

Lakeshore Living

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR LAKE GENEVA HOME

Dream Design

*Style, Function and Family
in a Powers Lake Home*

Cheers!

Excellent Food
+ Drink Pairings

8 Great
Kitchen Trends

WHAT TO GIVE THE
**HOST WITH
THE MOST**

LET YOUR STYLE SHINE

Coming Home Should Be The Brightest Spot In Your Day



Photo by Shanna Wolf

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Taking Home Some Tips

We moved into our home a year ago. What was exciting was that it offered a fresh slate to reimagine the interior the way we wanted it to look. So we undertook the painstaking work of painting the oak trim white throughout the entire home, repainting all of the walls, adding kitchen hardware, replacing flooring and carpet, swapping out light fixtures, landscaping ... and a whole lot more. It's been a lot of work, but we're so proud to call this place home now.

Being at the helm of Lakeshore Living has offered me so much inspiration for how a home can push the design boundaries. I've gleaned many ideas from the gorgeously-appointed houses I've been lucky enough to walk through. Our marble countertop in our guest bathroom, our (hopefully, in the future) patterned tile kitchen island and throw rugs galore are all design tips I've pulled from the homes I've seen that have successfully employed these tricks to make their spaces look beautiful and pulled together. It's never too late to make your own design tweaks on a small or large budget, too!

I'm in love with this edition. We have so many useful takeaways about home design and style that I can't wait for you to read it cover to cover. Take Katie Vaughn's piece on six easy steps to properly selecting, hanging and displaying your wall art. It seems like it's a simple task—until you realize there's a lot more that goes into it than you think. Read about it on page 20. And Deanna Kane explores two interesting topics for us in The Workbook and our Technology departments: what's trending in kitchens right now, and great smartphone apps to help you design your home. Check them out on pages 22 and 24, respectively.

And of course, we bring you another full slate of stunning homes, including a freshly remodeled residence and a cool condo makeover, both on Geneva Lake. Our cover story of a dreamily-designed abode on Powers Lake is pretty awe-inspiring, too!

Thank you for reading! If there's ever a topic you're interested in seeing in our pages, don't hesitate to drop me a note. And if you or someone you know has a home that would be great to feature within our pages, please email me at Shayna@ntmediagroup.com.

Enjoy the lake!

Shayna Mace, Editorial Director



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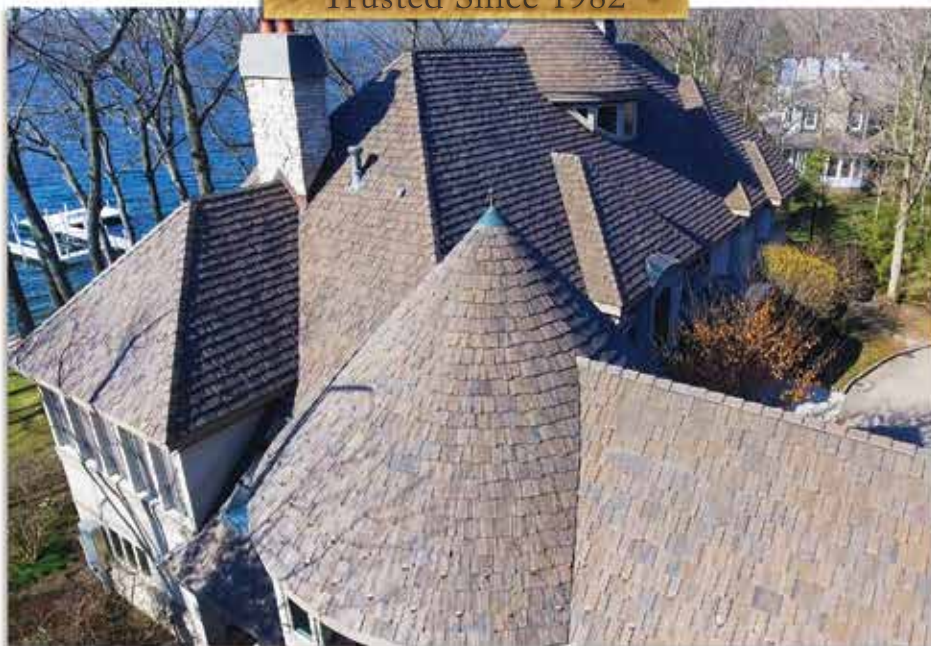
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Lakeshore Living

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR LAKE GENEVA HOME

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For the Host With the Most

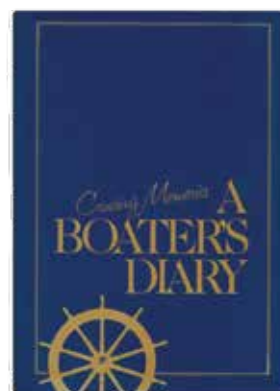
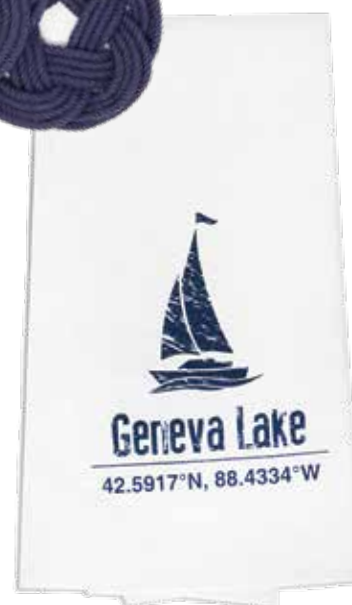
Got a gathering to attend?
Be the favorite guest and gift your party
host one of these special, useful pieces.

Styling and photography by Shanna Wolf

Beautiful Board

Country Home Acacia wood
artisan cheese paddle, \$34 and
local cheeses, prices vary, both
from **Green Grocer**.

Olive oil is a must-have in any kitchen. This basil version is a step up from ordinary!



This simple and striking carafe is the ultimate in minimalist style.



Thank-You Thrillers Go from "Well, that's nice" to "Wow!" with these anything-but-standard trinkets. (Clockwise from top left): Gourmet basil olive oil, \$14, **The Olive Oil Shops**; Wake the Lake dark roast, \$12, **Lake Geneva Coffee Roastery**; Turks Head coasters, \$20/set of four, and Geneva Lake tea towel, \$13, both from **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**; rustic farmhouse decanter with wood stopper, \$31, **Green Grocer**; A Boater's Diary, \$34, Clay in Motion soap dish, \$15, Taylor Street Seaside soap bar, \$8 and cobalt whale bottle opener, \$34, all from **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**; Jumbo Xerographica air plant, \$42, **Boxed and Burlap**; Country Home Acacia wood tablet cooking stand, \$34, **Green Grocer**.



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Lands Downunder Herringbone Throw in Lilac, \$128, landsdownunder.com



Jana Bek Design Lilac Brushstroke Lamp, \$525, janabek.com



Biscuit Home Pique Sham in Chartreuse, \$135, biscuit-home.com

Color Crush: Lilac and Green



The color purple is on trend and popping up in interiors everywhere. It's one of those colors that can be hard to commit to but if it's used well, it can create a sophisticated space. Designers Rosemary Wormley and Meredith Present of Ash Street Interiors designed this darling girl's room, above. "Lilac was an obvious choice when our client told us it was her favorite color! Pairing it with a punchy green created a beautifully balanced combination," says Present. This color combination is fresh and fun, yet still elegant. I can't wait to use it in my own interior projects. —Alexandra Wood, Owner of Alexandra Wood Design

PATTERN PLAY

Don't be afraid to mix and match textiles in this fun color combo. (All prices below are upon request.)



HUE CUES

It can be tough to find the right shade of purple, but when you do, it's magic. Here are two winners.



Spring Lilac, Benjamin Moore (1388) This shade of lavender is very sophisticated and remains timeless. There are no hints of blue or gray and it pairs well with many accent colors.



Dreamy Cloud, Benjamin Moore (2117-70) This soft and subtle color is closer to being an off-white, but with a perfect hint of purple. An ideal choice if you don't want to commit to a full-on purple wall.

Left to right:

- China Seas Double Cross in Jungle Green, quadrillefabrics.com
- Romo Zahira in Mauve, romo.com
- F. Schumacher Acanthus Stripe in Leaf, fschumacher.com
- F. Schumacher Haruki Sisal in Lavender, fschumacher.com
- F. Schumacher Poms in Lilac, fschumacher.com

Fresh for Fall

Your must-have
list of the
coolest,
chicest finds
for the season.

Styling and text by
Shayna Mace

Photography by
Shanna Wolf

Mad for Plaid

This classic pattern is making big waves everywhere—and it deserves a rightful spot in your closet this season.

