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New Beginnings

With 2020 behind us, 2021 feels like the year to reflect and re-strategize how we move through our daily lives — especially our homes. Because we're spending more time at home than ever, many of us are being more thoughtful about the spaces within — should we declutter a particular space? What about changing a paint color? Or, is it finally time to update that bathroom?

And if it feels like everyone is doing home improvements right now, it's because many homeowners are. The online home remodeling platform Houzz conducted a study that found a 58% increase in project leads for home professionals in June 2020. We've certainly felt our lives change since our last issue, including bringing on assistant editorial director, Shelby Rowe Moyer!

In general, we both feel like we could all use a little beauty right now, and this issue has that in spades — from interior design and architecture to recipes and picnic trappings we hope will move you to create good food and conversation with the ones you love.

It's time to dive into some inspiration.

Shayna Mace, Editorial Director
@shaynamace

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@shelbyrowemoyer

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Moveable Feast

Take advantage of long, warm days by bringing a meal outdoors. Picnicking becomes a snap with these items (many of which are reusable).

Styling and photography by Shanna Wolf



Backyard Getaway

Bocce ball set, \$150, **Crate and Barrel**; Watercolor Blues melamine plate, \$16, **Paper Dolls Home Furnishings**; Marimekko Juhannustaika paper lunch napkins, \$9, **C.R. Goodfinds**; Hydro Flask insulated lunch box, \$45, and Hydro Flask food flask, \$30, both from **Clear Water Outdoor**.



Park Picnic

Rumpl puffy outdoor blanket, \$50, **Sierra**; picnic melamine plate set, \$27, **C.R. Goodfinds**; Baggu Madras wine bag set of 3, \$28, **baggu.com**; Light My Fire spork, \$2, **Clear Water Outdoor**; and Canasta wicker basket, \$75, **Lands' End**.



On the Boat

Welly traveler, \$32, **Clear Water Outdoor**; portable cocktail backpack, \$220, **Lands' End**; Yeti Hopper Flip I2, \$250, **Yeti**; Yeti Copper Can Colster, \$25, both from **Gordy's Pro Shop**; and travel bamboo straw set, \$10, **Brick and Mortar Home**.

LAKE GENEVA'S LUXURY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN EXPERTS



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Scalloped raffia shade, \$85, cruelmountain.com



Scalloped jute rug, \$265, from jaipurwithloverugs.com



Matouk for Schumacher Quincy sham, \$169, matouk.com



Paule Marrot "Viva" print, \$1,375, naturalcuriosities.com



May Flor Pencil Rattan bench, \$1,255, shopsocietysocial.com

{ Beautiful Blues }

With a portfolio ranging from homes in Milwaukee to vacation getaways in Door County, Meghan Posnanski of Summit Drive Design is a master at creating fresh and youthful interiors for her clients.

"My clients wanted something fun and unique for their Whitefish Bay [owner's] master bedroom, but didn't know where to start," says Posnanski.

"We sorted through bags of samples and they were instantly drawn to Schumacher's Hydrangea fabric (shown above). That was our starting point for the design, and we took it from there to build a color scheme for the space."

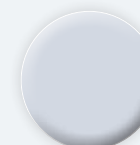
Hue Cues



STRATFORD BLUE, Benjamin Moore (831): The purple undertones in this almost-periwinkle blue color are perfect for walls, cabinets and furniture.



LULWORTH BLUE, Farrow & Ball (No. 89): This fresh, mid-blue color is both timeless and classic. Perfect for walls where you want a pop of color.



WISHFUL BLUE, Sherwin-Williams (SW 6813): This light color is both delicate and soothing, and is infused with subtle hints of lavender and gray. It pairs well with navy and green accents.

Produced by Alexandra Wood
@alexandrawooddesign



Pattern Play Freshen up with hydrangea blue, one of nature's most timeless and classic colors. Use wallcoverings, trim and fabric to mix and match shades of this hue.

1. Gazebo Blue Fabric, quadrillefabrics.com
2. Fiorentina Two Color Fabric, quadrillefabrics.com
3. Climbing Hydrangea in Blue Wallcovering, quadrillefabrics.com
4. Keaton Lip Cord Trim in Navy, fschumacher.com





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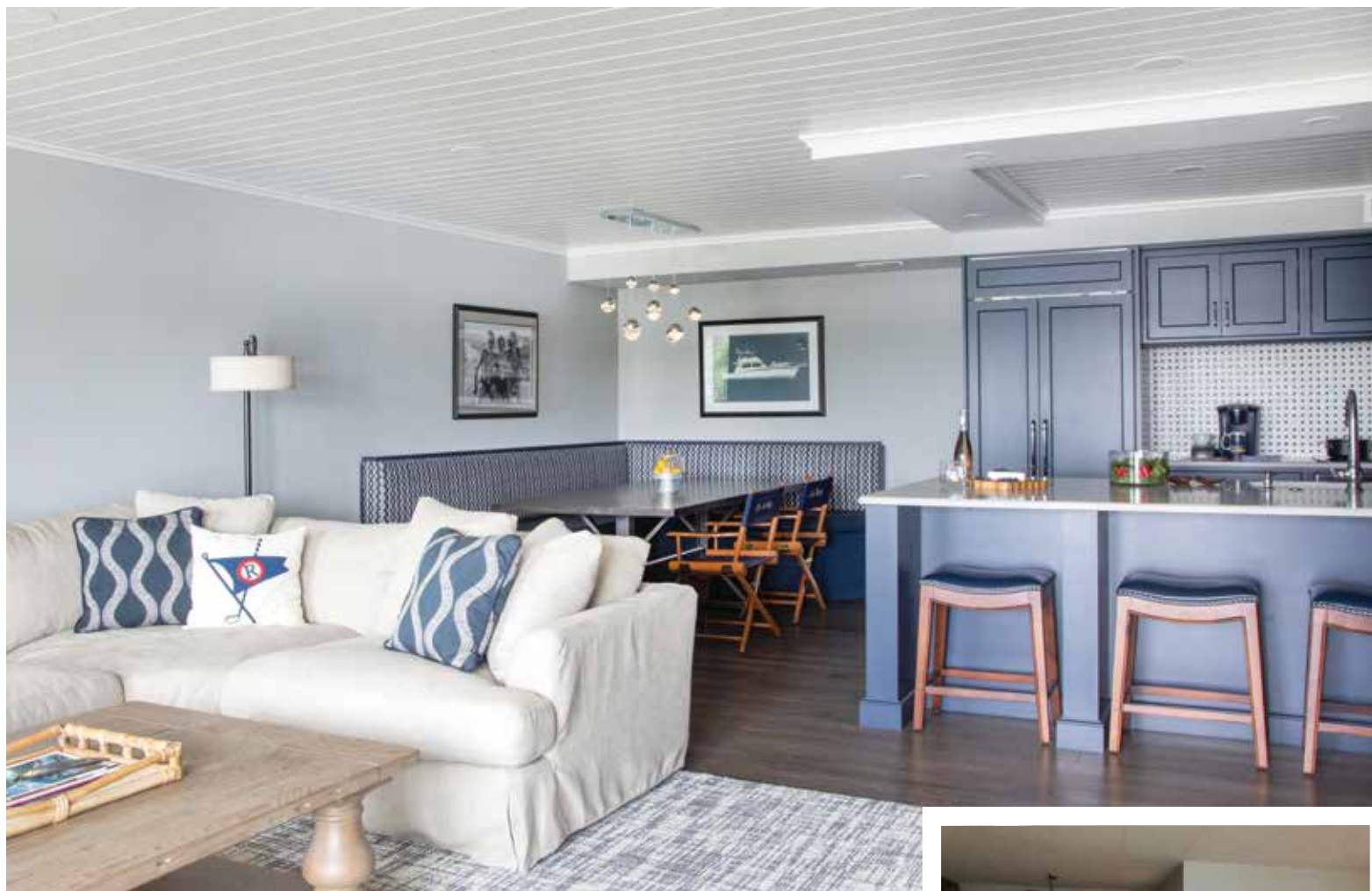
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Hello, Colorful Kitchen

A dated Lake Geneva condo receives a total makeover, and the kitchen is the biggest transformation.

