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 Case Study

Modern Family

Aging Boomers, adult siblings, boomerang kids, elderly parents: The typical American household is being reinvented as you read this. Three inspired projects respond to the surge in multigenerational living, with privacy and togetherness for all.

By [Amy Albert](#)



Irvine, Calif., two houses face each other with a courtyard in between. It's one residence with room enough for three generations.">

Compound Interest At Lambert Ranch in Irvine, Calif., two houses face each other with a courtyard in between. It's one residence with room enough for three generations.

Credit: Christopher Mayer

together. "The question became, how could we create housing to meet those demands? As a home builder," says Webb, "I realized that I had never offered our buyers solutions to these kinds of issues."

Enter Lambert Ranch, a master planned community of 169 homes with three distinct product lines, aimed smack at multigenerational households. Webb is quick to point out that multigen living isn't exactly a new idea; many immigrant families are used to living together. But the concept, he observes, is "just as powerful" with families that have been on these shores a while.

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Lambert Ranch's most spacious option is two houses that face each other, comprising a family compound with a central courtyard between them. Here the initial buyers were a couple with two adult sons: parents in one home, sons in the other. "They're a family who lives together not because they can't afford it, but because that's what they're used to," says Webb. "The house we showed them was just what they were looking for."

Lambert Ranch

Builder The New Home Co., Aliso Viejo, Calif.

Architect Robert Hidey Architects, [Irvine](#), Calif.

Developer LR8 Owner LLC, Aliso Viejo

LandPlanner Adams Streater Civil Engineers Irvine

Interiordesigner Meridian Interiors, Irvine

Photographers Christopher Mayer, Jill Paider

Lambert Ranch

Irvine, Calif.

Larry Webb, CEO of The New Home Co., has been building houses for almost 30 years. But recently he and his team noticed some distinct trends amongst their clientele. They had kids in their 20s who were coming home. They had elderly parents in various stages of health. They had siblings and extended family whom they wanted nearby so they could all raise their kids

Situated on a ranch started by the Lambert family back in 1915 (the heirs, sisters now both in their 90s, opted to stay on the property after the sale), Lambert Ranch answers multigenerational needs in several ways. All living spaces are connected to the main house, but most have separate entrances, ensuring both togetherness and autonomy. All first-floor bedrooms have full bathrooms, enabling that space to become a separate apartment. Dual master bedrooms are set on separate floors.

One plan features a freestanding 800- square-foot casita in back; the first buyers were a couple with extended family who visit often. They're also on opposite schedules—one works a day job and the other is an ER doctor who gets home at 3 a.m. and needs to decompress. Another was a couple from Venezuela who will be living in the house with their five kids. The couple's older parents—still vital and healthy—will take the casita.