PPLA Clothing Livia woven coat, \$/49, KLD surplice jumpsuit, \$/10, earrings, \$22, tote, \$59, all from **Eddie**; Free People At Ease loafer slides, \$98, **Shoshoo**.



Mighty Menswear

Menswear makes a splash—in a figure-flattering wrap dress. hem & thread dress, \$48, Twelfth & Brown.

TEXTURE TEASE

Cool, cozy textiles are pure fun. Miss Me textured sweatshirt, \$79, Jayne.



LOVELY LEOPARD

Make a splash in these wild slides. Matisse Berlin leopard slides, \$115, Shoshoo.



EDGY DENIM

It's all about cool hems—like this diagonally-frayed pair. Articles of Society Sammy jeans, \$64, E Street Denim.



Slick & Sporty

Pair this with a T-shirt and midi skirt to knock your look out of the park. Velvet Heart Eve Jacket, \$110, Bloomingbyrds.



GREAT BOOTIE

Western style is big—here's an elevated take on the trend. Kaanas Arabia open ankle bootie, \$149, Shoshoo.



SOFT STYLE

A bit of boho plus plush velvet in one top? Count us in. THML velvet embroidered tee, \$56, Jayne.



SWEET SKIRT

A little sporty, a little '90s, this skirt is the best of both worlds. Pink Martini knit skirt, \$64, Bloomingbyrds.



LUSCIOUS LACE

Romantic details take over in this must-have blouse. Current Air top, \$74, Bloomingbyrds.



EXTRA EMBELLISHMENT

Pearls are popping up everywhere—like on these straight-leg stunners. A'second ankle pearl jean, \$79, Bloomingbyrds.





Delavan Lake, WI | \$1,235,000

Here is a South Shore Delavan Lakefront with 110' of lake frontage just over 2 acres in size located in an area of very attractive and impressive neighboring homes that would make for an ideal potential building site for the next owner. The modest main home although usable in its present condition, will likely be either substantially remodeled or entirely taken down to make way for a new home. The adjoining comfortable 3 bedroom 1 ½ bath Guest House that is also included is located on a separate tax key parcel and would be perfect for temporary use while the main home is being remodeled or rebuilt and if ultimately removed, would enhance the appeal and desirability of the overall potential building site. A lakeside boathouse for toy storage and expansive deck on top for entertaining. The property and spacious grounds would be a perfect setting and location for construction of a beautiful new home on a fabulous estate type setting.

MLS#1606048

Bob Webster

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Meet the Maker



It Makes Scents

The heavenly smell of soothing lavender and uplifting lemongrass waft from Tara Parish's quaint Madison-area farmers' market booth on a sunny Tuesday afternoon. Shoppers unfamiliar with her products probably stop first for the smells—but quickly realize that Parish's **Shade Tree Naturals** line is worth the pause. Her handcrafted soaps, hand and lip balms are 100 percent all natural, and Parish will gladly fill you in on every ingredient in her wares. It's her life.

When Parish had her first son eight years ago, she started buying baby body-care products but was disheartened to find that many weren't as all-natural as they seemed. "So that spurred my research and not wanting to use those products on him. And that's when I started my business," says Parish.

She started reading about essential oils, soap-making and where companies source products from. "If I was going to make natural products, I wanted to know every single ingredient that was in something I was using and what I was putting on mine and my family's bodies. I had also had multiple pregnancy losses and there were no answers from anybody on what was happening, and this was a big time for me to switch how I did everything."

Parish taught herself how to make lip and hand balms online. She took a soap-making class in northern Wisconsin. She then tweaked all of her recipes to craft her own exclusive formulas. Parish sources all of her own ingredients and asks her wholesalers for Material Data Safety Sheets or proof of sustainability for their products. "And anything I can get locally, I do. If I put coffee in my soap, I use a fair-trade local roaster, or beeswax from a local farm," she explains.

This fall she introduced seasonal scents like orange clove, pumpkin chai, peppermint cocoa and honey vanilla in addition to her year-round scents of lavender lemongrass, eucalyptus spearmint and more.



"I want to focus mostly on women and children and them making healthy choices for their families," says Parish. "I want to be a business people can trust and as close to nature as possible."

Parish will be at Madison-area events coming up including Dane Handmade (Nov. 14) and the Madison Makers Fall Market & Pub Crawl (Nov. 23). Otherwise peruse her website where she offers \$7 flat-rate shipping for her goodies. shadetreenaturals.com

Shoppist



Artfully Yours

Although Frenchman Henri Matisse is arguably one of the most famous artists of all time, there's another Matisse you should get to know—**Galerie Matisse** and **Matisse Too**. Shoppers quickly realize that Galerie Matisse isn't a staid run-of-the-mill art space with its riot of colored walls and breathtaking array of international artworks. Matisse Too's adjacent spot is whimsical, with art pieces in affordable price points. Owners Bob and Sandy Skibitzki have worked hard to cultivate this image.

"We put a lot of work in every day to make it look cool [here], and people just love coming in," says Bob.

Bob only buys paintings, sculptures and mixed-media pieces that he likes. "Fortunately, I have a broad taste meter. So, I'm looking for things that attract me. I've seen thousands of paintings, and when I see something that attracts me about it, hopefully it'll attract someone else."

Amazingly, the gallery has been open since 1976—yet another testament to the couple's staying power in the community.

"We have a lot of repeat business, so that's kept us going all of these years ... it's amazing in a little town like this the clients we get in from all over," says Bob.

The Skibitzkis' extensive travel (about every six weeks, says Bob) coupled with their connections in the international art community mean they're able to continually refresh their spaces—and scout for new artists to supplement their global cadre of favorites they already showcase.

"We have a lot of choices and it's a big look for not that much money, and that's what people appreciate and like," says Bob. "We do all of the legwork, and people can just come and pick out what they love."

Galerie Matisse and Matisse Too, 830 W. Main St., 262-248-9264, galeriematisse.com

Ten Minutes With DIANNE FASANO

The Wilmette, Illinois, native and owner of Bella Tile & Stone shares her world with us.

By Shayna Mace

You opened Bella Tile & Stone in 2006, and now there are four locations in Lake Geneva and Delafield in Wisconsin; Wilmette, Illinois; and Park City, Utah. How did you get into the tile business?

My husband and I moved here from the Chicago area and we were building a house. My best friend was the builder, and she told me I had to choose tile for the home. I was looking for something unique and different, and I couldn't get to Chicago or the Merchandise Mart at that time.

We finished the house, and my friend said, "Why don't you open a tile store?" My dad was born and raised on a small island in Italy and when we would visit family there, I would see nothing but tile! So when [my friend] brought that up, it came full circle for me because tile was always something I'd appreciated—even though I knew nothing about it.

How did you differentiate your business from other tile stores?

When we opened we wanted really special things, and lines we cared about and loved. So we were very selective in fine-tuning that. [In pricing] we're equally competitive with any local store—and we do all of the design services for free. The group of women I work with here are incredible at what they do, and they are so important to our business, too! And taking care of our clients is number one. I live my life by that—would I want someone to make an extra



phone call, send that note, come to my house? All of the things I want, I try to be that person.

What do you like to recommend to clients who have a smaller budget to work with, since that's where you have to be creative with cost?

We strive every day [to] create really interesting spaces and not make it crazy [expensive]. Beautiful, hand-cut tile is costly, but you can create a design with just three-by-six

tile. There are so many ways to make things look different. Personally, those are my favorite [projects] ... I strive to make [designs] that you wouldn't have thought of.

What's your favorite décor style?

I like a transitional aesthetic. I appreciate old-world and traditional style—but I'm also liking the simplicity of the modern, contemporary looks we're seeing right now. 🍷



I play tennis locally. We also travel around to play. It's my outlet other than my work and my kids.



I feel a real warmth here. When we moved to Lake Geneva, I was really attached to my hometown. Now you couldn't pay me to leave! We're really fortunate to be here.



The biggest trend by far this year is cement tile—at the Coverings show it was everywhere. Also, water jet mosaics and gold accents are popular.



I really like the Lake Geneva School of Cooking. Chef John Bogan's food is incredible and he makes every dining experience unique and fun!



[For shopping] I love Strawberry Fields, Cornerstone Shop & Gallery, Kilwins, The Design Coach, Brick & Mortar and Curate. For my daughters, I love E Street Denim.

Perfect Pairings

Matching up food and your drink of choice, whether it's wine, beer or spirits, can be a fun and educational way to savor what you're serving to guests. Here's the lowdown on how to do it best.

By Kristine Hansen



Food and drink pairings can feel intimidating. Will you accidentally ruin the taste of the food you've labored over in the kitchen? What if the special wine you picked out doesn't sing ... and tastes terrible instead?