By Shelby Rowe Moyer | Photography by Shanna Wolf

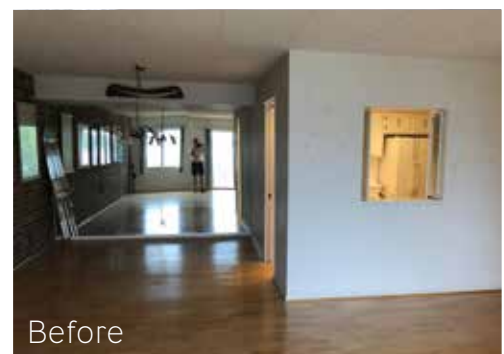


Looking at it now, it's hard to imagine John Johnston's Lake Geneva condo before the renovation, when it had popcorn ceilings, mirrored walls and a closed-off configuration.

When he bought the condominium in 2018, he knew it was going to be a fixer-upper. The small unit has two bedrooms and two bathrooms, and, because it's a condo, there was only so much rearranging that could be done — due to plumbing constraints and load-bearing walls. Still, the kitchen, dining and living rooms had a lot of potential for a major upgrade to make the whole area feel more open.

Johnston worked with the late Frank Guido (a well-known builder who, unfortunately, passed in 2020) on the construction, interior designer Ann Kottler, and senior designer Natalie Spiniolas of Geneva Cabinet Company to give the condo a coastal contemporary look. At the top of the to-do list was scraping off the popcorn ceilings, removing the brick wall in the living room and gutting the kitchen so that it was open to the rest of the space.

Kottler says Johnston wanted the overall theme to be nautical and fresh, and he was willing to make bold choices. In fact, much of the design was selected around the navy hue



BEFORE IMAGES COURTESY JOHN JOHNSTON

of the cabinets, which were custom-built by Geneva Cabinet Company. Kottler says taking a chance with a colorful kitchen can feel really refreshing. Navy is a popular color choice in Lake Geneva homes because of its lake aesthetic, but it still feels clean and refined, Kottler says.




- ← The shiplap ceiling adds texture to the room and also lends itself well to the nautical aesthetic. To bring more light into the area, can lighting was installed throughout the kitchen, dining and living room. It brightens the space without obstructing views of the lake.
- ← Custom built-ins with shelving make the fireplace feel more intentional and add much-needed storage. The fireplace tile is charcoal gray slate from Bella Tile & Stone, and the prefinished hardwood flooring is Denali-colored hickory from Casabella's American Relics Collection.





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← Far left: The custom banquette works beautifully in the small space by seating more people than a traditional table. The fabric was sourced from Ralph Lauren, hearkening back to John Johnston's former career working with racehorses. Everything was designed around the Plato custom cabinetry in Moody Blue, says Natalie Spiniolas.



"For me, in terms of pushing the envelope, I do think it's worth taking a chance on bold choices suggested by the design professional team that you hire," Kottler says. "But I also think people should learn to trust their instincts. Here is A and B. Which one feels better? It's about the space that you create to enjoy the place and make memories with your friends and family. When your space is well-designed, it feels good to be there."

From a functional standpoint, the open concept makes it easier to entertain. The banquette-style dining area in the corner was a smart choice as it works in the small space, and it also allows more people to gather around.

"I really like the banquette," Johnston says. "In that small space, we have several congregating areas with the stools, the banquette and the TV area."

In the living area, the brick fireplace surround was removed and a charcoal gray slate tile from Bella Tile & Stone was swapped in, and built-in shelving with storage was added on either side. Shiplap was affixed to the ceiling for texture and can lights were installed. The can lights disappear into the ceiling so the view of the lake is unobstructed — always a must for a lakefront property.

Johnston, who lives full-time in Illinois, comes regularly on the weekends, especially during the summer, and he loves how the entire project came together.

"What you see spells it out," he says. "It's an undertaking doing [a renovation]. There were quite a few trips to Lake Geneva to get it right. ... It turned out really well. I'm very pleased. It just fits." 🐾



↑ Before, the kitchen was closed off, making the whole room feel small and tight.



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Summer Essentials

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Styling and photography by Shanna Wolf

Style Tip:

Pastels always feel great in the summer. Load up on lavender and seaglass hues and then pair them with neutrals (like cream and sand) for a fresh look or dark tones (like navy and burnt orange) for a bold ensemble.

Clockwise from middle:
FRNCH Melina lavender romper, \$98, **Jayne**;
Leslie Curtis Ava bracelet set, \$52, **Bloomingbyrds**;
Clarks Lana beach platform sandals, \$95, **Jayne**;
Maui Jim Sunny Days sunglasses, \$330,
Lake Geneva Opticians;
and Hammit VIP Ricotta raffia handbag, \$375,
Bloomingbyrds.





Lenny & Eva earrings, \$28, **Jayne**

Naked Zebra jumpsuit, \$79, **Bloomingbyrds**



Love Tree top, \$34, **Twelfth & Brown**

Brand Bazar Range pant, \$109, **Bloomingbyrds**



Leslie Curtis Mandy bracelet set, \$57, **Bloomingbyrds**



AHDORNED Circle Handbag, \$88, and embroidered strap, \$38, **Jayne**



Wishlist shoulder tie tank, \$32, **Twelfth & Brown**

Hem and Thread shorts, \$32, **Twelfth & Brown**



Vera Bradley Tropics Plaid cosmetic bag, \$40, **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**



Yellowbox Belamy raffia sandals, \$50, **Jayne**

Birkenstock Arizona patent white sandals, \$100, **Jayne**



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Meet the Maker



Functional Art

By Shelby Rowe Moyer | Photography by Shanna Wolf

Sue Zimmer makes molding clay look effortless. In a matter of minutes, she’s shaped a fist-sized lump of clay in to a small bowl — the subtly ribbed, tree-ring-like texture within the bowl is the only echo of her deft finger work.

Anyone who has tried pottery, though, knows what a disciplined art form it is and how challenging it is to create an even, simple shape.

Zimmer fell in love with this medium after taking pottery classes in high school and college, but it fell to the wayside after she began a corporate career in sales in the printing industry. It wasn’t until about 10 years ago that she started making pottery again, and for many years after that, she made and sold her work on the side. In 2017, however, she decided to leave her sales job to run her Pewaukee-based **Stone Pony Pottery** business full-time.

A lifelong animal lover, her pottery business naturally became attached to that arena. One of her specialties is making prizes for dog and horse shows, mostly in the form of handmade mugs, bowls, plates and jars. She also does custom dog print mugs using a mold she casts from the client’s dog’s paw. Her mugs are by far her biggest sellers. Much of her work is also direct to area organizations, companies and events that commission her to create pottery with their logo on it.

