cities, New Braunfels offers a truly ideal location for Texas Hill Country living.

WORLD-CLASS DINING

Restaurants in New Braunfels reflect an international flavor rooted in the city’s German heritage. It wouldn’t be the Lone Star state without some good ‘ole Texas barbecue, but the city’s favorite local dining options run the gamut from Huisache Grill & Wine Bar and McAdoo’s Seafood Company in New Braunfels to The Gristmill in Gruene.

SHOPPING

Throughout New Braunfels, excellent shopping opportunities abound. Head Downtown to the historic main plaza for a variety of great antique stores and can’t-miss boutiques. Just up the road in San Marcos, the Premium Outlets have been voted among the “Best places to shop” by the Austin Business Journal and named the third-best place to shop in the world by ABC’s “The View.”

RELAXED, FRIENDLY AND AFFORDABLE — QUALITY OF LIFE

New Braunfels is located at the intersection of desirability and affordability, and those who move to Hill Country homes here are proud to do so. With a low cost of living, an exceptional climate, beautiful topography, and an endless array of things to see and do, New Braunfels offers a quality of life that is second to none.

THE PEOPLE

People are often drawn to the Hill Country by the spectacular natural beauty of the area. But when they experience the warm and welcoming spirit and friendly residents, they know they have made the right choice. Life here moves at a relaxed pace among homeowners who all seem to be looking for the same things: a more peaceful, family-friendly way of life among nature and new friends.



CHOOSING YOUR COMMUNITY

When choosing a community for your dream home, it's important to get a complete feel for the way of life, potential neighbors, and important details. It helps to:

- Visit at different times of the day
- Drive around, time the commute
- Learn what's happening in the area and within the community, i.e. new construction
- Learn if there is a Property Owners Association and research annual fees and services provided
- Research applicable taxes
- Read reviews of the community, developer, and builders within consideration
- Check the surrounding area to make sure the local schools, restaurants, shops, and other important amenities meet expectations
- Research zoning and building codes
- Meet current owners, ask their opinion of the neighborhood
- Learn if there are building covenants that will define the style, size, or façade of the home

Vintage Oaks has one of the highest rates of owner referral of any community in Texas. Owners happily invite their friends and family to become their neighbors.

BUILDING VS. BUYING

Many people think that buying an existing home instead of building a custom home in the Hill Country allows them to move-in for less money and hassle, but that is not necessarily true. In a community like Vintage Oaks, that offers both Texas land for sale and builder homes, the choice often comes down to specific wants and needs.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BUILDING A HOME VS. BUYING AN EXISTING HOME

Your Dream Home, Your Way: Why settle for someone else's choices when you can select your favorite cabinets, countertops, appliances, carpets and flooring? Your new home will reflect your style, not someone else's taste.



Vintage Oaks has been named the area's fastest-growing community for four years in a row. With more than 3,300 sprawling Hill Country acres, this coveted community features 1–14 acre homesites in both gated and non-gated neighborhoods and new builder homes for sale. Vintage Oaks' famed amenities draw Hill Country land and home buyers looking for a complete community that lives like a resort. The amenities include:

- Miles of nature trails that wind through the community, connecting to neighborhoods and other amenities
- Olympic-size pool
- Kiddie pool
- Lazy river
- Tuscan-style Clubhouse with wine room, fitness center, and pavilion with full catering kitchen
- Soccer fields
- Baseball field
- Tennis courts
- Picnic grove
- Kids' playground
- Timber Ridge Park and Veteran's Walk
- A future Fitness Club in Vintage Oaks' newest neighborhood of The Grove
- Year-round activities and events for all ages including a Summer Concert Series

From retirees to young families to veterans, Vintage Oaks has something to offer everyone.



Choose a Floorplan and Room Layout that Meets Your Needs: Want a master bedroom on the first floor? It's yours. With massive his and hers walk-in closets? Done! Want high ceilings and a luxurious, resort-style master bath? Perhaps you'd like a sitting room with a fireplace in your owner's suite or French doors that open to your private patio or the pool? When you build custom, you get to design your home according to your specifications and lifestyle.

All New, Under Warranty: A used home often has older or poorly maintained features that may soon need replacing. Your new home—and the products that comprise it—are brand-new and under warranty. What's the cost to replace a roof, appliances, countertops, or a water heater on a used home? Those components of your new home feature the latest designs and building materials and should offer you years of comfort and enjoyment before needing replacement.

Energy Efficiency and Cost Savings: Today's new homes are far more energy efficient than homes built just five years ago. With all of the advances in efficient windows, doors, heating & cooling and more, your new home will save you energy and money while you enjoy the comfort of a well-sealed, efficient home.

Comfort and Indoor Air Quality: Today's new homes meet stringent energy standards and codes not in place even a few years ago. They combine high-performance energy efficiency with state-of-the-art ventilation and air filtration. The result is year-round, draft-free comfort and higher indoor air quality.

Low Maintenance: Today's new homes have open floorplans and high ceilings that reflect the way we live today. They're also made of cutting-edge building products that require less care and maintenance. Another plus? The latest building systems and components are designed and engineered to work together and require less maintenance.