"You can be very playful," advises Shannon Berry, cheesemonger at Fromagination in Madison, who spent her childhood on a lake near Rhinelander in Northern Wisconsin. After cooking at restaurants in New York City and Portland, Oregon, she returned to Wisconsin, in part because she missed lakeside living.

Your goal should be to bring out flavors you like in each of the beverages and food items, "two like parts of two different things," says Berry. "You don't want [the food and drink] to fight each other." For example, scotch and aged goat cheese both feature bright, grassy notes.

Also consider textures. Does the beverage have a dry finish or is it sweet? Is the mouth-feel heavy or light? Keep like with like and you can't go wrong. "With a wine that is very buttery and silky, you want to match it with a cheese that has that same texture," advises Amy Wulz, wine educator at Drumlin Ridge Winery

in Waunakee who teaches wine classes at the winery as well as at Madison College. Another example: delicate cheeses with delicate wines, like a goat cheese with Chenin Blanc. Not sure if the wine is delicate or not? Look at the alcohol content. Above 12 percent typically means this is an intense wine.

Also, don't be shy about opting for fall-friendly selections. "People are transitioning from all

STAY LOCAL

When in doubt, drink and eat items from the same geographic region. This is a tip Wulz gives in her wine-education classes. "If the people in Spain have been eating Manchego and drinking it with a Garnacha, that's a good match," she says. Along those lines, she says, try Drumlin Ridge Wauna Red Wine Blend (70 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 20 percent Syrah and 10 percent Zinfandel, featuring Lodi AVA and San Luis Obispo-grown grapes and a "very lush and velvety profile") with a five-year-aged Wisconsin cheddar.

these cool, crisp whites (wines) from summer," says Wulz. Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc can easily be replaced with Beaujolais and Pinot Noir.

WINNING WINES

Autumn is the perfect time to uncork fruit-forward reds. Berry recommends the fruitiness of a California Zinfandel wine with English Stilton cheese to complement its spicy finish. This is also when spice-rubbed cheeses are fitting, such as Roth's Gran Queso. "The rind is rubbed with paprika and cinnamon," says Berry, who would pair this with a spicy Zinfandel.

Bleu Mont Dairy in Dodgeville makes an award-winning Bandaged Cheddar Berry never hesitates to recommend to customers. "It would go great with a Cabernet Sauvignon or Barbaresco (Piedmont, Italy) or even a Glogg (hot spiced wine punch). It can hold up to any of those," she says.

For Thanksgiving and other fall-season meals, Phil Bilodeau—owner and co-founder of Thief Wine in Milwaukee and Shorewood—can't get enough of a dry style of Rosé. Apparently neither can his customers: "I'm selling more in September, October and November than I used to," he says.

Bilodeau also discourages only drinking reds once the outdoor temperature cools. The key is to look for wines without an oaky presence on the palate. "Albariño from Spain is really an underrated food wine," he says, as is unoaked Chablis (France). But if you want to drink red during the fall, consider Cabernet Franc (mineral with floral and raspberry notes), fruity Beaujolais from France and Nero d'Avola from Sicily, Italy. And don't forget about Pinot Noir. "You can get great [Pinot Noir] from Burgundy, France; New Zealand; and California," he says, noting they are "crowd pleasers and low in tannins."

BEST FOR BEER

Chef Ryne Harwick of Hunt Club Steakhouse in Lake Geneva thinks fall is the easiest season for pairings. "[In the kitchen] I really like to work more with winter spices, like juniper and cinnamon," he says. "A lot of the heavier beers are more in season that time of year. We're really moving away from the bright, citrus-y flavored beers."

One of Harwick's favorite pairings is roasted butternut squash with a dark beer. "It's going to have the same body in the mouth feel," he says. Earthy tones in carrots and beets, too,

are ideal while sipping heavy beers, like lagers or porters.

A pairing with local roots that Berry highly recommends is any Oktoberfest craft beer from Wisconsin with Roth's Monroe cheese, a double cream, washed-rind variety.

CONSIDERING SPIRITS AND DESSERT WINES

You might think ordering an Old Fashioned, which was invented in Wisconsin—and is a staple on every bar and restaurant menu, from college-area dive bars to swank supper clubs, is trite—but maybe not?

An Old Fashioned's cinnamon and orange flavors are often reflected in autumn cuisine, says Harwick.

What can be really fun when mapping out a meal is pairing dessert (your cheese course, perhaps?) with a drink, giving it the same consideration as you did the appetizer or main entrée. "If you're searing a really pungent, creamy cheese or a really heavy blue, you should go with a dessert wine or late-harvest wine," says Wulz. Dry, nutty wines with caramel notes like Sherry and Madeira also go well with most desserts. 🍷

WISCO AUTUMNAL BEERS TO TRY

Ale Asylum Oktillion, Madison

Capital Brewery Oktoberfest, Madison

Central Waters Brewing Co.
Oktoberfest Lager, Amherst

Door County Brewing Co. L'automne,
Baileys Harbor

Geneva Lake Brewing Co.
Oktoberfest Ale, Lake Geneva

Lakefront Brewery Pumpkin Imperial Ale,
Milwaukee

New Glarus Brewing Staghorn
Oktoberfest, New Glarus

Stevens Point Brewery Point
Oktoberfest, Stevens Point

Tyranena Painted Ladies Pumpkin
Spice Ale, Lake Mills

Kristine Hansen is a freelance writer who calls Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood home.




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Hang Time

A beautiful home isn't complete without some show-stopping art. But finding a masterpiece and displaying it properly can be intimidating. Not to worry.

Here's how to go from "Oh, I love this piece" to "Ahh, it looks perfect right there" in six simple steps.

By Katie Vaughn

START WITH THE ART

Let's be clear: There's no such thing as "right" or "good" art—just art that speaks to you. If you're choosing new art, start by getting a feel for what you like. When a work catches your eye, try to determine why. Is it the colors, the subject matter or the mood? A sense of calmness or an exciting dynamism? And is it a portrait, landscape, still life or abstract work? These can all be clues to identifying your aesthetic.

When it's time to shop, keep both your stylistic preferences and practical needs in mind, suggests Tory Folliard, director of Tory Folliard Gallery in Milwaukee.

"Once I have a better idea of their taste, the size and a general idea of the amount they would like to spend, I am able to provide [clients] with options," he says. "Along the way, there is an education process—providing information about

the artists they are considering and the works themselves."

EXPAND YOUR OPTIONS

Paintings, drawings, prints, photographs and mixed-media works on paper and canvas are all fantastic art options that look wonderful on a wall. But what else might you frame and hang? Pretty pieces of wallpaper or fabric, old maps or mementos and items of clothing with sentimental value could have new life as art.

"All artwork is worthy of conservation framing—a child's artwork, a hard-earned diploma, family photographs, even a signed concert poster," says Gary Milward of Gary's Art & Frame in Middleton.

And perhaps art you already own just needs to be reframed or placed somewhere new to shine.

"Many of my clients have collections of stunning art pieces," says Lisa Mohindroo of Milwaukee-based Mohindroo Interiors, "but their beauty needs to be brought to its fullest by displaying them in ideal locations of the home."

CONSIDER YOUR DÉCOR

Once you've found art you love, how do you make sure it works with the décor in your home?

"Really, the only rule of thumb that I follow is to make sure your art doesn't match your interior," says Barry Avery, owner of Fontaine Home in Madison. "I tell clients that we don't want to be matchy-matchy—we can do better than that."

So if a home is decorated in saturated jewel tones, Avery wouldn't place a similarly hued painting in the space; he'd opt for something lighter for contrast. It's the same with design styles: The magic comes in mixing things up.

"If someone has an extremely modern home, I might have them try a gilded frame with a traditional oil painting," Avery says. "If they've

got a more traditional environment going on, bring that more contemporary piece in."

Ultimately, choosing art you love—not what matches your sofa—makes good financial sense. "Fabrics, styles and color trends come and go," says Folliard, "but hopefully, if they choose wisely, the art will be with them for the long haul."

THINK INSIDE THE BOX

These days, the options for showcasing art are nearly limitless.

"Honestly, it's a personal preference," says Jamie Jorndt, an artist and volunteer at Gallery 223 in Lake Geneva. "Some like a raw canvas, some like works framed. And I've noticed more framing of canvases lately."

The only constant considerations when framing, says Milward, are related to quality and protection. Choose conservation-quality UV-filtering glass, high-quality mats and proper mounting techniques, he says, and never put photographs in direct contact with glass or glue down original art.

As for design, simple, clean looks are on trend, Milward says, pointing to thin floater frames that surround a canvas and large white or neutral mats paired with simple black moulding. For those looking for a jolt of color, Milward suggests Prisma frames. Made from clear Lucite, they can be customized in various colors, patterns, textures and shapes to suit the art they will hold.

