

# HOME IS WHERE THE HORSE IS

That Thoroughbreds are a tricky investment is well-known to all participants in the industry. There is a lot of money passing hands for a most-fragile commodity, meaning that the care and welfare of the animal should be paramount to all involved. Choosing where to board your broodmare and, subsequently, where to raise your foal are crucial decisions not to be made without careful study and examination of all alternatives. A proper facility should have the tools, experience, and horsemanship to ensure the safety and welfare of its Thoroughbred charges, as well as the proper physical layout and access to top veterinary care. You'll want staff members who are well-versed in timely communications with you, the client.

Fortunately, many such top-shelf boarding operations exist throughout the country to give that special care to your Thoroughbred. What follows are profiles of some of the leading facilities.



ANNIE M. EBERHARDT

Decisions on where to board Thoroughbreds shouldn't be left to chance

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### CAMBREY FARM

A family operation conveniently located in Central Kentucky, Cambrey Farm offers bloodstock and boarding services with a personal touch that emphasizes quality care.

Owned and operated by the mother-son team of Vickie and Jason Hewitt, Cambrey Farm near Paris, Ky., benefits its clients from two generations of horsemen with more than 30 years of experience.

"Your mare's welfare and care are our primary concern," said Vickie Hewitt. "We are very passionate about our horses."

Cambrey Farm, which has expertise and success in dealing with problem and barren mares, prides itself on its consistently high conception rates, averaging 96% over the past 30 years and 100% 2017, 2018, and 2019.

"Every horse is treated as an individual which is probably one reason for our high in-foal rates," she said.

Hewitt, who previously was involved with breeding in Northern California, retired from her career in education and relocated to Kentucky 18 years ago. The care and attention provided by Hewitt resonated with her clientele.

"The clients I have, most of them have been with me since I started the farm," she said. "Normally, when they come to the farm they never leave, unless they leave the business for other reasons. They like the communication. It's very important to be reachable, which I learned as a school principal."

# OAK LODGE

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**Please contact Alan Fitzsimons  
to schedule an appoint to view  
the farm and facilities.**



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ANNE M. EBERHARDT

services in an ideal location. Situated in California's San Joaquin Valley, Madera Thoroughbreds sits on 160 acres with the Fresno River running through the property and the Sierra Nevada Mountains serving as the backdrop.

Fischer, who also manages the operation, has more than 50 years of experience in the Thoroughbred industry. He established Madera Thoroughbreds in 1984 after running a farm in Calistoga for 24 years and is joined by his wife, Jill, a former schoolteacher.

There are three barns on the ranch, which is only an hour drive from Yosemite National Park. One barn is used for foaling, one for sales prep, and the other houses Madera's stallions. The front of the property includes nearly 20 paddocks, and there are irrigated pastures between 10-20 acres in the back.

Alert Bay, foaled and raised at Madera, represents a top graduate of the program. The 8-year-old City Zip gelding won 11 black-type events and earned more than \$1.3 million. Six of his wins came in graded company, including the City of Hope Mile (G2T) and Mathis Brother Mile (G2T) at Santa Anita Park, and back-to-back versions of the San Francisco Mile (G3T) at Golden Gate Fields. Earlier in his career, Alert Bay's victories in the British Columbia Derby (G3) and BC Premier's Handicap (G3) earned him British Columbia Horse of the Year and 3-year-old male honors.

Awesome Daze, a five-time stakes winner and earner of \$652,435, was also

### Foals deserve attentive care at any boarding facility

In addition to its hands-on approach to horse care, Cambrey distinguishes itself with lower than average board rates for Central Kentucky.

"We are able to keep our rate significantly lower because we oversee all of the vet work and day-to-day operations ourselves," said Vickie Hewitt. "Your horse will be seen by the same vet throughout the breeding season."

Cambrey Farm's feeding program is tailored to suit each horse's needs, depending on their age and condition, using concentrates made by Winchester Feed, which supplies many prestigious Bluegrass farms. Also, horses are fed from feed tubs, with the feed not exposed to other elements by touching the ground.

One important aspect of Cambrey

Farm is the co-ownership opportunities on mares, foals, in-utero foals, and racing prospects.

"We do a lot of co-ownership with our mares," Hewitt said. "We're always in it with them."

Cambrey also offers sales consulting services, advising clients on the best value for their horses or how to buy the most horse for their budget. The Cambrey team can also assist with matching mares and stallions, obtaining stallion seasons, and selling horses privately.

At the end of the day, Hewitt said, "We enjoy what we do."

### MADERA THOROUGHBREDS

Cal Fischer's Madera Thoroughbreds offers breeding, boarding, layup, and sales



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foaled and raised at Madera. Chief among the gelding's victories is the Wells Fargo Bank California Cup Classic, which he took by two lengths under jockey Gary Stevens. Awesome Daze earned California's champion older horse title.

