

place of her own



Porch Pondering

When Judy Nichols finishes each long day, this wraparound porch calls to her.

Life doesn't get any better than on the porch swing," says Judy Nichols. She and her husband, John, spend countless hours enjoying the wraparound outdoor living space at their Brentwood home. "We're situated on 9 acres, and we can sit outside at night with the music going and listen to the geese call across the pond and the bullfrogs croak down below us and think, 'Wow! This is so special.'"

By day, their busy lives allow little time for such leisure. John works for an area manufacturing company. Judy, a third-generation Nashvillian, works as a real estate agent and easily racks up 100 miles a day in her car, meeting with clients. When the couple's workday ends, John and Judy gratefully settle into the antique

wicker swing and rockers beguilingly placed on the generous-size porch. Skylights let in filtered light, and overhead fans aid the breeze. "It's a great gathering place," Judy says. "Everybody just automatically gravitates to it."

When the Nicholoses built their vintage-looking home 12 years ago, the porch figured prominently in their plans. "I went out in the country and took pictures of old farmhouses to create ideas for this porch and to make the facade as authentic as I could," Judy says. She also carefully selected the building materials that they used. "There is so much mahogany on our porch, we could

build a dining table for 50," she quips.

Naturally she recommends porches to prospective homeowners, right? "Absolutely," she says, then laughs. "But just like any other room, they do require maintenance and upkeep, such as regular cleaning and painting."

Still, the porch remains Judy's favorite spot to relax. "You can lie on the swing, and, if you move it just so, you can doze off," she says. "In the winter, it

has a nice view of the Tennessee hills. In the summer, you feel like you're in a little tree house." For Judy and John, such porch pleasures far outweigh any problems.

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