



## Barns by Blackburn.....

Kimberly Michaels' Sheik Island Farm, a 300-acre farm located near Dade City north of Tampa, FL. was once a cattle farm and before that an orange grove. The land is surrounded by two fresh water lakes and is connected to the mainland by a small causeway. The entrance road to the farm is still surrounded by orange groves. The island has a beautiful stand of Live Oaks with hanging Spanish moss.

Let's just say not your typical horse farm, so it called for some very special barns, living quarters and out buildings. That's where Blackburn Architects of Washington, D.C. come into the picture. The farm now has two barns. One is a smaller eight stall barn located on a portion of the land that is on the "mainland". This is used for retired horses and polo ponies. That area is also used for trailer storage and muck storage with a separate entrance.

There's also a stick and ball field on the island for working the polo ponies. The other main barn has

16 stalls for hunters and jumpers. "Attached to this barn is a service storage wing that contains storage space for hay, bedding, vehicles and farm office," says John Blackburn of the design firm. There's also a small, two-bedroom apartment for grooms.

"Though the service wing is attached to the barn by roof, it's actually a separate building for fire safety reasons," he explains. "The island was partially covered with the stand of Live Oaks but was largely open grazing land for cattle.

We chose to place the barn adjacent to the live oaks with an approach road that led through the trees," Blackburn says.

"We did not want to place the barn in the oaks because we wanted to keep as many as we could. The oak grove was used for jump trails. A design principle of the farm layout, as is with almost every farm we plan, is to isolate vehicular traffic from horse traffic for safety reasons."

So now, horses can be led from barn to paddocks, jump field, jump trails, luenging pen, and between barns without crossing any roads and visitors can be isolated from the horses.

The barn is constructed of split face concrete block with wood framed roof trusses and asphalt shingles. The design includes a ten-foot wide deep overhang along the sides with roll down hurricane gates at the stalls. Other than the hurricane gates there are no doors or windows at the exterior of the stalls. "That way the barn stays open for maximum ventilation," Blackburn says, ever mindful of ventilation.

"The steep roof is vented along the ridge to allow hot air to rise and cool the building. The barn is placed on the site perpendicular to the prevailing summer breeze which comes across the lake. Placement of the barn in this manner allows the breeze to blow across the barn creating a vertical draft in the barn and increasing the ventilation."

Courtesy of

**BLACKBURN**  
ARCHITECTS, P.C.  
• ARCHITECTURE •  
• PLANNING • INTERIORS •

202-337-1755  
www.blackburnarch.com