Madera has also cared for Solid Wager, winner of the 2019 Toboggan Stakes (G3) at Aqueduct Racetrack and earner of \$871,170. Other graduates include stakes winners Super Strut, Jack's Wild, Mateo, More Angels, Red Warrior, Soul Candy, Sheer Pleasure, and Got Even.

The stallion roster for 2020 features Elusive Warning, a son of Elusive Quality out of the multiple stakes-winning Valid Appeal mare Valid Warning. Elusive Warning won five of his 13 starts from ages 3 through 6, was a group stakes winner at Nad Al Sheba in Dubai, a black-type winner in the United States, and second in the Etisalat Godolphin Mile (G2). He is the only son of Elusive Quality standing in California and is the sire of Atavismo, a 2-year-old champion in Panama.

## MILLENNIUM FARMS

There is no better place in the country—maybe the world—to raise a horse than the Bluegrass. That's not only due to the hue of our famed mineral-rich forage. The best

stallions, veterinary hospitals, auction houses, and horsemen call Central Kentucky home, and Millennium Farms is in the heart of it all, putting those resources to good use and raising horses right from day one.

"If I were a horse, this is where I'd want to live," said J. Ted Neel, general manager of Millennium Farms. "Raising a healthy, sound, competitive athlete is at the core of our entire program. From what they eat to how they're cared for and handled, we take very seriously the decision that was made by each of our customers to place their horses in our care."

Nothing is left to chance. Farm management works with local extension agents to test their pastures regularly, ensuring horses receive the optimum vitamin and mineral content from their forage. This information is then used in collaboration with their feed company to blend custom feed, providing the optimum nutrition plan for each horse at every stage of its life, whether it be a gestating or nursing mare, weanling, yearling, breeding stallion, or a horse on lay-up or transitioning away from the racetrack and onto the next phase of its life.

Just as no two horses are the same, no two customers are either. The team at Millennium Farms takes pride in getting to

know its customers on a personal level, offering each of them the services and types of communication that suit them best.

"We tailor our services and approach to each horse to ensure they are afforded every possible opportunity to meet their potential," said Neel. "The same goes for our clients. Whether it's how often and in what format they prefer to receive updates on their horses to working with them to define, refine, and meet their goals, we work hard to provide the same level of individualized attention to our customers that we do for their horses."

## OAK LODGE USA

Dedication to the land and to the well-being of the horse is paramount when it comes time for owners to search for the perfect spot to board their mares.

The land in Bourbon County in Central Kentucky is known as some of the best ground on the planet to raise a Thoroughbred. Oak Lodge USA spreads across 120 acres of prime bluegrass in Bourbon County and is nestled among the best stallion operations found anywhere.

"We don't overuse the land," said Alan Fitzsimons, who operates Oak Lodge with his wife, Suzy. "There is plenty of space for every individual who is out on the farm



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ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Nutrition and amount of time left outdoors are decisive factors when choosing a facility

eating grass year around. The land is outstanding, and we try to minimize the time the horses stay inside. The more they are outside the better. Better to be out running around in the paddock.”

In all, the land at Oak Lodge has produced more than 130 stakes horses, in-

cluding top sire Medaglia d’Oro and grade 2 UAE Derby Sponsored By Saeed & Mohammed Al Naboodah Group winner and Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (G1) starter Plus Que Parfait.

While the Fitzsimonses have run Oak Lodge for a decade, they had years of dedi-

cated service to the industry under their belt before they opened the gates.

Alan Fitzsimons, a graduate of both the English and Irish National Stud’s Management Diploma Course, has had an extensive learning curve, having worked in Australia, New Zealand, as well as in the U.K. and the U.S.

In New Zealand he had the good fortune to work with Sir Patrick Hogan at Cambridge Stud as well as work as the stallion manager at Eliza Park in Australia before coming to Kentucky to work for Robert Clay at Three Chimneys Farm for two years. That service was followed by another two-year stint at Coolmore’s Ashford Stud.

Suzu Fitzsimons attended the University of Limerick Equine Degree Course and has since spent more than 10 years working for Coolmore in Ireland, Australia, and the U.S.

Continuity is key to any successful operation, and the crew at Oak Lodge has been together seven years and knows the farm inside and out.

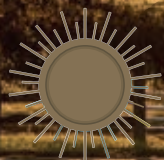
Come foaling time, Fitzsimons attends every birth, along with the assistant manager, and should an issue arise, Dr. Tina Cassar of Cassar Equine Clinic is just minutes away.

“She’s very good at what she does,” Fitzsimons said. “The treatment and care she provides are absolutely top-notch.” **BH**

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