

House in a Garden, Garden in a House

A picturesque valley of several houses contains one big family's home, barn and a beautiful garden. We dropped by when the country turned into a winter kingdom.

TEXT PAVLÍNA BLAHOTOVÁ FOTO ONDŘEJ KOŠÍK,
MILADA BLÁHOVÁ

ATTIC: The space, dominated by a tree, allows for rest and meditation. The candle-adorned metal wall is where all holidays and birthdays are celebrated.



WINDOW INTO THE GARDEN: Large windows incorporate the garden into the interior and make it seem like a large living painting that changes every day. In winter, covered in snow, it has a unique charm. The couch was custom-made to accommodate views of the inside and outside.





RADEK BLÁHA When he discovered the location he was single but furnished it with respect to the woman who'd one day become a part of his life.

In the early 90s, the complex of agricultural buildings in a small village in the Kladno region was essentially in ruins. The era when the village had over one hundred inhabitants, even a thriving hotel, was long gone. Only a few inhabited houses remained, as did the municipality's historic charm. In 1999, the house's original owner went through the usual rigmarole of complete reconstruction, performed in cooperation with preservationists—the farmstead includes one of the oldest timbered rooms in Czechia. Its surviving wall was made from a fir felled in 1495, i.e. during the reign of Vladislaus II of Hungary. Once the full reconstruction was complete, the owner left the homestead and decided to sell it. That's when Radek Bláha knocked on his door. "I wanted to move from Prague to the country. I'd been going over my options for quite a while, open to a great many things—anything from a small chateau to a village cottage... Nothing caught my eye enough to make me go for it. Until I stumbled upon a rather bland ad with images of this homestead. The moment I arrived and went through the door I knew this was it."



DRONE VIEW

The weather was beautiful and so Ondra, our photographer, took out a drone and made a few top view photos. Thanks to its careful reconstruction, the former farmstead, surrounded with a garden and pond, looks like an old image come alive.

FOTO ONDŘEJ KOŠÍK, MILADA BLÁHOVÁ

**PLAYHOUSE**

It has two floors and this year the little girls will be allowed to spend the night there for the very first time. The Bláha family purchased it disassembled. Big Backyard Victoria Mansion, available on piccolino.cz

"If you want a green island with fish swimming above you, make it yourselves. You're the only ones who can make your dreams come true."

Radek Bláha

I knew immediately that here I could incorporate everything I expected from a home—space for children, music, books, work, studying, or meeting other people. I spent my childhood in a house with a large garden. Which may have been one of the reasons why I decided it was time to go back to my roots. I wanted to devote my time to studying, and this house was great for that. Back then I was single; still, I was looking for a place where I and my future wife whom I hadn't met yet would feel well."

DREAMS COME TRUE

Radek purchased the homestead in 2012 and admits he was quite lucky. His future family's home had already gone through full reconstruction and high-quality restoration, with much attention paid to the preservation of historical details, allowing him to focus on furnishing the interior and making changes to the garden. The entire space was furnished practically all at once. In the original homestead, a large walk-in space was created including a kitchen, living room with a fireplace, and attic which houses the bed- and guestrooms. The barn framing the garden's northern end was converted into a large gym. The extension bordering the plot by the entrance gate is used as a clubroom, concert hall, study, large dining room, or party room. This is where we invite you to take a look now—the extension is also a small family gallery of sorts since its spacious table, made from a single piece of exotic wood, carries the delicate silver flowers made by Milada Bláhová—the wife who did end up making an appearance.

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

"I met Radek in 2014. Back then I lived in a similar historic homestead in Česká Sibiř, though it had never gone through a complete reconstruction and repairing it would have likely take my entire life. Compare this to Radek who's awfully fast and had finished his reconstruction project within a year,"

foto ONDŘEJ KOŠÍK

**STUDY IN THE WINTER GARDEN**

The green island with swimming fish is Radek's dream come true. "Everything in here is a mixture of experiences, values, ideas, and dreams," he says.

"The party room where we celebrate all holidays and birthdays imbues our family celebrations with a unique atmosphere."

Milada Bláhová

ATTIC VIEW

A place for quiet work or relaxation without losing contact with the ground floor, connected with a metal staircase.



CENTRE TABLE

Made from one piece of litchi, a majestic tree growing in Indonesia and producing fruits that are also available here in Czechia. Radek found it in Snel and Milada decorated it with silver bouquets.



says Milada. Their new family soon welcomed two children who have the run not only of the whole house and gym, but also a garden, designed to allow them to run around and hide at any time—for example in the playhouse their parents only dreamt of until they learned it could be purchased. The Bláha family still faces a few interesting challenges, though—the homestead is located opposite an unused former stable with a residential floor which could be turned into a gallery, meeting space, or an art studio where Milada and the girls would be free to create. When you ask the couple what their favourite part of the house is, they answer jointly, "We love the place in its entirety but believe the best is yet to come." 🐾

FOTO ONDŘEJ ROŠÍK



1/ FOR THE BIRDS Even the feeder is highly stylish. 2/ AROUND THE HOUSE The traditional façade includes large windows in the extension, opening to the garden.