SEE THE LIGHT

Think about lighting to ensure your masterpiece is both visible and protected. Talk to your framer or art dealer if a piece will be hung in direct sunlight to make sure it won't suffer from fading or other damage.

But don't leave your art in the dark! "More and more clients are understanding the need for picture lighting," says Avery. Sure, recessed ceiling lights can do the job, but



many homeowners are opting for lights placed above that specially bathe art in soft light. And it's not just traditional brass fixtures anymore—choose from classic lamps to sleek bars in a wide range of finishes.

LEVERAGE YOUR LOCATION

Take stock of your space long before picking up a hammer or drill. "Every room is different—some rooms have high ceilings, others may feature many windows with just a narrow wall space to work with," says Mohindroo. Take a step back and keep scale in mind.

For instance, you may know you want to hang a painting in your dining room, but a work that's on the smaller side would look teeny on an expansive wall. A large-scale canvas, though? Hello, bold statement!

You could also opt for a triptych or a tight grouping of works that reads like a unit, suggests Avery. A single frame style would enhance the cohesiveness. Or maybe a gallery-wall treatment of several different-sized pieces would best fill the space. Go with whatever feels right, suggests Jorndt. "You're basically looking for balance."

A gallery wall looks especially great in long hallways and offices where you might want to feature a variety of artwork. You can go with matching frames and an orderly arrangement for a calmer, tidier feel, or vary materials, colors and sizes for more personality.

And whether your art's hanging with a group or flying solo, think beyond the basics of placement. Kitchens, bathrooms and bookshelves can all be stellar—and eye-catching—spots to have an artistic moment.

"Any space in your home that could use a little livening up should be fair game," says Mohindroo. 🐾

Katie Vaughn is a Madison-based art, travel and features writer.



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Trending in a Kitchen Near You

Classic design elements are complementing the hottest looks in kitchens right now.

By Deanna Kane

Whether you are undergoing a gut rehab or looking to update a few fixtures, keeping your kitchen current means taking a new spin on the classics. As we look into 2019, focus on timeless trends, and creating a home around livability, warmth, comfort and longevity.

"Trends can be timeless. It's a matter of blending and being consistent with adjacent areas," says Ericka Sprangers, interior designer at the Kohler Design Center.



SUBTLE, STAINED CABINETS

White cabinetry has become the gold standard of a brand-new kitchen. "White is safe, timeless and classic for any space," says Sprangers.

While white cabinets are too classic to ever go out of style, stained cabinets are the new front-runner to warm up the space and make it more livable.

"Stained cabinets are easy to maintain," says Eileen McGee Wetzel, interior designer with Story Hill Renovations. "You don't notice the wood expanding and contracting, like in painted cabinets. Stained cabinets are also easier to conceal the typical wear-and-tear."

The Classic: White cabinets
The New Take: Stained cabinets



FUNCTIONAL FAUCETS

Similar to kitchen sinks, up-and-coming faucets will have a focus on functionality.

"Consumers want style, but also functional faucets with features," says Sprangers.

"I think we're going to see more semi-professional style faucets instead of the traditional pull-down faucets," says McGee Wetzel. "The semi-professional faucets allow the nozzle to move around without the restraint of the gooseneck."

The Classic: Pull-down faucets
The New Take: Semi-professional faucets

SOLID FOOTING

When choosing a flooring material that will set the stage for your home's overall aesthetic, stick to the classics. "Wood flooring is a lifetime floor," says Jerry Schmidt, sales director with Dream House Dream Kitchens.

"Wood, wood, wood," says McGee Wetzel. "The trend will be wider planks; this creates a higher-end look than the traditional three-inch plank."

The Classic: Wood floors
The New Take: Wide plank floors

GRAY WILL STAY

If you thought gray was on its way out, it continues to reign as the leading paint color. This go-to shade has staying power.

"Gray is not going anywhere but we will see a wider palette, ranging from warmer grays to cooler blue-grays," says McGee Wetzel.

The Classic: Gray
The New Take: Expanded gray palette



PLAYING WITH PATTERN

While the bones of the kitchen will remain timeless, backsplashes are the perfect platform to incorporate pattern, color and different materials.

"Having fun with a pattern is a great way to express your personality. You can easily replace a backsplash in five years when the trend has gone away, but you can't do that with counters and cabinets," says McGee Wetzel.

If you're ready to move beyond subway tile, this is your opportunity. Ceramic tiles will bring pattern into the kitchen and create a bold statement.

"I'm in love with all of the bold ceramic and cement tile patterns I'm seeing," says McGee Wetzel. "They are a great way to add [interest] to a backsplash, whether it's behind the range or all around the kitchen."

Another way to add dimension to your kitchen backsplash is integrating metal into the design.

"Incorporating brushed brass within the tile is a way to make your backsplash stand out," says Schmidt.

The Classic: Subway tile
The New Take: Handmade, ceramic subway tile



QUARTZ IS QUEEN

Quartz remains the countertop leader in function and style, but expect to see it expand beyond surface level.

"Quartz has so much variety in color and pattern—there's an option available for everyone," says McGee Wetzel. "I think we're also going to see it used more as a backsplash and as waterfall edges to create a clean look."

Also expect to see other materials incorporated into countertops, such as integrating walnut with quartz as the seating edge of a kitchen island, according to Schmidt.

The Classic: Quartz

The New Take: Quartz expanded beyond the countertops

FINISHING TOUCHES

When it comes to selecting finishes, this is the area to show your flair for the dramatic.

"Matte black will be a finish of choice," says Sprangers.

"Matte black can be easily paired with any color, stain or finish; it's a great complement to white counters and cabinets," says McGee Wetzel.

If you're looking to keep your finishes more traditional, matte gray with a no-fingerprint finish lends a timeless, beautiful glow to the room.

"Matte gray creates a sophisticated look to elevate your kitchen to a higher level," says McGee Wetzel.

The Classic: Polished nickel
The New Take: Matte black



ARTFUL APRON FRONTS

Apron sinks remain a leading kitchen sink choice; however, look forward to seeing sleeker variations of this classic. This sink style is moving beyond the farmhouse look, and into more contemporary designs.

"Apron sinks are here to stay, but we're going to see slimmer versions," says McGee Wetzel. Kohler's Strive Vault sink is an apron-front design, in sleek stainless steel. It makes a visual statement, while providing the easy-clean functionality every kitchen needs.

The Classic: Apron sink

The New Take: Streamlined apron sink

Deanna Kane is an interiors, home decor and real estate writer, who also enjoys taking on her own home renovation and design projects.

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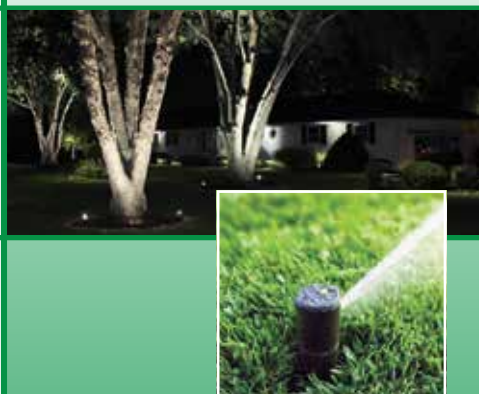
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Virtual Design Made Easier

Using your smartphone to help create a perfect, Pinterest-worthy room is only a few taps away.

By Deanna Kane

From space planning to visualizing one-of-a-kind pieces, there are a plethora of apps to help design your home. Creating a dream home can be overwhelming, so use your smartphone to help simplify the experience. These home design apps take the burden out of preparation and selection, so you can enjoy the creative process. (All apps are free unless noted.)

Prep Work

Houzz (iOS, Android)

The Houzz app separates the pros from the amateurs. Houzz is a canvas to begin gathering professional design ideas to ignite your own creative process. View similar spaces to yours, to help visualize your home's potential.

"The best part about Houzz is you don't have to filter out DIY projects; everything is posted by professionals," says Eileen McGee Wetzel, interior designer with Story Hill Renovations.

iHandy Level (iOS, Android)

If your toolbox is scarce, don't skip the most important step of hanging pictures—ensuring they hang level. This straightforward app will turn your phone into a level, resulting in a straight wall of frames.



Photo Measures (iOS, \$6.99; Android, \$4)

There's no need for a tape measure when you download this digital measuring app. Take a photo of any room or item, and the app will show you the exact measurements.

"Understanding how furniture will fit in a space is crucial. Using a measuring app means you don't have to pass up a one-of-a-kind piece at a flea market or antique store, because you are afraid it would be too large or small," says Cynthia Wilson of Cynthia B. Wilson Interior Design.

Benjamin Moore Color Capture (iOS, Android)

Benjamin Moore's app lets you take a picture of any color that inspires you—the lake on a sunny day, a dusty rose hydrangea, fabric from your grandmother's vintage dress—and you will instantly receive its color match from Benjamin Moore's 3,300 paint colors.

