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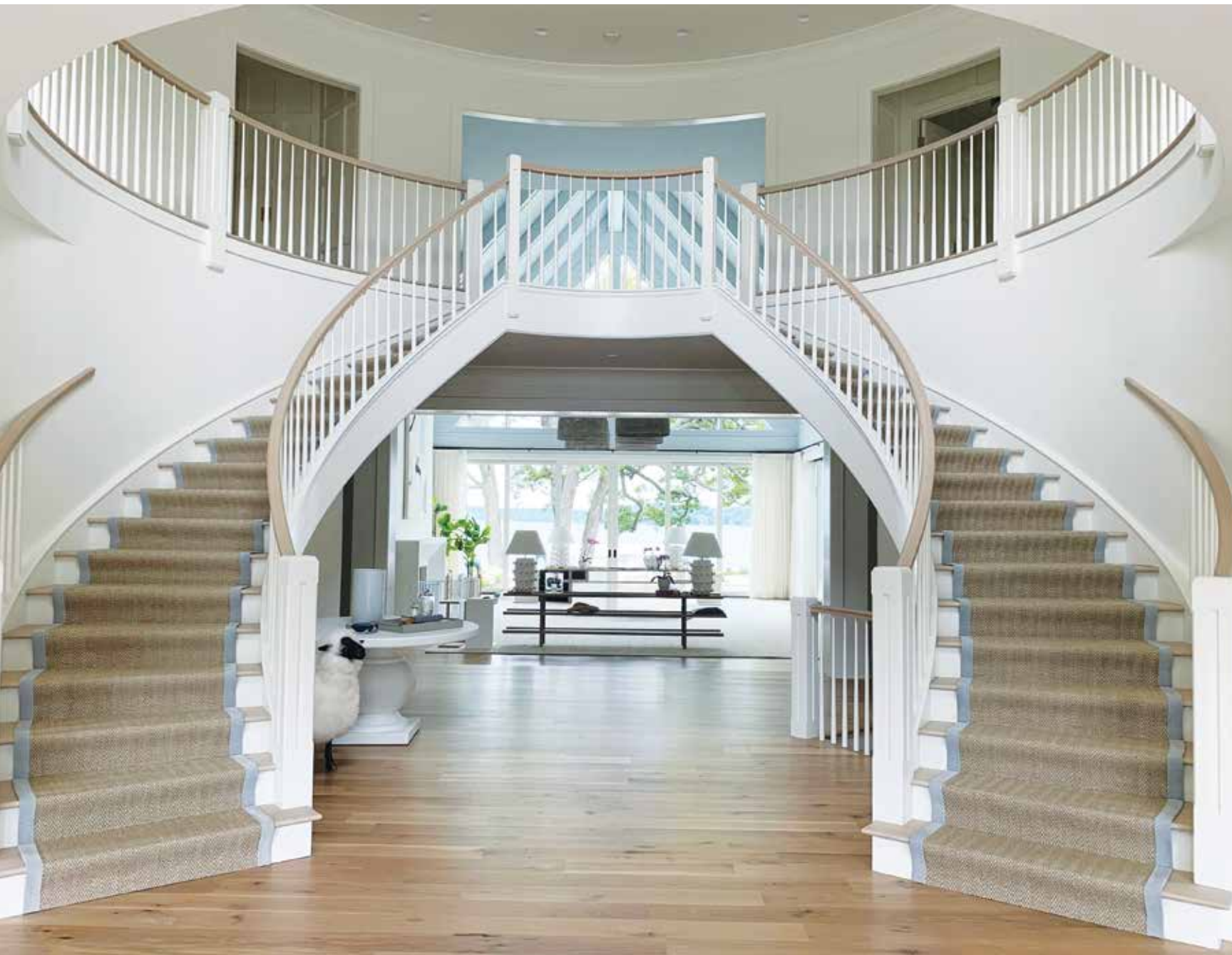
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The Latest and Greatest

Greetings, and welcome to our annual issue of Lakeshore Living Lake Geneva!

