

Excerpt from the Blog Site of Steve and Shannon Mackey on the daily construction of their Home/Vineyard at www.notavivavineyards.com

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Lancaster County Timber Frames Visit

Today we visited Lancaster County Timber Frames who will be building the frame for our new home/tasting room. Shannon and I have been working on the plans for well over a year now, and I actually first contacted LCTF in fall of 2004 as we were beginning to get quotes from manufacturers. I had a great conversation with Tony Zaya, founder of the company, due to the fact that LCTF is based in Lititz, PA which is where my former company Clair Brothers is based. Come to find out that Tony and Roy Clair went to college together—small world! It was during my time at Clair Brothers that I became familiar with the quality of craftsmanship that comes from central PA, and that is the kind of work we are looking for in our home.

I sent Tony the original copies that we had for the building and he was immediately intrigued. Essentially, we are designing a multi-function facility that can serve as a tasting bar, live-music performance hall, private party facility, and corporate retreat. The original defining features were the central tasting bar, large loft for seating, and upper loft which serves as the music stage. In front of the music stage will be a drop-down video screen for home theater purposes (watching football in a tasting room!) as well as corporate events. Of course the sound system will be over-the-top! So to say that it is not a typical structure is an understatement.

Since the original design, we have reconfigured the main loft into more of a “catwalk” design, which actually stretches the entire length of the building and have changed the bedroom/closet/kitchen configuration accordingly.

We left for Lititz last night....Got up early, had a quick breakfast at the hotel and headed out...

Once we got there we were met by Amy Weaver (contracts) and Joshua Coleman (designer) as well as Tony. Immediately we got a great sense of enthusiasm for the project from everyone. So after introductions we went into the main shop to see some work getting done (they stopped sanding while we were in there with the baby) and checked out some trusses ready for shipping. Then we went over to another warehouse next door to see some other frames already completed and ready to ship. Then back to the office and upstairs to Josh's design loft to check out our frame on the computer. We chatted about a few design issues and minor changes for awhile, then Josh took us out to see two of their existing projects.

The first was an ongoing project overlooking a river—gorgeous view. The interior is actually very similar to what we're doing, with Douglas fir frame and white pine tongue-and-groove ceiling with light walls. The quality of the work was amazing!

Next we went to a restaurant at a golf course which was completed a few years ago. The concept is somewhat similar to what we're doing, with a loft for music performances, so it gave us a great idea of what the size of the interior would feel like. After looking around we had lunch together, and filled Josh in on our history—how we met, how the vineyard concept came together, what the vision was for the future. It's humbling in a way to see the expression on people's faces when we tell them the story—I guess it seems pretty amazing hearing it for the first time, and we rarely sit still long enough to ponder it.

So after lunch we parted ways, with Josh hoping to get us the next round of plans before Christmas. Hopefully the plans will be final before the end of the year, so we can get started on blueprints for the builder.

Check out the [photos from our trip!](#)