Currently, her work can be purchased at Key Pieces Home Décor & Gifts in Merton, Wood Station Co-Op and Sobie’s Restaurant in Oconomowoc, the Olivia di Vita olive oil and balsamic vinegar shop in Delafield and Lake Effect clothing company in Hartland. But she also has an Etsy shop where a variety of ready-made pottery pieces can be purchased. Custom orders, like the dog print mugs, can be requested on her website.



Even though being self-employed entails constantly switching metaphorical hats — from social media to sales marketer to maker — it’s a peaceful life, and her business acumen has made her successful.

“I like to make things that are useful and beautiful,” she says. “I have this real practical side that makes me want everything to be useful. It’s a bonus if it’s pretty, too.”

Shoppist

Light and Bright Design

By Kate Lawless

Located a bit off of Main Street in Lake Geneva, **Summer Made** has a collection of home design pieces curated by owner Angie Rinn, an entrepreneur with a passion for helping residents and out-of-towners find foundational pieces that refresh their homes.

Rinn started Summer Made at just 27 years old in 2019 and has grown the store into a beautiful community staple, with unique items like woven rope end tables, bamboo ladders and wood charcuterie boards.

“I’ve always been drawn to that light, bright aesthetic and incorporating a lot of natural materials — maybe even nautical-themed styles, which fits perfectly with being right by the water here in Lake Geneva,” says Rinn.



Rinn manages to find a mix of both unique vintage pieces and foundational basics for her customers, making sure there’s something for everyone, no matter their interior design style.

She’s also excited to expand her offerings beyond just home goods by adding lifestyle products and accessories, such as clean, bright perfumes and Lake Geneva beach bags that match the overall Summer Made aesthetic.

“I focus on more natural, nontoxic body products like candles, diffusers and salt scrubs,” says Rinn.

Summer Made also has a blog page where Rinn updates readers on her travels to furniture markets and shares interior design inspiration.



“I try to be intentional about that,” she says. “No matter what season of life you’re in, if you’re shopping for your home or shopping for a birthday gift, I try to have a mix of something for everyone.” 🐾

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INSPIRING ARTSCAPES

Ten Minutes With GARRETT CHEYNE

The owner and principal designer at Delavan's Curate Design Group is always pushing the design envelope to give clients ultra-unique spaces.

By Shelby Deering

How would you describe your design style?

[Heavily] masculine! [And], I absolutely love mixing elements from different eras. I hunt for the unusual pieces that you cannot just run out and buy. I do not like to be bored with what I am looking at, so sometimes the louder, the better.

How does the Lake Geneva area inspire your work?

We are such a melting pot around here. I think that is one of the best parts about this area. Clients are from all over the country — and the world, for that matter. Getting the opportunity to [work] on some of these properties around here is where a lot of our inspiration comes from. The families that we get to meet and become friends with — just having the chance to experience life through all these different moments is where the inspiration comes from.

What words of wisdom do you have for designing challenging spaces?

This is a hard one, as every job is so different. If we do encounter a challenge at a job site, we just take it head-on and see how we can work with it. If it's an option to remove that challenge from the site, we do so accordingly. If it is something that we cannot change — let's say it's a graphic tile for instance —



we neutralize the entire palette around it. Let the tile take center stage and layer in texture to ground it and calm it down.

How do you like to push the design envelope?

I could not do this without my amazing team, including April Leuhne, Suzanne Augustson and Brianna Flower. We like to get a general idea of a client's taste and then level up their overall style. We try to stay away from mainstream trends. Do not do something that won't look good in 10 years. Either keep it classic

or go all out on a design that blows your neighbors out of the water. Put that sculpture of Bacchus on a pedestal in your entryway — and then light that bad boy up!

In your opinion, how do antiques bring soul into a space?

You just cannot replicate the craftsmanship and character of these pieces. You want the depth of the texture that antiques hold. If everything is brand-new, it does not have enough character in my eyes. Adding antiques breathes life into a space that was not there before. 🍷



Bacchus is the newest addition to our studio space. These statues are from the rooftop of the Vanderbilt Hotel in New York. Made of terracotta and cement, they weigh in at around 900 pounds each.

The Troy Medium Table Lamp is a design by one of our favorite designers, Kelly Wearstler, based out of California. Her designs are always so elegant and structured.



This incredible antique convex mirror was originally a traffic mirror from the Czech Republic [dating back to] the 1940s. Several sizes are available [in the studio], and no two are alike.



The Parisian Leather Chair has always been one of my favorite frames to work with. This classic frame pairs well in almost any setting.



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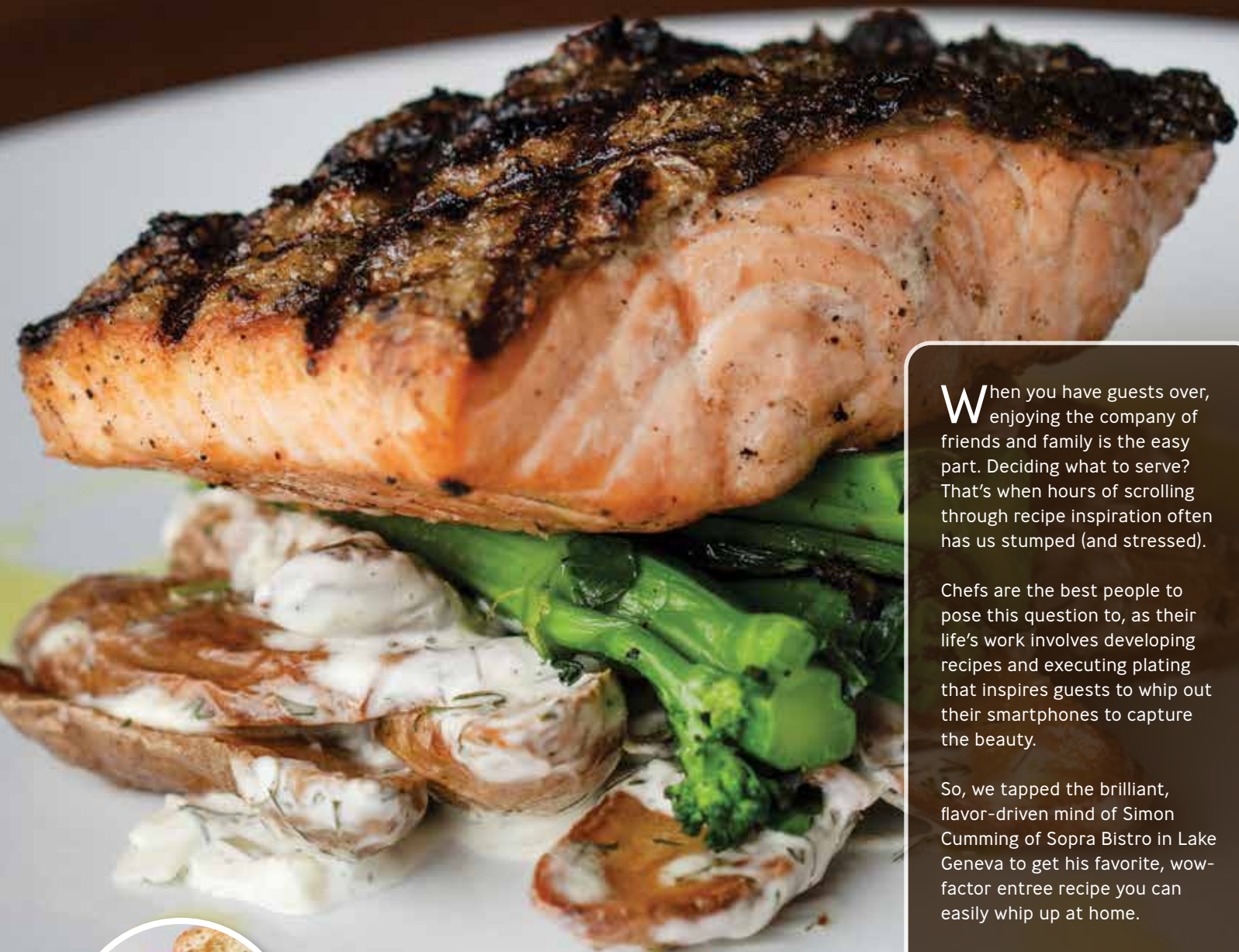
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Entertain Like A Chef

This party-pleaser is chef-created and approved for your next fête (remember those?) — or night in.