I always look forward to working on this publication because we showcase the very best of the Lake Geneva area, including spectacular houses, innovative businesses and the latest home trends. The properties we feature are designed with entertaining and easy living in mind, and many have the latest trends and technologies implemented in their designs.

The first time I saw a porch with motorized screens (in which the screens go up or down with the touch of a button) was about five years ago, in a lakefront home we were featuring. Since then, many of the homes we've written about have incorporated this into their outdoor spaces. Unique touches like these are what make a lake home feel like a special getaway.

"What we've found working on a lot of vacation homes is that it's a different way of living," explains Suzanne Glavin, principal designer and co-founder of North Shore Nest, an Illinois-based interior design firm. "You need to design [the] home so it's very easy and efficient to bring large groups together ..."

We'd love it if you can use this issue to help inspire your own home projects, take away some entertaining tips and enjoy beautiful home photography. So, take a moment to relax, open this issue and get inspired.

Enjoy the lake!

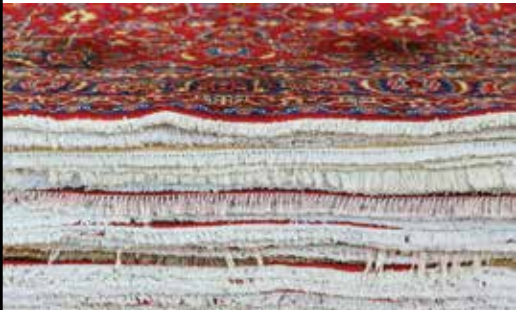
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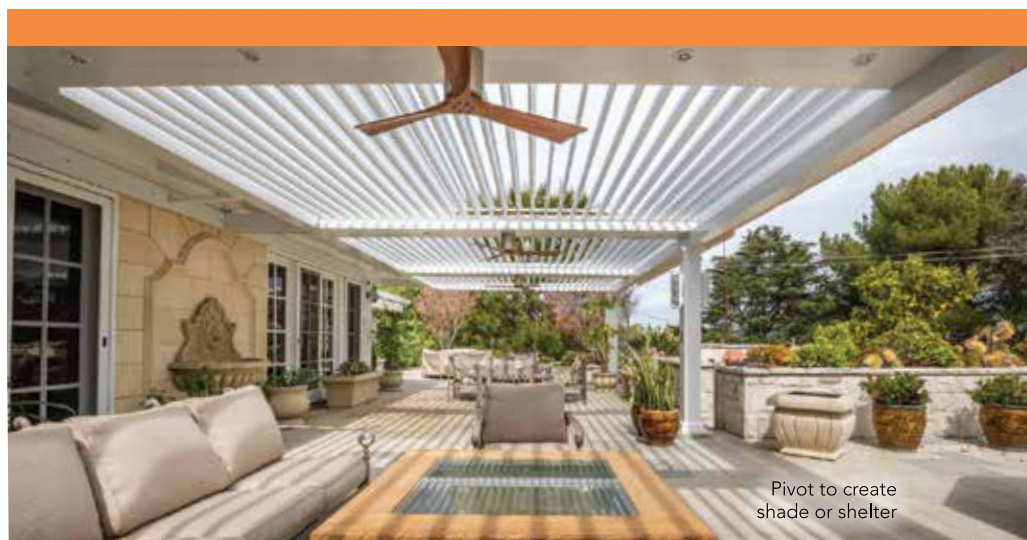
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***Lake Home
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BOB WEBSTER*Realtor**Compass Wisconsin*

An expert in the luxury, "second-home" market in southeastern Wisconsin, Bob Webster has been in the Lake Geneva real estate industry for over 40 years and is uniquely prepared to serve his clients looking to enjoy the "Lake Geneva lake life."

Webster was born and raised in the Lake Geneva area, giving him a deep knowledge of the community. "My wife and I have lived in Fontana for over 40 years and raised our children here," he says. "We really appreciate all the natural beauty in this area as well as all the benefits of small-town living."

Describing his style as "purposeful" and "confident," Webster says he's always trying to under-promise and over-deliver at every opportunity during a transaction. "I treat each and every one of my clients the way I would want to be treated," he says. "They find comfort knowing I'm always striving to meet their goals and needs."