Safety: State-of-the-art circuit breakers. Electric garage door openers with infrared beams that stop if a tricycle or child is too near. High-efficiency furnaces and air conditioners that use the latest environmentally friendly coolants. Cabinets, carpets, and paints that use fewer volatile organic compounds, so that you and your family can breathe easier. New technology and design keeps your family safer.

Easier Than You Think: Sounds like a lot of work? At Vintage Oaks, simply choose the lot of your dreams and our Builder Services team will recommend a qualified homebuilder who can offer you plans, options, and costs quickly, making the process fast, painless, and far less expensive than you think!



CHOOSING YOUR HOMESITE

Perhaps the best part of building your home for Texas Hill Country living is that you get to choose where you will be located. Heavily wooded lot? Flat and open for fun in the yard? Hilly and secluded with great views and privacy? When you decide to build, you choose the ideal homesite, orienting your home plan to your wants and needs, and framing those beautiful Hill Country views.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING YOUR HOMESITE:

- Budget: How much are you comfortable with / approved to spend?
- How large of a homesite do you want or need for the home you have in mind?
- Do you want a certain amount of road frontage or is seclusion more important to you?
- Zoning & Deed restrictions — Do you want to be able to put any style or number of structures on your property or do you want a consistent community that protects values with community guidelines?

WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING AT HOMESITES WITH A LICENSED REALTOR®, HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS READY:

- Are there currently utilities in place, i.e. water, electric, sewer?
- Is the property surveyed? With a surveyed parcel, you have greater assurance that the acreage will be exactly what you contracted for. Boundary lines are shown on the survey map, as well as pinned and flagged on the property.
- Is the title to the property clear (free of liens and other encumbrances)?
- Is title insurance available on the property? We suggest that you consult your closing attorney, escrow agent, or real estate agent for further information on title insurance.

WHAT IS A MASTER-PLANNED COMMUNITY?

A master-planned community is one that has worked with local and regional agencies and municipalities to deliver a comprehensively planned community. A master-planned community shows the full vision of the community: How it will look and feel at completion, and what owners can expect as a part of that community. This distinction includes:

- Formal community entrance
- Amenities and open space plans to ensure there are ample parks, things to do and protected greenspace in the community
- Coordination with area utilities to ensure properties have access to the best utilities and services
- Coordination with emergency services (working with local agencies to ensure prompt access for fire, police, EMTs)
- Title guarantees — in SouthStar Communities like Vintage Oaks, titles are guaranteed unencumbered
- Deeds and covenants to ensure some consistency of architecture and presentation, protecting property values
- SouthStar Communities' in-house Property Management Company manages the amenities and common areas in the community. Someone is on-hand to answer questions and attend to issues.



- What are the current taxes on the property? Taxes usually relate to services provided by the town, county, or school authority, and they vary by community. Ask your sales representative for more information on the local taxes in the area you are considering.
- What are the deed restrictions on this property? It is important that you understand what uses are permitted or not permitted on any given property to help you decide which parcels meet your requirements. Occasionally a property will meet all town requirements for a particular use, but a deed restriction will not permit that use. Be sure to ask if there are any deed restrictions before building. If you intend to build, inquire about building codes and what permits will be required.
- If I choose to build, do I have to select a specific builder? SouthStar Communities' property owners have the freedom to select any builder, as long as the builder is qualified. All home designs will have to be approved by the Vintage Oaks Architectural Review Board to ensure architectural consistency and adherence to neighborhood covenants. This process protects the integrity of the community. Your builder/architect will present your plans for review.
- Does the community have a Property Owners Association (POA)? At SouthStar Communities, we believe that Property Owners Associations are vital to the success of the community, which is why we have an in-house Property Management Company that can offer the highest level of customer service to our residents.
- How can I get information on building guidelines for my community / homesite? Each community has a specific set of codes, covenants and restrictions that spell out the building standards for that community. To obtain this information, simply call or visit the community you're interested in and a representative will be happy to help you.

BRAND-NEW BUILDER HOMES AT VINTAGE OAKS

The masterplan's newest community, The Grove, is a whole new way to love Vintage Oaks. If you're moving to the Hill Country or simply looking to move to a better, newer, fresher home, you'll want to see The Grove's spacious homes from three of Texas' most renowned builders, with more than 60 unique floorplans from which to choose spanning 2,100 to 3,500+ square feet with lot sizes ranging from 60–75 feet wide. The smaller lots appeal to everyone from young families to retirees because they offer all the best of Vintage Oaks living without the maintenance involved in acreage property.