BY KRISTINE HANSEN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOLLY LEITNER



When you have guests over, enjoying the company of friends and family is the easy part. Deciding what to serve? That's when hours of scrolling through recipe inspiration often has us stumped (and stressed).

Chefs are the best people to pose this question to, as their life's work involves developing recipes and executing plating that inspires guests to whip out their smartphones to capture the beauty.

So, we tapped the brilliant, flavor-driven mind of Simon Cumming of Sopra Bistro in Lake Geneva to get his favorite, wow-factor entree recipe you can easily whip up at home.

"Everybody loves salmon," he says, of the entree he chose. "It's just one of those crowd-pleasing dishes."



Chef Simon Cumming's Shrimp Appetizer

This simple appetizer with tiger shrimp is a favorite. Visit lakeshoreliving.com for the recipe.



Salmon with Crème Fraiche Fingerling Potatoes

INGREDIENTS

YIELD: SERVES 4

Olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
2 pounds fingerling potatoes, quartered
4 8-ounce salmon filets
1 cup crème fraiche
1 tablespoon shallots, minced
1 tablespoon capers, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon dill, finely chopped
1 teaspoon fresh-squeezed lemon juice



INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Coat potatoes in oil, salt and pepper. Place in baking dish, cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes. While potatoes are cooking, season salmon filets with salt and pepper. In a separate bowl mix crème fraiche, shallots, capers, dill and lemon juice. Preheat cast-iron skillet. Take potatoes out and set aside. Add oil to skillet and place salmon skin-side down. Reduce heat to medium and sear for 4 minutes. Flip salmon and place in preheated oven for 7 minutes. Toss potatoes in crème fraiche mixture. Place salmon filets on top of potatoes and serve, or add your favorite green vegetable. Cumming opted for broccolini and asparagus. 🍴



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Curating a Self Care HAVEN AT HOME

Home is where the heart is — and pretty much everything else these days.
Here's how to cultivate peaceful spaces in your own abode.

By Deanna Kane | Photography by Shanna Wolf



Now, more than ever, seeking solace at home is vital for health and wellbeing. Creating an atmosphere of wellness and grounding can be accomplished through carefully selected home design elements and the power of color psychology.

Every year, the major paint retailers select their colors of the year (see sidebar). For 2020, they made prophetic color selections — each hue was chosen to inspire relaxation and reprieve at home.

For 2021, we're still seeing soothing color choices from paint purveyors — along with some hues that evoke a little more energy. (See next page).

To learn more about creating an at-home sanctuary, we spoke with local designers who shared their tips on curating much-needed balance and positivity within your spaces.

THE POWER OF SIMPLICITY

As people continue to seek refuge at home, many spaces are multi-purpose. Simplicity is a must to prevent a chaotic energy.

"As we use existing spaces for new purposes, like homeschooling and work, there is a trend to keep spaces simple, but also inviting," says Erica Zander Meier, owner of Zander's Interiors.

A relaxing atmosphere requires editing to remove negative

emotions that are often the result of too many items.

"When I create spaces meant for relaxation, I remove visual clutter," says Carrie Simpson, owner of Vault Interiors & Design. "Eliminating excess can reduce stress or anxiety."

Sarah Helf, founder and designer of Sarah Helf Interior Design, LLC agrees. "There is no way to feel relaxed in a space that is overflowing with piles, boxes, bags and toys."

LOOKING INWARD

Recognizing the elements that calm you is an important part of a wellness-focused home design.

"Identify what makes you relaxed and happy," says Helf. "For example, if natural elements soothe you, incorporate wood furniture, plants and different textures."





While personal preferences are what make your home unique to you, relaxing spaces often have the same unifying features.

"Combining design elements such as soothing color palettes, lighting, correct spacing of furniture and mindful decor will facilitate relaxation at home," says Nicole McCoy, owner of NicoleMdecor.

Lighting plays a substantial role in the feeling of a space. Helf says, "A correctly lit room can elevate your mood."

Questions Helf asks her clients include, "Are you able to bring more light into your home by enlarging window openings or fully opening window coverings? Are your lights on a dimmer to customize the light by task and time of day?"

COLOR PSYCHOLOGY

Color is a low-effort, high-impact way to update the space, and change how the room makes you feel.

"I have seen an increase in blue and green color palettes. Blue can calm your mind and reduce anxiety. Green can also be restorative," says McCoy. "My clients are subconsciously choosing these colors because they need a calming space."

Achieving relaxation at home through the use of color is unique to each individual.

"Changing a paint color in a room can create a new mood," says Meier. "I did this in the first two weeks of the safer at home order. We selected a dark navy blue to create a more restful and cozy space for reading and relaxation."

Color palettes in neutrals, blues and greens are top choices to create repose.

NEUTRALS

- **Creamy white.** "When I create tranquility in a space I always include paint colors with warm undertones, like Sherwin-Williams Creamy," says McCoy.
- **Greige.** "Many of my clients like warm tones, like Benjamin Moore Gray Owl or Balboa Mist," says Helf.
- **White.** "A fresh, light space can quiet the mind. A few of my favorite white paint colors are Sherwin-Williams Alabaster; Benjamin Moore White Dove, a warm white; or Benjamin Moore Chantilly Lace, a crisp, bright white," says Simpson.



BLUES AND GREENS

→ *Spa blues and greens.*

"We typically see colors that reflect the ocean, including Benjamin Moore's Beach Glass and Sagebrush," says Meier.

→ **Greens.** "Greens can be calming and grounding. A soft, blue-green like Sherwin-Williams Sea Salt is great for creating a spa-like room, and Benjamin Moore Vintage Vogue for rich, deep color," says Simpson.

→ **Navy blue.** "Blue is perfect if you are looking to promote more stillness in your home. Sherwin-Williams Languid Blue is peaceful and restful. Benjamin Moore Hale Navy is great in a bedroom or den," says Simpson.

"Finding the right color for a room can dramatically change how you feel in that room: relaxed or energized, restored or agitated, even how productive or distracted you are," says Simpson. 🍷

2021 Colors of the Year

- **Behr, Canyon Dusk:** Selected for its grounding, connective and tranquil properties. Canyon dusk is reminiscent of travels to ancient Moroccan cities and glowy sunsets.
- **Sherwin-Williams, Urbane Bronze:** This slate-like tone creates a statement with its modern appeal. Its "warmth and comfort breathe down-to-earth tranquility."
- **Benjamin Moore, Aegean Teal** is both soothing and uplifting, and encourages you to "celebrate the simple pleasures." The youthful hue looks dashing against bronze fixtures.

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What to Consider Before Tackling a Renovation

By Deanna Kane

A renovation project takes a substantial amount of planning — even if you're working with a professional. Hiring an interior designer, architect, contractor or a design-build firm will help you realize your vision and take the reins with executing it. But, to fully maximize your investment, thinking through what you're looking to gain from your renovation will ensure that you get the most from your project.