Webster has earned several real estate designations, awards and recognition over the years dating back to the early 1990s when he served as president of the Lakes Area Realtors Association and also received the Realtor of the Year award. Most recently, he received the Distinguished Service Award from the Wisconsin Realtors Association in 2021. However, he says past client referrals are the highest compliment of all.

"I'm a seasoned professional who will leave no stone unturned and am willing to go the extra mile to do whatever it takes to get the job done for my clients," he says. "More wrinkles in the face means less wrinkles in the transaction."

Webster acknowledges much of his success to his loyal assistant for over 15 years, Lisa Pitcher, who he says is both a wonderful person and the best, by far, at what she does.

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Clean Scene

Home décor pieces in neutrals and wood tones quietly enhance any space.

Styling and photography by Holly Leitner




Clockwise from top left: Be Home mango wood/enamel serving set, \$49.99, **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**; stoneware taper candle holders, \$10.95, **Cashmere Compass**; bourbon and bergamot candle with leather wrap, \$27, **Paper Dolls**; Lake Art, LLC Cribbage set, \$99.99, **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**; wooden vases, \$19/each, **Paper Dolls**; glass carafe set, \$34.95, **Cashmere Compass**; and Be Home mango wood/enamel bowl, \$74.99, **Cornerstone Shop & Gallery**. 🐾



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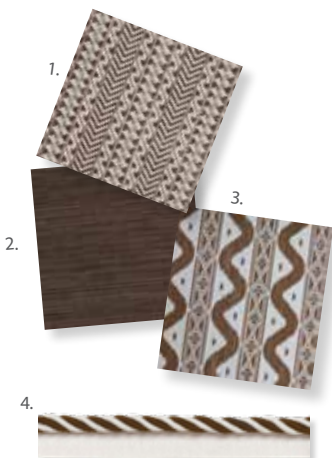




Anything But Boring

Nicholas Konzal of Nicholas Carl Design is a master of creating sophisticated and luxurious one-of-a-kind interiors. His Milwaukee-based, award-winning design firm created a show-stopping space at the 2022 Wisconsin Breast Cancer Showhouse. This moody space proves that brown is anything but boring — it can be captivating.

"I was inspired by the view in this room, but also the function. I designed this space as a secondary hangout to the main living room and first floor. A chance to invite guests for an after-party drink, and to enjoy the fireplace," he explains. "I chose the color blue to play as an accent to the brown walls. I needed a powerful color to draw your eye into the space and make you engaged. The navy blue of the sofa was the perfect color to accomplish this."



Pattern Play

Use wallcoverings, trim and fabric to mix and match shades of brown.

1. **Luxor wallcovering in coco/parchment,**
lisafinetextiles.com
2. **Manila hemp wallcovering in truffle brown,**
phillipjeffries.com
3. **Ikat Stripe fabric in chestnut brown,**
mrsalice.com
4. **Capri lipcord in java,**
schumacher.com

Shop the Look

Sophia bedside carafe and tumbler, \$250,
aerin.com



Channels blue and cream throw pillow, \$180,
ariannabell.com



Truro side table, \$998,
serenaandlily.com



Capri sofa, \$1,995-\$6,895,
williams-sonoma.com

Hue Cues



TANNER'S BROWN, *Farrow & Ball* (No. 255): This rich brown color is warm with a lot of depth. Perfect on millwork or in a powder room to create a moody vibe.



TARPLEY BROWN, *Benjamin Moore* (CW-170): A sophisticated tone that's ideal for a den or home office where it can be used on walls, trim and ceiling for a luxe feel.



BEACHCOMBER, *Benjamin Moore* (993): A color that's perfect for those who don't want to go all-in on brown. Lighter than other colors, it's a pretty brown hue with undertones of taupe.

Produced by Alexandra Wood
@alexandrawooddesign





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A Ravishing Renovation

A Burlington home gets a head-to-toe makeover.