"Color Capture encourages you to take a chance with a color you might have previously ruled out," says Wilson.



Design



Art.com (iOS only)

While creating a gallery wall looks straightforward, there can be a painstaking amount of measuring and arranging before you commit to hammering in nails. This app lets you create your "dream gallery wall," and perfect the layout to avoid patching up the aftermath of measurement miscalculations.

"Gallery walls are still strong, but getting them started is sometimes a challenge. This app lets you lay out the gallery wall virtually before you hammer in the nails. You can also purchase prints directly in the app," says McGee Wetzel.

Chairish (iOS only)

If you're looking for unique, one-of-a-kind pieces, explore vintage treasures in the Chairish app. Once you've found the piece you can't live without, use its "View in Your Space" feature to see it in your own home. (Pro tip: Double-check the seller's ZIP code to avoid astronomical shipping fees.)



Homestyler Interior Design (iOS, Android)

Eliminate any lingering scale or style doubts with this app's three-dimensional functionality. Before making any expensive electrical mistakes, view how the statement chandelier you've been eyeing will look in your foyer, or avoid costly return shipping costs by determining if a set of island stools will work in your kitchen.

"This app is an easy-to-use tool to help visualize your ideas. You can take a photo of your space and try out wall colors, décor items, furniture and more," says McGee Wetzel.

Hutch (iOS, Android)

Hutch was developed with the idea to "allow anyone to discover their inner interior designer." Select the room you would like to design, your preferred style and budget, and Hutch will create a photo-like rendering of a sample room with shoppable decor items. You have the ability to edit the room to best match your taste, including changing the paint color, furniture and art selections. If you are happy with the design, add the pieces to your shopping cart and purchase them directly through the app.

TRANSLATE TO REAL LIFE

With the plethora of apps available at your fingertips, there is still no replacement for visualizing the item in your home. Scale is the most important element for creating a cohesive space.

"It's imperative to double-check measurements when purchasing items online. Use blue tape or stack boxes to thoroughly understand how large or small an item is for the room," says Wilson.

With the number of resources available to purchase furniture online only, the comfort factor can be a gamble. Wilson offers some tips to make sure the pieces that look perfect online provide the level of comfort and durability you need in a long-term piece of furniture.

"A trick is to look at the item's weight. If something is very light, I would be worried," says Wilson. "A dining room chair could be wonderfully upholstered and look great in photos, but you could find draping a coat on the chair causes it to fall backwards. Make sure you're purchasing solid pieces."

Wilson also advises that every piece you purchase online should come with a warranty. 🐾

Picture-Perfect

While downloading a curated selection of home design apps can make designing your home infinitely easier, there is ultimately no substitution to seeing a color, fabric or texture in real life.

"The digital world is different than reality; you should never rely 100 percent on a digital image to make a design decision," says McGee Wetzel. "Always find a physical sample and bring it home to see what it looks like with your lighting. When in doubt, hire a professional to assist with space planning."

If you're looking to keep your design experience digital but still want a closer level of guidance, e-design is a smart middle ground.

"Some interior designers have entered the digital game by offering e-design. This is a great way to get professional advice, then execute the design yourself," says McGee Wetzel.

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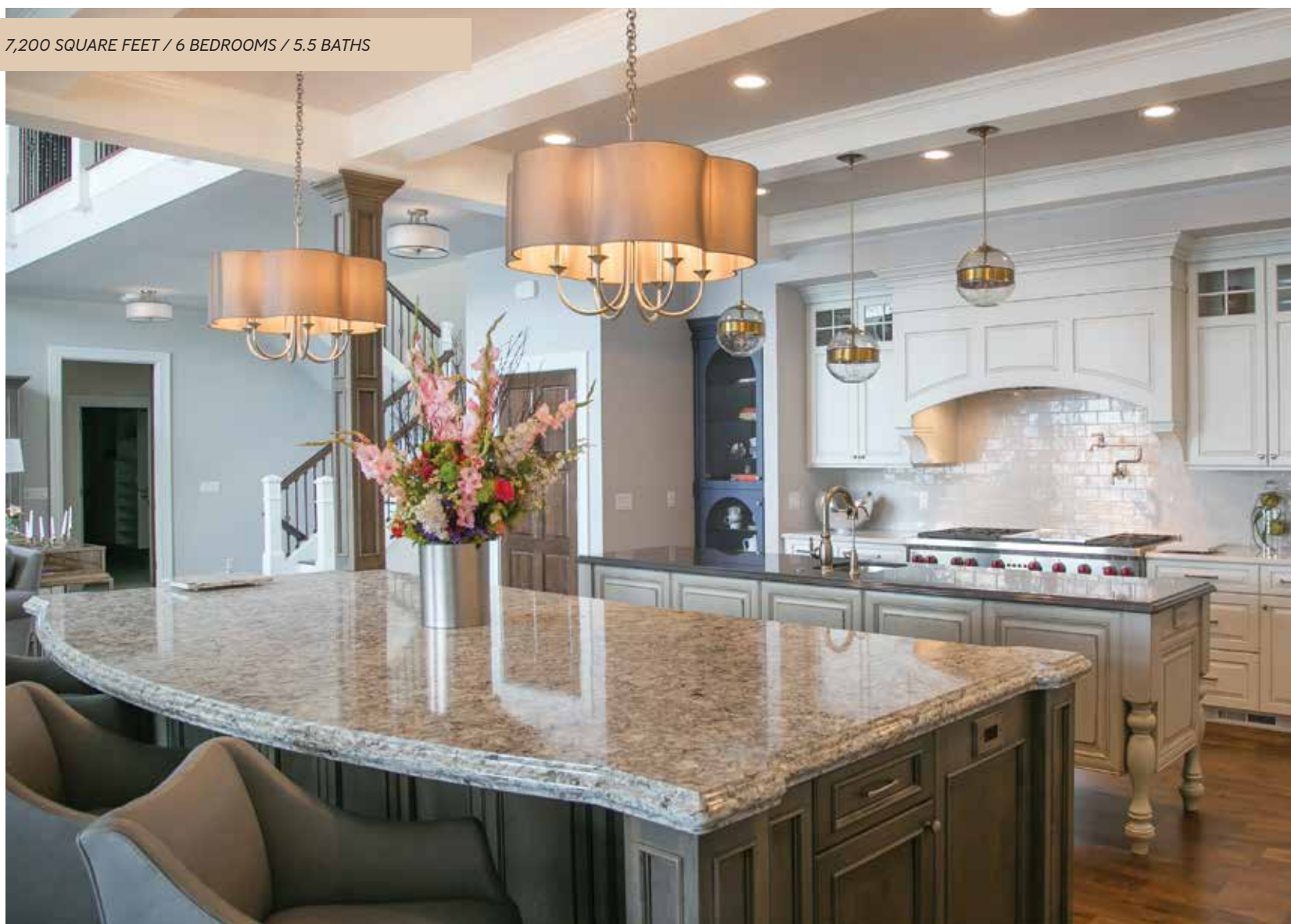
Fashion and function unite in a spacious, yet cozy-feeling Powers Lake home that's fit for lots of family.

By Shayna Mace

Photography by Shanna Wolf







When you have a large family like Diane and Joe May, there's no way around it—you need to have a house big enough to fit everyone comfortably. Joe is one of 15 (!) kids, and Diane has six siblings. The Mays have three grown kids of their own, too.

Searching for a lake home became a priority a few years ago for the Mays. They'd always taken an annual summer trip up to Hayward in northern Wisconsin for the last 15 years, but from Lake Villa, Illinois, where the family was based, Joe says it was a six-hour drive each way to get up there. "So we casually discussed finding a getaway. And we started thinking about how often we would go there," says Joe. He let his friend Steve Thelen know that they were searching in the Lake Geneva area with its close proximity to Lake Villa.

Shortly after, Steve called Joe to let him know there was a property for sale on Powers Lake—

only a 35-minute drive from Lake Villa. The couple immediately went to see it, put an offer on it two days later, and got it. The next step was to figure out if they wanted to keep the existing 1978 structure, or rebuild. For that, the Mays turned to Randy Thelen—Steve's second cousin, and owner of Thelen Total Construction.

"Size-wise the home was what we were looking for, as it was 7,000-plus square feet. But it was outdated for us. We loved it, but the plumbing and electrical was not in the best shape, and we would have spent an inordinate amount of money to refurbish it," explains Joe.

So, the original structure was torn down in February 2016 and the Mays got to planning how they wanted the home to look and feel.

BIG IDEAS

Thelen talked to the couple about what they wanted in their new home. "We were looking for





something of a cross between elegant and cottage-y,” says Joe. “We wanted the main floor to be the elegant part, and downstairs to be a bit more relaxed and laid-back.”