SPACE PLANNING 101

Before consulting with your remodeling team, understand how you currently use the space. Think through what works, what doesn't and what you would like improved. The professionals will take it from there.

"We encourage our clients to make some lists. One list should be what they like in their current home, then to also identify what they don't like," says Chad Speight, president of Chad's Design Build. "Our clients don't need to be able to solve those problems. That's what we do."

When space planning, the function of a space takes priority, and the form will follow.

"Always think of function first, and go through a checklist of how you operate at home," says Jean Kruzan, owner of J Kruzan Construction. "When you enter your home, do you have a good place to hang your jacket? A place to set your groceries? Do you have a good drop zone?"

In an HGTV-saturated world where the open floor plan is king, Kruzan suggests thinking through the alternatives before you become set on removing all the walls.

"You should also think about the flow of traffic and furniture placement when remodeling. Removing walls can change that," says Kruzan. "Consider if you're losing storage space, and if so, where will you make up for it if you knock out the wall, such as adding a closet or built-ins."

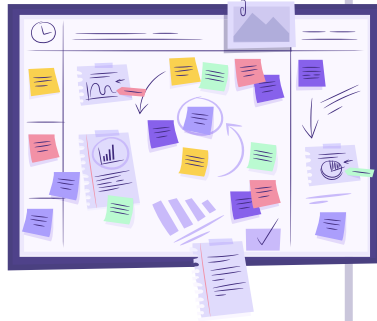
HAVE A PLAN, AND STICK TO IT

Many home renovation veterans have stories about how over budget their project went and how much longer it took to complete. The biggest reason for this is not having the layout and materials finalized. Not being confident on either of these elements is an easy way to incur costly and time-intensive changes.

"Planning is critical. If you start a demo and then have to wait weeks for the cabinets, the remodel will be a nightmare," says Kruzan. "Making decisions under pressure is not fun and can lead to bad choices."

Devising a plan isn't just to save time and money. This level of planning is key to creating a cohesive design scheme.

"Planning will help you see how everything will pull together in terms of colors, texture and flow. When you plan, you might consider how other areas of the house will be affected by the remodel," says Kruzan. "For instance, how is the new flooring and existing flooring going to tie in together? Do we extend painting into some of the surrounding areas?"



INTENTIONAL LIGHTING

Lighting shouldn't be an afterthought. Understanding how your contractor will install lighting can help you think about how much light you might need in a room. While lighting is an area that a professional will help you plan, visualizing it before your renovation will help you stay invested in the process.

One tip is to divide the ceiling into a grid to determine the amount of recessed lighting you need. Speight suggests, "Depending on how much light you want, center each light in one of those squares on the ceiling."

An important lighting detail to include is dimmers. Even if you can't visualize how much lighting you will need, dimmers will allow you to control the level of illumination.

"While lighting plans should be decided case-by-case, I do recommend putting in as much lighting as possible, because you can always put dimmers on to reduce the light," says Kruzan.



"Always think of function first, and go through a checklist of how you operate at home. When you enter your home, do you have a good place to hang your jacket? A place to set your groceries?"

— Jean Kruzan, owner of J Kruzan Construction

A SPEND VS. SAVE BREAKDOWN

To avoid renovation sticker shock, identify the areas where you want to splurge and where you can save. Particularly if this is a forever home, allocating a healthy portion of the budget to permanent design aspects is a smart investment.

"Homeowners should spend on the structure and mechanicals of the house: windows, insulation, furnaces, water heaters, lighting and cabinets," says Kruzan. Particularly during a kitchen renovation, investing in the right set of cabinets can pay off down the road.



"With cabinets, there are a few aspects that will explain the vast differences in costs," says Speight. "A typical cabinet is made out of MDF chipboard, which can expand and deteriorate when it gets wet. Plywood is a great upgrade to give you a sturdier box." To help reduce renovation costs, save on items that can be easily upgraded, like light fixtures and hardware.

Additionally, if there's a project you may want to complete in the future, such as a basement bathroom, Speight recommends installing the plumbing and wiring so those projects are easier to complete as your budget allows.

A LIFESTYLE APPROACH TO STORAGE

Overlooking the intricacies of storage can be common without a professional's insight. Kitchens, in particular, offer a wealth of storage options that aren't typically well-known to homeowners.

"Custom kitchen cabinet solutions allow everything we're used to seeing on a counter to be carefully stowed away. Drawers can organize cooking utensils more thoughtfully so you can find the items you need when you need them, and, they're not on the counter," says Speight.

Revisiting your list of what doesn't work can help provide valuable insight to your contractor (or construction firm), so they can help solve your storage dilemmas.



"We see cabinet solutions that allow you to access items in the back of the cabinet. It lets you view the cabinet like a drawer so you can see the items from the side," says Speight.

While the pros are here to help you bring your vision to life, understanding your basic renovation needs and how your space can best work for you will help you fully maximize your investment. 🏠

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Luxe ON THE Lake

Having enjoyed their Lake Geneva vacations for years, one family makes an abode on the water their permanent home — and renovated it for ultimate comfort, in top-tier style.

By Deanna Kane | Photography by Ensure Productions

Rose and Gaetano Lollino, and their son and daughter Gianni and Nicolette, had been visiting Williams Bay for years and fell in love with the area. When the Lollinos were ready to call Lake Geneva home, they knew exactly where they wanted to be — on the water.

The Chicago-based couple bought their five-bedroom, four-bathroom home on Geneva Lake five years ago. With the help of Stebnitz Builders, the Lollinos began renovating their coastal-inspired home from top to bottom, both inside and outside, in 2018 to create a more modern flow and functionality within the home — as well as ensuring the lake views took center stage.

The greatest design challenge for the Lollinos was renovating the interior of the home — reworking the flow of the first floor and adding square footage to create enough space to comfortably accommodate their guests. In order to accomplish those two main goals, the exterior ultimately became a major part of the renovation, too. But all the hard work and planning certainly paid off.

At the beginning of the project, Tracy McHugh, sales and brand manager at Stebnitz Builders, says the Lollinos came to them with some preliminary drawings from an architect they worked with in Chicago. “[Ultimately], the design won a Platinum 2019 Key Award by the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago,” she says.

During the renovation, the Lollinos leaned on Jeff Auberger, remodeling consultant and designer at Stebnitz Builders, to help guide them and bring their vision to life.



“Jeff was an anchor for me,” says Rose. “He helped me see through so many parts of the design process.”

KEEPING COMFORT FIRST

High on the Lollinos’ priority list — in addition to keeping the lake views central and visible on every level — was having ample space for all their guests.

“Creating a space where our guests feel comfortable is so important to us,” Rose says. “The amount of seating space and sleeping space were two of the most important parts of the renovation. The more we could maximize sleeping space, the better. We wanted our guests to have a comfortable place to sleep without having to blow up air mattresses.”

To accomplish this, the Lollinos added an additional story to the house to make space for a lofted bunk room and bathroom.

On the home’s main level, entertaining takes center stage with a comfortable seating area, a high-top table with seating for six, plus an additional kitchenette with lots of storage, a wine

GATHER AROUND

← The kitchen island waterfalls into a dining table. It's Rose Lollino's favorite aspect of the kitchen. Whether it's filled with people laughing and eating or not, it's beautiful to look at.