The Grove's homes feature:

- One- and two-story designs
- Open floorplans
- Mud rooms, game rooms, and libraries (per plan)
- Ample master suites with spa baths
- Abundant storage
- Numerous customizing options that allow the addition of a study, expanded master bedroom, outdoor living area and/or kitchen, media room, extended covered patio, and third-car garage (per plan), as well as individualized finishes

Surrounded by 100 acres of serene open space, which most homesites back up to, The Grove's setting maximizes Hill Country views and serenity, with rolling topography and tall trees all around, yet the community's convenience and accessibility to amenities and New Braunfels is unparalleled. This highly walkable location puts Vintage Oaks' resort amenities within an easy stroll or bike ride, and a new Fitness Center, with cardio rooms, weights and machines, classrooms, locker/spa rooms, and a lap and fitness class pool, will soon be added right in The Grove. Getting out into New Braunfels for work or play or to explore the city's great restaurants and shops is easier than ever thanks to The Grove's dedicated entrance from Highway 46.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE HIRING A BUILDER

Designing and building a custom home will be one of the most exciting events in your life. Here's how to make sure it results in the perfect home for you:

- Determine what you need. For most, it starts with the number of bedrooms, size of living areas, and special preferences. Do you need a big gourmet kitchen, or an outside cooking area? A room for kids to play or a home theater? Home office space or a workshop? Write down what you absolutely need, and then what you would like, should budget allow.
- One of the biggest trends in home design right now is "green building". This may simply mean energy-efficient windows and weatherstripping, or may extend to powerful solar systems that actually sell energy back to the utility, resulting in lower or non-existent energy bills. There are water catchment systems that capture rainwater or household grey water for "free" irrigation of gardens and yards. Many of these technologies can add to the purchase price, but may pay for themselves in utility savings and tax credits.

LET VINTAGE OAKS' BUILDER SERVICES DO THE RESEARCH FOR YOU!

Vintage Oaks Builder Services provides all of the information to make building your dream home easy and stress-free.

Vintage Oaks Builder Services is a complimentary service that assists property owners in choosing the best builder for their dream home. Builder Services helps Vintage Oaks owners by providing inspiration with floorplans and elevations from the area's best builders, and simplifies the process of building a home.

If there are existing Texas Hill Country homes in the community that have caught your eye, ask us about their builders and designers, and what the experience was like for those owners.

Only Builder Services can provide you with:

- Builder "reviews" based on owner feedback including quality, budget, timeframe, post-completion service, etc.
- Recommendations based on the 500+ property owners who have built previously and those who have recently constructed a home in Vintage Oaks

Our Service:

- Explain / simplify the construction process — explain ARB process, construction process and typical timeline, what to watch for to avoid costly changes or delays
- Follow-up through the building process to understand your experience
- Based on an understanding of your specific needs, recommend builders who have come highly recommended from other owners
- Share your feedback with other owners to ensure your voice is heard

Our Process. Building a home in the Hill Country is a very personal experience. We will meet with you to understand:

- Do you already have a home plan in mind?
- Special / unique factors to your Vintage Oaks homesite to highlight/consider — views, topography, signature trees, etc.
- Budget and price sensitivities
- Timeline / time requirements
- Communication requirements
- Special needs, i.e. someone great at millwork, custom cabinetry, outbuildings, xeriscaping, etc.

Based on your specific requirements, we will introduce you to area builders who have proven success among other Vintage Oaks property owners or area homeowners.



BUILDING A HOME AT VINTAGE OAKS

In addition to the many joys of building a custom home, there are Vintage Oaks-specific benefits our residents enjoy:

No timeframe to build. When you find the homesite of your dreams, secure it at today's prices and low financing rates, and build when you are ready, with no pressure.

So many options. Gated and non-gated neighborhoods with homesites ranging from 1–14 acres.

Variety of topography and locations. Wooded hilltop? Serene open pasture? Steps to the pool or tucked quietly behind a gate? Vintage Oaks offers a broad selection of areas to suit your desired lifestyle. But all enjoy the amenities and management of the Vintage Oaks community.

So many amenities. Resort-style amenities at one of the lowest Property Association annual fees in the Hill Country.

Guided by the owners. Vintage Oaks owners make up the committees and board that guide the community, along with a seasoned developer.

Happy homeowners. As you tour Vintage Oaks, be sure to meet the homeowners, and ask them about living there. Vintage Oaks owners bring their friends and family to the community as new neighbors each month. There is no greater measure of success for a community than the happiness of its homeowners and residents.

Seasoned Developer. SouthStar Communities has been successfully developing residential communities across the Southern United States for nearly 25 years. We are actively developing and operating three communities in Texas today, located in the Texas Hill Country and San Antonio. We welcome you to learn more at www.SouthstarCommunities.com.

Please contact a Vintage Oaks Land Consultant at 830-264-1554 to let us help you find the home of your dreams in Vintage Oaks or any one of our other communities in Texas:

The Crossings, New Braunfels, TX — www.thecrossingstexas.com
Mission del Lago, San Antonio, TX — www.missiondellago.net

www.VintageOaksTexas.com
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ABOUT AUTHOR

SouthStar Communities is a seasoned developer with successful residential communities across the Southern United States. With over 25 years owning, operating and developing residential communities, our legacy is delivering beyond expectations for our residents, investors and partners. We welcome you to learn more at www.SouthstarCommunities.com. Please contact a New Home Consultant at 830-264-1554 to let us help you find the home of your dreams in Vintage Oaks.