The Mays’ main-floor requirements are beautifully showcased in the soaring great room, with a 20-foot-tall coffered ceiling, floor-to-ceiling windows and stone fireplace, and cozy sitting area.

“[The Mays] really wanted a two-story entryway and two-story great room. And the wall of glass [gives them] a skyward view—so [they can see] a big panorama of the outdoors. And the texture on the ceiling gives a sense of scale to the room,” says Randy Thelen.

The understated gray and white color theme throughout is accented by glamorous touches in the décor pieces, lighting and furnishings. The Mays worked closely with Katie Wozniak and Kathleen Glynn of Katherine Elizabeth Designs out of Barrington, Illinois, for interior design guidance throughout the whole home.

“We put together palettes based off of feedback from Diane and Joe,” says Glynn. “They wanted the home to be lake-y, but they wanted it to be casual and livable as it’s a four-season house. So it needed to look as cozy in February as it does cool in August.”

EXCELLENT FOR ENTERTAINING

Although the entire home is show-stopping, the kitchen and dining area certainly contend for some of the most wow-worthy spaces. The fashionable yet functional

kitchen has two granite-topped islands (the larger of which is 14 feet long) that offer tons of prep and gathering space. The smaller island near the stove has creamy white cabinetry and a navy top, while the rest of the kitchen has light, flecked countertops and cabinetry.

“We love to entertain. So at least a few nights a week we’ll be eating in here,” says Joe.

The beautiful cabinetry throughout is by Bea Industries out of Elkhorn—including the fun navy vertical cabinet that pops in the left corner of the kitchen that houses serving pieces. With the cabinetry reaching the ceiling, it adds height to the room—and the top tier of glass-front cabinets lend a historic touch to the room.

Adding to the ease of entertaining is a six-burner Wolf stove with a cooking grate and griddle that was “Diane’s dream,” explains Joe. They also have a Wolf steam oven, too. A wine refrigerator, icemaker and two Sub-Zero refrigerators hidden behind cabinet facing provide plenty of storage room for the family and their many guests.

But the kitchen’s real highlight is tucked in the back corner—a fully-stocked butler’s pantry with more storage, lots of countertop space, dishwasher and sink. Joe loves that the room can be closed off with the slick pocket door to hide any mess from dinner parties.

“We introduced [the butler’s pantry concept] to them, and they really liked that,” says Thelen. “The working pantry [is great] because there’s a sink and a dishwasher,



“We knew that Diane and Joe loved blush tones, so we started with a few inspiration colors. We wanted the room to be soft, warm and relaxing,” says Glynn. “I love the wallpaper. That’s one of those things that adds an extra layer of texture to the space ... we felt it was a good foil for the light fixtures, custom window treatments and bedding. Now it’s all about placing textures and patterns together so they all live harmoniously without any one element taking over.”





so if you think of your own kitchen and the things that are sitting out in the open—you can have the blender and coffeemaker in [the pantry instead], and they’re convenient to use. I think the working pantry or the scullery is a nice complement to a high-end kitchen, because it provides a lot of functionality and makes it convenient [since] you can hide things and entertain.”

The dining area boasts a gorgeous table that can seat 14 to 16 people (it has 18-inch leaves on either side that slide out to accommodate more guests, Joe notes) and upholstered chairs for a more glamorous take on dinnertime. Curtains hung strategically close to the ceiling bump up the feel of the room’s height and dress up the area a bit more.

Attached to the dining area is Diane’s favorite room—the screened porch. The room is hexagonal and has a cathedral, wood-beamed ceiling—so it feels like an escape off of the main living area, which is what it’s supposed to be. The tiled floor, indoor/outdoor furnishings (including cheeky leopard print-covered ottoman) and TV mean that this hangout room truly is an extension of the main home. The

couple can use it during the spring, summer and fall because of the heat lamps and thick plastic window coverings that ward the chill away. And during the summer it’s sublime with its treetop and water views.

LOVELY LIVING

The master suite is tucked off to the right side of the home and boasts a tranquil bedroom, master bath and sunroom that separates with French doors from the bedroom. The sunroom overlooks the water and can easily be closed off on both sides to provide a sleeping area for guests, or opened up for normal use for the family to enjoy.

“From a function point of view, the sunroom is ... a cozy space. It could be used as a private sitting area off the master, or it can be used off the great room space,” says Thelen.

Thelen also likes that they added a master foyer as he calls it, to provide separation from the great room and the master bedroom. The hallway houses the closet and the entrance to the master bath—and the bedroom is steps away on the left. It’s also great for providing separation if one



(*Opposite, top*) The wallpaper in the master bedroom has an organic feel to it, reminiscent of geode. Soft shades of pink, gray, cream and tan make the space a relaxing retreat. (*Opposite, bottom*) The jaw-dropping second-floor catwalk overlooks the great room and connects all of the bedrooms upstairs. (*This page, clockwise from left*) Wicker furniture reflects the airy, vacation vibe in the May's sitting room; a hexagonal steam shower in the master suite with herringbone tile and multiple shower heads was a must for Diane; and a granite countertop with vintage-look fixtures adds high-end pizzazz to the master bathroom.



person wakes up earlier than the other—and gets ready for their day in the bathroom at the other end of the hall. “It gives more versatility to the master suite,” points out Thelen.

Upstairs from the master suite are four bedrooms and a luxe bunk room. A “catwalk” bridges together two of the bedrooms on one side of the house to the remaining beds and baths on the other end. The wood-beamed, cathedral ceiling is a unique touch above the catwalk. The May’s daughter Lauren found that touch on Pinterest.

“Lauren said, ‘That’s really cool.’ We pitched it to Randy. Now, a picture of it is on [Thelen’s] website!” says Joe, smiling.

Each bedroom bears a distinct point of view. Lauren’s room has masculine touches mixed with feminine pieces, all chosen by her. Moody black walls, a green velvet upholstered window seat and built-in dark wood bookshelves filled with favorite books and decorative brass pieces convey a cozy look. “This room reflects her well, I think,” says Joe.

Lauren’s room is connected to Hayley’s via a

jack-and-jill bathroom with graphic cement tile floor, pedestal sinks (with brass accents and fixtures) and steam shower. Hayley’s room has an entirely different feel, with white walls, a carved-wood headboard, vintage-look Oriental rug and soft, patterned bedspread.

The other bedrooms were decorated by Wozniak, including son Alex’s, the guest bedroom (with soft pink and natural accents) and the uber-cool bunk room (with shades of navy and lots of wood built-ins) that has three sets of bunk beds, two queen beds and hangout area.

In the basement that’s built for entertaining, the Mays wanted a practical space that offered a stylish punch. The hangout area has cozy furnishings and a TV, and behind it is the gorgeous built-in bar—that’s quite opulent with cool pendant lights, mirrored shelving and detailed millwork. Two more bedrooms, two full baths, laundry room and lower-level patio with built-in grill finish off the space nicely.

A family member asked Joe recently if they’d change anything in their house. He replied, “We wouldn’t change a thing.” 🍷



(*Opposite, bottom*) The temperature-controlled wine cellar is fitted with custom cabinetry to show off the couple's extensive wine collection. Joe says a back room attached to the cellar may eventually be finished off for a tasting room, too. (*This page, clockwise from left*) Lauren's room reflects her love of history and reading; Joe says the Wozniak-appointed guest bedroom is beloved by his sisters-in-law, who stay in here frequently; and Hayley and Lauren's bathroom bears a contemporary, yet vintage stamp with of-the-moment cement patterned tile floors, brushed brass accents, dark walls and pedestal sinks.



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Old Condo, New Look

How one couple transformed an outdated condo into a light, bright oasis that overlooks Geneva Lake.

By Shayna Mace | Photography by Shanna Wolf

Set on a peaceful side street off of Geneva Lake is an unassuming condo with enviable water access right down a short path on the side of the property. It's close to the bustling activity of downtown, but still quiet enough that it feels like a respite on a warm sunny day or a snowy one in front of the fire. It's become home for Claudia and Steve (who asked their last name not be used) since both of their recent retirements—and being full-time Lake Geneva residents since last May has already immersed them in their new community.

The couple wasn't originally looking for a condo. They were simply looking to downsize from their Libertyville, Illinois, home to an ideal geographic location that would keep them close enough to their grown children and one grandchild in Illinois, while still accessing a spectacular lake view. And Lake Geneva, and more specifically—Geneva Lake, fit the bill.



(Above and top right) Starting the kitchen from scratch meant the couple could completely customize the space. The built-in banquette offers ample storage and a place to sit and relax. The print hanging in the kitchen is from Cornerstone Shop & Gallery. (Right) As a condition of the condo sale, the previous owner included all of the furnishings. Although they sold most of them, the couple kept the dining room table and stained it a deep walnut and outfitted it with new upholstered chairs.