LET'S LOUNGE

↑ Just off the great room on the main level is a kitchenette stocked with snacks, a wine fridge and even a beer tap — giving the Lollinos and their guests additional space to quickly grab refreshments.

← During the renovation, the living spaces were given extra attention to ensure there was enough room for everyone to hang out. Here, guests can lounge on the couch, sit at the bar facing the great room or gather at the dining table.



fridge and even a beer tap. This main floor hub makes it easy for guests to grab snacks or drinks while lounging on the deck or hanging out in the living room.

INDOOR-OUTDOOR ENJOYMENT

To create a better flow, Stebnitz and the Lollinos focused their attention on the living spaces — particularly within the kitchen and great room. The original fireplace was relocated and a bay window with built-in seating was added to facilitate more fluidity in the home's central gathering space.

The kitchen island with a built-in, uniquely shaped dining table is Rose's favorite part of the house. Whether she has a house that is filled with family and friends gathered around it or the island is completely cleared, she can admire its beauty.

"The kitchen has beautiful zermatt quartzite countertops and

backsplashes. The island waterfalls into a dining table," says McHugh. It's a truly unique element that sets the design apart from what's typically seen in homes.

For the family, all of these wow-worthy spaces are yet another reason their waterfront move was the right choice, with options to seamlessly enjoy family time indoors, or take in the stunning lake views on their decks or boat. From the pier to the pergola, they take advantage of all the outdoor space their home has to offer.

After all, a big portion of the redesign was to showcase its best asset: the views of Geneva Lake, so it's no surprise that being lakeside is Rose's favorite part of the home.

"We often end up under the pergola in the front of the house in the evenings when the lake gets a little cooler, or in the lower-level screened-in room," says Rose. "But the pier is one of my favorite places at the lake to be." 🍷



COZY HOUSE GUESTS

← In order to accommodate friends and family who come to stay, an additional story was added to create a bunk room and bathroom for guests.





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MANIFESTING THE DREAM

After dreaming about a specific home style for 20 years,
a couple realizes their vision on Delavan Lake.

By Shelby Rowe Moyer | Photography by Shanna Wolf





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This is the home Stacia Hahn has been envisioning for decades. She and her husband, Eric Haas, have lived in Delavan for the last 20 years, and while their previous home was located on the far east end of the lake, Hahn had always dreamed of living on a busier part of the lake, where activity is constantly buzzing.

In 2018, they noticed a listing for a small home on Delavan Lake. While they initially passed it over, Hahn said they ultimately reconsidered and decided it was a good opportunity to move to their desired location. After closing on the property in late 2018, the couple opted to tear down the existing home and begin building anew with Geneva Lake Dream Homes.

Hahn came to Geneva Lake Dream Homes co-owner Ernie Tuchscherer with a very specific vision. And Tuchscherer says Hahn has great taste. She did all of the interior design herself, and she knew exactly what she wanted, he says, so it was just a matter of transforming her ideas into a functioning home.

In terms of the big picture, Hahn says she and Haas wanted the lake views to be the crowning jewel in every room, and they wanted ample space to entertain. Also, because this is Hahn's full-time residence — Haas spends most of the week in Green Bay where he works — the aesthetics were even more crucial.

"It was definitely important to have the home that was in my head for the last 20 years," she says. "I wanted a stairway tower; I wanted a large [owner's bedroom] and closet. I wanted a monochromatic color scheme — that has always appealed to me. I didn't want it to be a typical lake house. You [often] see the coastal-type look with a shaker roof and siding, so I knew I wanted black windows with white siding — more modern and contemporary with a lot of black and white. Stylish and classic."

The three-story, four-bedroom and four-bath home is certainly stylish and classic. The interior and exterior mirror each other beautifully with the monochromatic palette and clean lines that have an upscale aesthetic.



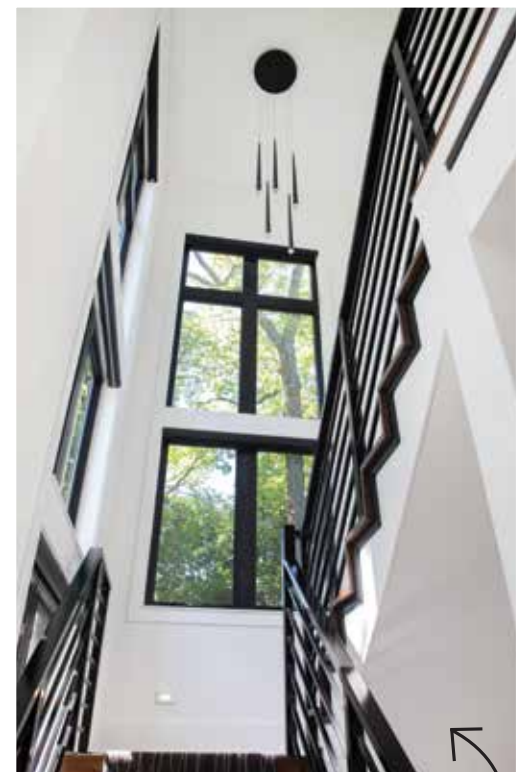
MODERN FUNCTIONALITY

Ernie Tuchscherer of Geneva Lake Dream Homes says the No. 1 request he gets is open-concept living. “[Homeowners] don’t want all of these dens and a dining room. They want a large eating area off the great room and large counters. Everyone wants these 8-to-10-foot islands that people can [gather] around.”

VISUAL CONTRAST

Stacia Hahn points to the dramatic fireplace as a special element. To break up the white in the room, she came up with the idea to install the black bench underneath.

The 12-foot-high ceiling with an exaggerated coffered design also adds extra dimension to the room.



Hahn has long dreamed of this statement staircase tower. The black railing was custom fabricated, and it, along with the black trim windows, creates beautiful visual depth.

SUITE STYLE

Hahn wanted an oversized owner's bedroom. It easily holds their king size bed, plus has a sitting area with a sectional and TV. She sourced the bed, couch, pillows and cube poufs from CB2.

SPA-WORTHY

The free-standing steam shower, soaking tub and floating vanity were must-haves, Hahn says. "The shower is really large. It's just nice to go in there and sit for a half hour, and the glass pivots, so you can fully enclose it."





The lower level has a cool, masculine vibe that incorporates some heirloom family furniture. In the wine room, they placed Haas's great-great-grandfather's sofa and his grandmother's college trunk. From Hahn's side of the family, she was happy to mount the antelope her father shot in Wyoming over the bar, and she also has her grandfather's cigar table and her great-great-grandmother's gold pocket watch.



Outdoor living is abundant with the family's two decks and lower-level seating area. Hahn says the fire pit on the lower level was a must.

PURE ELEGANCE

The vanity was custom-built based on a sketch Hahn made to convey her vision, and the floor tile was carried into the shower and up the wall to make the room feel longer.



Hahn was very intentional about carrying the design from room to room. Because the majority of the interior is white, she went with white oak flooring that was stained a rich, dark hue to warm up the rooms on the main level and add some color. Design is carried through in the selection of light fixtures as well. All the fixtures are black (except in the lower level) and spherical, which help break up the linear look of the furnishings and architectural details.

The lower level is the only area that breaks away from Hahn's white and black color scheme. It has walk-out access to the lake, which brightens the rustic, industrial gray of the bar, and the orange bar stools are the only pop of color you'll find in the home.

"I wanted it to be more masculine," she says. "Just to shake it up."

In the basement they were able to incorporate some special heirloom pieces that lend themselves to the masculine vibe. In the wine room,



they used Haas' great-great-grandfather's sofa — which they had reupholstered — and the trunk his grandmother took to college.

Tuchscherer says the look of the lower level is one of his favorite aspects of the house. "They made good use of [the space] with the pub, eating area and exercise room. Behind that, there's an office for Stacia that overlooks the lake."

Now more than ever, homeowners are asking for dedicated office space, as well as a flex room that can be used as a guest bedroom or an additional office — which is also present in Hahn and Haas' home, he says.

Hahn and Haas moved into the home in May 2020, and they've gotten extensive use out of every square foot. The exercise room, for example, has always been on Hahn and Haas' wish list, and with the pandemic, they've been able to stay healthy at home.

Her advice to others embarking on a new build is to have "a general idea of what you're looking for before the process begins and the ability to make decisions quickly, but also take the advice of others. Be open to other opinions, especially the experts, because they're all invaluable." 🐾

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A MODERN MASTERPIECE

Clean lines and an airy flow drove the design of this Geneva Lake home that was also designed with future accessibility in mind.

By Shelby Rowe Moyer | Photography by Shanna Wolf



3 BEDROOMS | 5 BATHROOMS



Designing a home that looks good and functions well is always the No. 1 goal when building a new dwelling. And when the two seamlessly merge, that's when the magic happens. Such is the case for one family's Geneva Lake home, which has an immense level of detail and functionality in it, yet has an artistic edge that invites visitors to appreciate its uniqueness.

Describing it as their forever home, the homeowners say that during the design process they considered how each decision would allow them to age in place.

The family didn't want to compromise on space. To work within the constraints the narrow lot posed, they built a three-story home, which included three bedrooms and five bathrooms. Because they couldn't fit an owner's suite on the main level, they chose to include an elevator in the home to maximize future accessibility.

In addition to the main living spaces, the first floor also boasts a sunroom, an office and a library that doubles as a flex space for office work or entertaining guests. On the lower level, the homeowners have more room to entertain with a secondary living room and a

bar, plus an exercise room, recreation space and storage. Rooms flow seamlessly from one to the next, equipped with wide doorways that make the home feel open, while also maintaining the individual integrity of each room.

The owners have long wanted to live in a house like this. They moved to Lake Geneva in 2012 after spending nearly 30 years in Chicago. Prior to building their home, they lived in a condo in Lake Geneva while searching for the ideal lake lot. They wanted a house that was within walking distance of downtown and also capitalized on sunset views. After some searching, they closed on this property in 2018, and began the build process with Lowell Custom Homes.

Scott Lowell, president and founder of Lowell Custom Homes, says the homeowners knew exactly what they wanted, and they were dialed in to how they wanted the home to look and function.

He describes the overall aesthetic as "transitional traditional" — the exterior has a more traditional vibe, while the interior leans a little more contemporary. As part of Lowell Custom Homes' services,



they connected the homeowners with interior designer Beth Welsh of Interior Changes.

Welsh worked closely with the homeowners, and they often consulted with her before making any decisions. They wanted everything within the home to feel intentional and cohesive, and Welsh helped keep them on that track.

On the first floor, everything is anchored by the expansive, all-white kitchen. The ultra-modern kitchen has an incredible array of storage features that are hidden behind sleek cabinetry. A set of doors next to the refrigerator, for example, open to reveal a large pantry where glassware, dry goods and small appliances are stored. In the main part of the kitchen, drawers neatly corral loose cooking utensils. The holy grail, however, might be the custom sink. It's roughly five feet long, and makes food prep and assembly

CLUTTER-FREE KITCHEN

The 5-foot-long, double-faucet sink — called a “workstation” — was crafted with room for ample kitchen accessories, says Natalie Spiniolas, senior designer at Geneva Cabinet Company (which custom-built all of the cabinetry throughout the home). “Everything is extremely customizable, and there are hundreds of accessories that [can] go into the sink. We made all of the cabinets [underneath] that hold all the accessories — strainers, cutting boards, serving dishes. [The owners] did not want any clutter. Every cabinet has some kind of storage.”



↑ Scott Lowell, owner and founder of Lowell Custom Homes, likes to create visual interest on ceilings within the main living spaces of the homes they work on. “It creates a different ambiance in different parts of the home,” Lowell says.

← The vanity in the main floor bathroom is a true showstopper. The homeowners came across this fossilized stone top at a remnants store, and fell in love with it. Special lighting was installed underneath to capitalize on the stone’s crystallization.

ELEVATED OFFICE

The wood-paneled office has the feel of a bygone era without losing its contemporary edge. The owners opted for cherry wood because of its fine-grained appearance, and it strikes the perfect balance between light and dark. The windows make the space feel more open, as do the glass French doors.



so much easier with removable compartments that can catch food scraps or hold cutlery.

The kitchen is open to the great room, which flows beautifully in to a sitting room that has, potentially, the best views of the lake. Also on the first floor is a spotlight-worthy, all-wood office, as well as a library that doubles as a flex space where the couple can work or entertain guests.

The homeowners spent a lot of time considering which species and shade of wood would wrap the interior of the office and tried to strike the perfect balance between light and dark.

Ultimately, they were inspired by the buttery walnut wood on their Eames lounge chair. From there, they landed on cherry wood for the walls, built-ins and ceiling because of its fine-grained, even appearance.

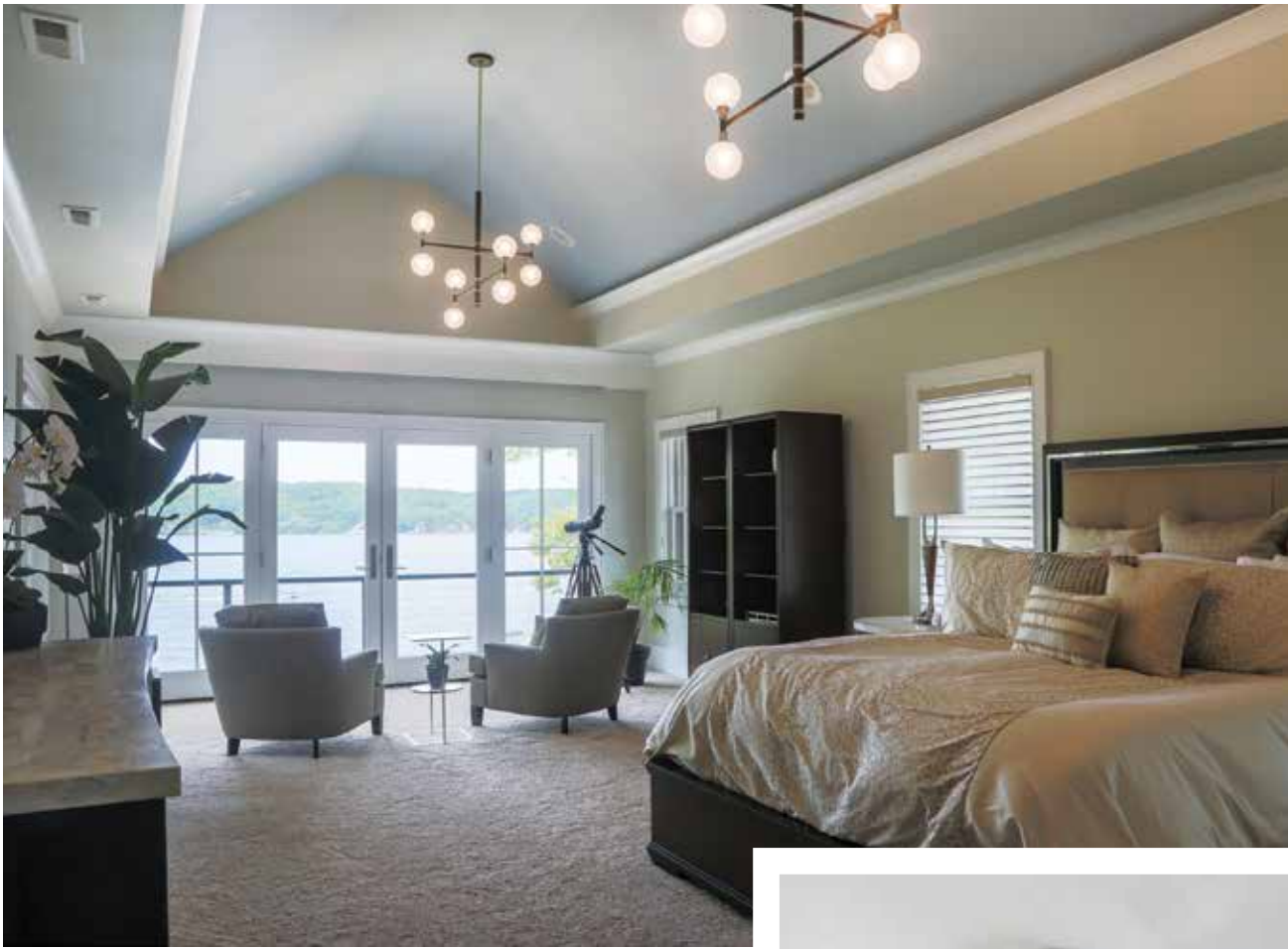
The end result is a warm space with a nod to Scandinavian design. “There’s a soothing [quality] to it,” the owner says. “The house has this very zen feel, and there’s a zen-ness to the office. [It has] clean lines, but there’s uniqueness to it.”