“We had looked at a number of houses around the area. When our realtor brought us to this place, we hadn’t really thought about a condo, because we’d always focused on a house,” says Steve. “When we came in and looked at the property and particularly its location with its access to the lake and [knowing] that the maintenance would be taken care of, it became a very attractive option to us.”

The condo offers plenty of space for family gatherings and kid visits in its 3,100 square feet—which is immediately obvious when you step in the front door. The sunny entryway takes visitors into the kitchen and dining room and adjacent great room that offers peaceful lake views. The serene gray and white hues throughout are punctuated by pops of red and black in the living space. It’s a big change from what the condo looked like before.

“We basically brought it down to the studs, and started all over again,” says Steve.





MUCH-NEEDED MAKEOVER

When they purchased it, the couple knew the condo had good bones but it needed a serious revamp. They decided to overhaul the interior to bring in more light and get rid of the “dated, 1980s” feel, Steve says. The condo had only been used as a vacation home previously, so it needed the extra trappings of a comfortable, full-time residence. Their first call was to Illinois-based Orren Pickell Building Group. The couple even had a family connection to the company: their oldest son is longtime friends with sales and marketing manager Eric Pickell. So, they knew they were in good hands.



“When they bought the condo, it hadn’t been updated, possibly at all, from when it was originally built,” says Pickell. “So they wanted to make sure the finishes were in line with what they had in their previous house and make sure it was a good space for entertaining and be comfortable with kids and grandkids there.”

The couple met with Pickell and worked with his team on the planned changes—which were extensive. “We had to work within the parameter of the property, so we weren’t able to move windows and doors, or make exterior changes. So what we could do was make interior changes with the walls and open it up to maximize the space,” says Pickell.

On the main level that meant taking down a wall between the kitchen and the dining room/living area. (Amazingly, the kitchen had been closed off to the spectacular lake view.) Then, the couple reworked the kitchen to take out the U-shaped island and put in a new eight-by-four-foot quartzite-topped island, installed new cabinetry, put in a tray ceiling and worked in a built-in banquette.



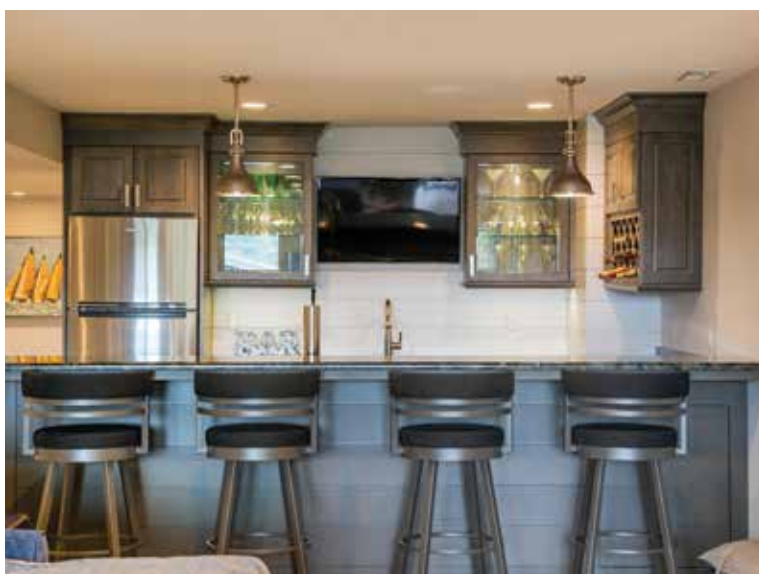
(Top) The tranquil master suite with Toms-Price furniture is deliberately clutter-free—but the ocean-themed bedding adds a jaunty nod to the Mitchells' lake life. (Bottom middle and right) The luxe master bath is a favorite room of Claudia's and bears her personal touch. Although the soaking tub was installed primarily for the grandkids to use, Claudia says she's happy to use it, too.



“We wanted an open concept and we wanted a big island with the sitting area, and the kitchen was designed around that,” says Steve. “It was just totally start from scratch and make it efficient.”

The kitchen isn’t only functional—it’s beautiful, too. All of the quartzite countertops were chosen from Illinois-based Terrazzo & Marble Supply and put in by Gerali Custom Design. The gorgeous statement backsplash from The Tile Shop and attractive light fixtures above the island and dining room table (from Inglewood Lighting) add dazzle to the space. Three barstools are efficiently tucked under the island for hanging out.

The lower level simply conveys hang out and relax with the casual bar area, comfortable living room and classic nautical touches.



Besides the wall removal and kitchen reconfiguration, the couple also made over the first-floor laundry room and removed the hallway closet to add more space to their master bath—attached to the master bedroom on the main level. The extra space allowed room for a soaking tub, larger shower and cabinetry for linen storage. The whole bathroom is outfitted with marble from The Tile Shop and granite countertops. The sparkling, jewelry-like light fixtures impart a glamorous touch to the space. The couple also installed a sound system in here.

“It’s one of my favorite updates, and I wanted something totally different than what we had [in our old house]. And I love the mirrors, too,” says Claudia.



FUN FAMILY TIMES

Another reason the couple loves the condo is because the lower level has three bedrooms and a spacious bar and entertaining area for when their kids bring friends or their son, daughter-in-law and grandchild visits. The bar, which was a brand-new addition by the couple, has gray-stained cabinetry and an eye-popping, dark prismatic granite countertop with shimmering green-blue accents. Claudia says the countertop was chosen by her daughter, who was a competitive swimmer in high school and college and is now a coach and SCUBA instructor in Hawaii. “Her life has basically been in the water one way or another. So we incorporated her love of water here,” she says. (Photographs of underwater scenes also hang on the adjacent walls.) The bar is fully equipped for overnight guests with a full-size refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, sink, TV and keg with a tap. In the living area, the stone-surround fireplace, built-in cabinetry (installed by Pickell Builders) and poker table invite guests to hang out and relax.

Although the couple gave the lower level quite a makeover, they still kept a few items on hand from the previous owners—like the detailed ship models and a trunk (used as a side table) that lend the whole place a sense of lived-in history and classic nautical accents. Since Steve grew up on the east coast, he loves the touch of seafaring artifacts, and so does Claudia. They appreciated being able to use some of the special pieces from the old place and still keep them in the new one for a home that’s uniquely theirs.



“We are so happy to have a quiet and inviting retreat on the lake to enjoy with our family and friends,” says Claudia. 🍷

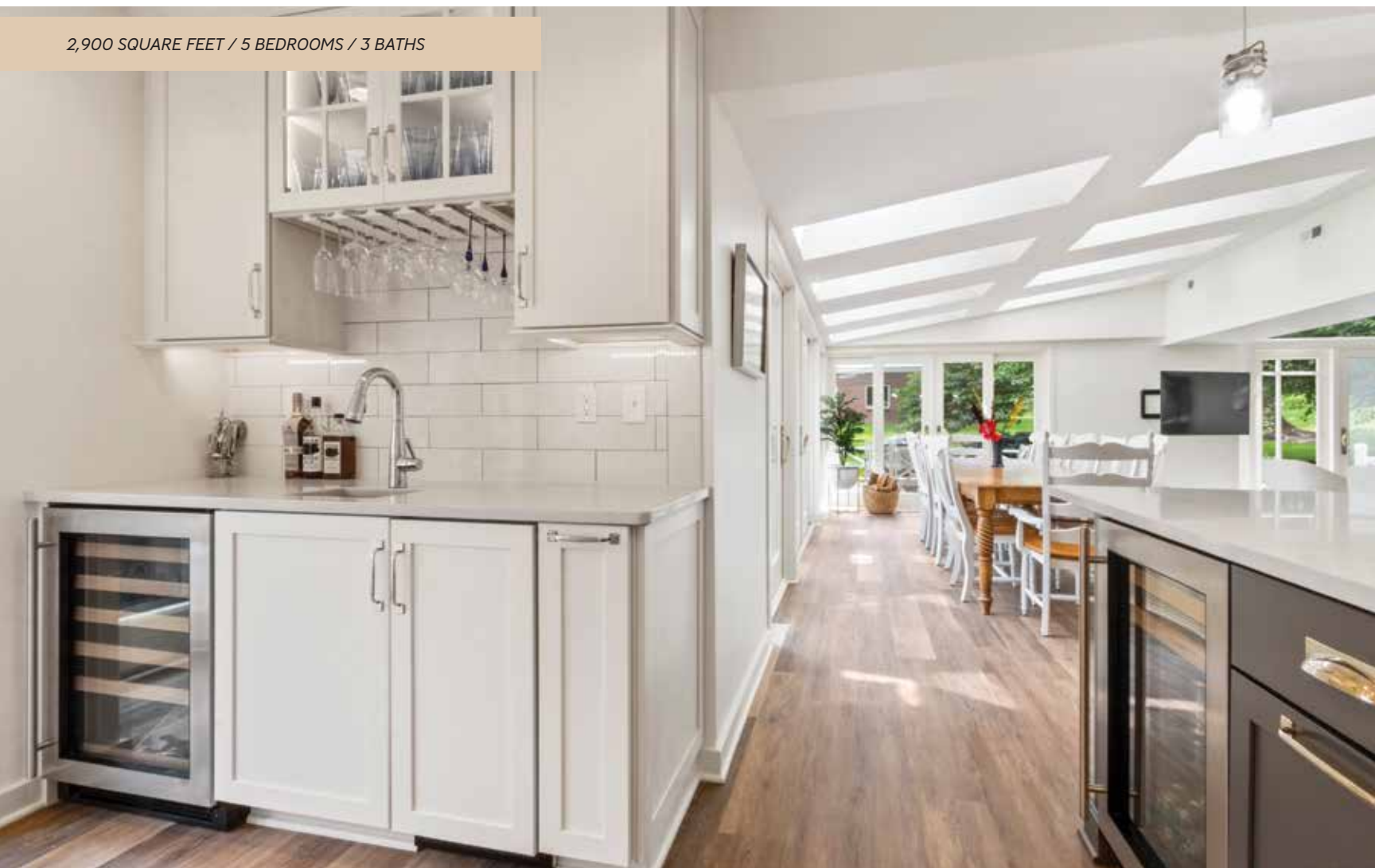
The background image is a photograph of a dining room. It features a large wooden dining table with a thick top and turned legs. Several white wooden chairs with spindle backs and brown leather seats are arranged around the table. The room has a high ceiling with two large skylights. Large windows in the background offer a view of a green lawn and trees. A small framed picture hangs on the wall to the left.