In the owner’s suite, the room’s muted design allows the floor-to-ceiling lake views to capture all the attention. The wide-open bathroom was designed with accessibility in mind, including the zero-entry shower.



And, the closet is a fashion lover’s dream. Aside from the specialty lighting and cabinetry, there’s also a secondary closet for extra storage that opens up to the guest bedroom closet, allowing for natural light from the guest closet window to flow in.

Their home was finished and they moved in right before the pandemic began and everything shut down, the owner says. Because this is their full-time residence, they designed it with comfort in mind — a silver lining, you could say, to suddenly becoming homebound. 🐾



CUSTOM CRAFTED

Lighting was a crucial part of the planning for the owner's closet. All of the rods and shelves are outfitted with lighting, making it easier to find items within the closet. Spiniolas said Geneva Cabinet Company configured the measurements around the number of shirts that would be hanging and even the length of pants to create a totally custom design.



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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a striped long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, stands on a wooden deck holding a small white dog. A man in a light blue button-down shirt and blue jeans sits in a wooden rocking chair next to her. In the foreground, a large white dog sits on the deck. Behind them is a large stone fireplace with a fire burning inside. The background is filled with lush green trees.

THE ULTIMATE UP NORTH GETAWAY

A Northwoods home has been a sanctuary for the Eldred family for nearly 20 years, and after an extensive renovation, it's even more perfect for this family that loves to entertain.

By Shelby Rowe Moyer | Photography by Shanna Wolf



Heidi and Steve Eldred live full-time in Beloit — roughly 50 miles southwest of Madison — however, their Northwoods property is a true home away from home. After decades of vacationing in this spectacular northern lakes area of Wisconsin, they decided to purchase a beautiful piece of property. Their purchase, on the Manitowish Chain of Lakes, gave them the waterfront access and the excellent fishing they desired.

Since buying the home, much of the interior has changed, Heidi says. The stately stone fireplace in the great room has remained the same, but the couple added large windows that boast lake views — and bring in tons of natural light.

The most recent round of renovations, which began in 2018, have really taken the home to another level.

The Eldreds love to cook and entertain. Their three grown children often spend summers with them at their Northwoods home — along with their friends and their friends' parents, who drop by for a homemade meal.

All of these gatherings spurred their initial conversations with interior designer Lisa Africano to help them come up with a kitchen and dining room layout that worked for their lifestyle. Bringing talented Manitowish Waters contractor Jim Meier of Jim Meier Builders onboard the project was the next important step.

Prior to the renovation, the kitchen and dining room were cramped, and the walls angled down in less-than-flattering spots. As is common during

MODERN LIVING

← In order to maximize space and retain natural light, interior designer Lisa Africano added in a wall separating Heidi and Steve Eldred's vanities.

↓ Prior to the renovation, the owner's suite overlooked the driveway — less than ideal when there's a lake on the other side of the home! To solve this, Africano designed the new owner's suite to have floor-to-ceiling windows and sliding doors on the lake side wall leading into the sunroom.



← Steve's favorite room, the sunroom, had a structural failing, which kicked off an additional tear down and rebuild of this space. The windows and sliding doors connect to the owner's suite.

The sunroom also flows into Heidi's office, where she can do a little work or some yoga. Each of the three connected rooms — the office, sunroom and master bedroom — can be closed off for privacy.



A CHEF'S KITCHEN

The mixed materials used in the kitchen add intrigue and also make the kitchen feel cohesive with the rest of the home. The minimalist cabinetry (painted Benjamin Moore Sidewalk Grey) feels very contemporary and the smoky-hued wood island and range hood lend a rustic vibe.

The industrial pendant lights over the island play off of the brushed brass sconces flanking the range, as well as the concrete table in the dining room.

"We found the lights first and wanted them to be in the kitchen, so we built a lot of the design around that," Heidi says. "I think of lighting as the jewelry of the room. They were kind of a throwback to a bygone era, but also modern."



↑ The stone fireplace is a favorite feature of Heidi's, and they kept it when they bought the home. Other than the fireplace, much of the home felt dated, according to Heidi, with mauve and peach tones. "We've made it feel like it belongs [Up North]."

The woman looking at the camera in this photo is Sarah, the Eldred's daughter.



STAY AWHILE

The Eldreds' three kids often have friends in tow when they come to stay. In order to better accommodate their much-loved guests, the upstairs needed to accommodate at least 10 people.

Katie and Sarah's (the Eldreds' daughters) bedroom (far left) has two queen beds and feels more luxurious. The leather throw pillows emblazoned with antique images were sourced from *Roughing It in Style*, located in Hazelhurst, a great resource for rustic decor.

Their son Jack's room was meant to be a "flop-pable" space for him and all his friends.

renovations, conversations about how to enlarge and remodel those spaces quickly spun into more projects throughout the home.

Steve's sunroom was failing structurally, so they opted to tear it down and rebuild the space.

During this major renovation, they added square footage to the kitchen and rebuilt the sunroom and the owner's bedroom. The additional square footage also allowed them to add a bedroom with an ensuite on the lower level, which now also has walk-out access to the lake.

To help the new spaces blend with the existing ones, Africano worked with the Eldreds on a design theme that looks upscale without sacrificing the cozy, Up North feel of the home. The aesthetic is a beautiful blend of contemporary (brass fixtures and midcentury modern lighting) and homey textures, such as leather and wool accents.


"We want people to feel welcome and like they're part of the family, and we wanted the design to reflect that," Heidi says. "... We want people to come in, and we want them to stay." 🐾



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Sporty Summers: A woman in the back of a motorboat watches a man slalom ski on Geneva Lake. The actual date of this photo is unknown, but it's estimated to have been captured in the '60s or '70s.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY (WHS-130629)



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