Changing Up a Classic

A Chicago-area couple find a house in their dream lakeside location—
and decide to take on a major renovation.

By Shayna Mace | Photography by KayserPhotography





Sometimes in the real estate market, you encounter a home that you know needs work—but has great potential. That’s how Jon and Jessica (who asked their last name not be used) felt when they found a 1940s home that had been added on to a few times over the years, in a very desirable location on Geneva Lake.

Although they hadn’t planned on searching for a vacation home in Fontana for a few years, a friend let them know a home in their desired area was for sale. The couple realized they had to act fast if they wanted it. “Our plan was to start looking in a few years, but we bought this home from the owner off-market. We had the vision of retrofitting it. I’ve worked in the real estate field and we’ve done a lot of these types of projects in the past, and we had the vision to create what we wanted to. We wanted to do the work, and [add] the value for ourselves,” says Jon.

GETTING TO WORK

The couple turned to Stebnitz Builders to help them visualize and strategize on what needed to be done, since they wanted to remodel the existing property, rather than build a new one. And that was no small feat.

“The home was a gut rehab,” says Jon. “It didn’t have gas or central air and the roof was shot. We had to get a new roof, central air and natural gas to make it a much more efficient home.”

But that wasn’t it—the floor plan also needed help, too. “The kitchen wasn’t really functional. And we wanted to take down walls in there. And then there were three



In addition to the extensive kitchen changes, Auberger says the team added brand-new recessed LED lighting to punch up the wow factor. With the changes that were made, he says the ceilings feel much higher. *(Lower right)* A Kohler apron sink injects farmhouse style into the space.



bathrooms in the house, but they were [laid out] funny and very tight—they weren't functional for guests, so we blew them out and started over to make them usable, full bathrooms," says Jon.

Stebnitz Builders designer and remodeling consultant Jeff Auberger agreed with Jon's assessment when he was brought into the project. "The house was nice, but it was dated and closed off. So the goal was to open the home up [and] allow more light to pass through the space. There was also a strong desire to bring it up to today's standards with [enhanced] products and materials, and create a consistent feel for the house that was current."

The team started with opening up the kitchen and removed walls between the kitchen and dining area, as well as removed walls between the dining and living rooms. The living room has skylights that made the whole area dance with light once the walls came down.

"That was a game-changer for the way the house functioned. Before, there were different floor coverings between all of those spaces, smaller wall openings and a lot of obstruction and shadows," explains Auberger. "With those changes, the skylights allowed a lot more light into the space."

Once an old peninsula and half-wall was removed in the kitchen, the couple and Auberger could piece the space back together.

"[Kitchens] tend to be places that people congregate, and we wanted it to be open and airy, and feel like a beach house [mixed with a] farmhouse," says Jon.

"We looked at the space as a clean slate," says Auberger. "Virtually everything in there is in a







(Left) Jon says the dining room was formerly the ice house for the property. “We wanted to keep the integrity of that room. All of the paneling is original. The dining table extends out and this is where we’ll eat and play cards,” he says. Auberger says the expansion of all of the room openings helped maximize the openness of the floorplan, too.

The couple also removed a small eat-in area adjacent to the kitchen island and replaced it with a wine/coffee bar with upper and lower cabinetry and a sink. It also has a U-Line beverage cooler and U-line icemaker, hidden behind a custom cabinet door.

A new Sub-Zero refrigerator, Wolf range and double Wolf oven were installed in the kitchen. Polished chrome hardware, Kohler faucets and sleek, slightly nautical pendant lights add eye-pleasing polish to the kitchen for a functional, stylish space.

To unite the three spaces that had formerly been separate, Auberger says installing new luxury vinyl plank flooring (LVP) worked wonders. “Much of this house was slab on grade, but other parts of the house had a small crawlspace underneath, and some parts not at all. So the use of LVP allowed us to go over concrete and level the adjacent floors to look continuous throughout. It also gives a rich, historic kind of look with a somewhat rustic feel.”

LIVING LARGE

Jon says throughout the home, the couple wanted to use creamy whites, shiplap and gray, blue and warm tones in

the décor to convey warmth. “We wanted this house to be an elegant, comfortable lake house with a nautical feel,” he says.

In the newly-opened living room, the couple opted to install shiplap on the ceiling to add a lived-in feel. Cozy Crate & Barrel furnishings and a rustic Jayson Home coffee table round out the room’s minimal, yet classic vibe.

Echoing the shiplap in the living room, the entryway was also accented with white shiplap to instill a sense of tradition to the place. Auberger says throughout the common areas larger baseboards were installed as well.



completely different location than where it had previously been. The cooking wall became a focal point with reclaimed wood shelves, a stainless range hood and horizontal subway tile. Now there’s an island that’s great for seating, and there’s work and prep space.”

The quartz-topped island boasts smoky gray cabinetry that contrasts with the white upper cabinetry—which Auberger says was a purposeful design accent. “It was a nice way to contrast that island space. [Sometimes] without that, things can get washed out, and it also allowed us to center the work space. It worked wonderfully.”





Besides the kitchen revamp, the other major task to remedy was the arrangement of the bedrooms, bathrooms and laundry room, says Jon and Auberg-er. They integrated the master bathroom into the master bedroom—whereas before, the bathroom was located across the hallway. They also created a designated laundry and mechanical room for the newly-installed furnace and central air units. Changing the configuration of the remaining bedrooms and bathrooms and bumping up the size of each bathroom helped make the vacation home more welcoming for family and guests.

“There’s a continuity about the house that just didn’t exist before that we were able to achieve through the little things—like slightly larger door openings, reconfiguring the bathrooms ... it feels so correct and exactly what you should experience. We took the entire home and brought everything up to code and to today’s standards,” says Auberg-er.

Jon is excited to bring his young family up year-round from their home in the Chicago suburbs to enjoy the lake. “We wanted the design to be comfortable, relaxing and inviting where everyone can just come to hang out and clear your mind,” he says. 🍷



A guest bath was made over with the same smoky gray cabinetry and polished chrome pulls that were used in the kitchen island. The new spacious walk-in shower has horizontal subway tile (also used in the kitchen) and marble flooring. For an extra design kick, the couple opted for marble tile in a herringbone pattern in the rest of the room.

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SAIL ON Taken in 1895, this image shows a steamboat docked at the city of Lake Geneva's piers, now known as the Riviera Docks. Steamboats were popular means of transport at the turn of the century, before good roads were built, and were used to carry people, mail and supplies. Today, the Lake Geneva Cruise Line operates a fleet of excursion boats including the *Steam Yacht Louise*, originally built in 1902 and restored in the late 1970s. It is available for private charters.

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A romantic couple is shown in a red and white rowboat on a calm lake. The man, wearing a grey sweater and a straw hat, is leaning over the woman, who is wearing a plaid shirt and jeans. They are both smiling and looking at each other. Their feet are sticking out of the boat and are in the water. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding trees. The background is a dense forest of tall trees, their reflections visible in the water.

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