By Shayna Mace | Photography by Shanna Wolf



When Colleen and Jeff Bailet and their daughters, Ava and Isabelle, decided to move back to the Lake Geneva area after a four-year stint in the Bay Area in California, they found a home on a five-acre parcel in Burlington that checked all of their boxes. Despite the property size, the couple knew they wanted to extensively renovate the home's interior.

"It had a hodgepodge of carpet, tile and various wood [flooring], and we knew we were going to rip it all out. We knew we'd paint the entire house. We wanted to completely gut and transform



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Top: The Ralph Lauren pendant lights are a show-stopper in the kitchen, among other touches. *Right:* Colleen commissioned a custom painting by Alabama-based artist Liz Lane to fit her office's bookcase. *Left:* Pup Rivi lounges in the home's family room.



Top left: A Visual Comfort light fixture hangs above Colleen's desk. The furnishings are from Restoration Hardware. *Top right:* The laundry room is closed off with a stylish barn door. *Bottom:* The couple added in luxurious, built-in, tufted banquette seating in the dining room.

the primary bathroom and remodel the other bathrooms. The kitchen was going to be reconfigured. And, we wanted to gut a back stairway, entryway and laundry room to expand that into one large area," Colleen explains.

In other words, they desired a whole-home renovation. The couple turned to Beth Welch of Interior Changes and contractor R.J. Amann of Amann Builders for assistance. Welch helped the couple reimagine the structural changes throughout, and Amann executed the vision.

Some areas, such as the front sitting room, underwent smaller changes, such as reshaping the arched openings that look into the room (see [page 19](#)). Amann added an attractive built-in bookcase in Colleen's office, also located in the front of the home.

Other changes were far more extensive. The couple added an additional entryway into the kitchen to help with traffic flow. They completely reconfigured the kitchen and shuffled the appliances around. They added a kitchen island (painted in Benjamin Moore's Gentle Gray) and topped it with a quartz countertop. The opening into the adjoining family room was widened by roughly 50% to bring the rooms seamlessly together.





The Bailet's laundry room has a soothing white and gray palette. Far from a utilitarian space, Colleen brought in style via the marble backsplash from Bella Tile & Stone, quartz countertops and Visual Comfort light fixtures.

Behind the kitchen, the expanded laundry room came about from stealing some square footage from a small garage entryway. Colleen loves the functionality of the room, which features cabinetry (painted in Benjamin Moore's Mineral Alloy), an island that's used for folding laundry and a beautiful marble tile backsplash from Bella Tile & Stone (from which all of the home's tile was sourced).

"[Our home] was truly transformed. It's light, it's airy and comfortable. It's no longer dated," says Colleen. "And I feel like each space has been utilized in a very smart way." 🐾

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Styling by Shayna Mace | Photography by Hillary Schave



Tailored Shorts

KanCan denim jacket, \$68, iltm shorts, \$79, and ee:some black sweater, \$39, all from **Bloomingbyrds**; silver chain necklace, \$22, Lucas handbag, \$69, and LA|TC Eden baseball cap, \$49, all from **Pink Moon Bay**; and dolce vita Zina leather sneaker, \$125, **Jayne**.



A Two-Piece Set

Free People Tovah two-piece set, \$148, BC Bags nylon belt bag, \$42, Sofft Gabella wedge sandal, \$120, and Hoodoo sunglasses, \$50, all from **Jayne**; and necklace, \$36, **Pink Moon Bay**.



An Easy-Breezy Sundress

Soho Pink Moon Bay Garden Party sundress, \$89, and hoops, \$32, **Pink Moon Bay**; Esqualo leather jacket, \$159, **Bloomingbyrds**; Optic Nerve sunglasses, \$40, **Jayne**; Chinese Laundry nylon crossbody handbag, \$96, and Ateliers Dixie heeled sandal, \$158, **Jayne**.



A Midi Skirt

Liverpool Los Angeles Prairie denim jacket, \$109, Lost + Wander Eternal Lights midi skirt, \$88, RD Style Maria rubbed muscle tank, \$48, BC Bags Cindy wicker handbag, \$48, and dolce vita Riva raffia sandal, \$125, all from **Jayne**; Ruggine hat, \$39, **Bloomingbyrds**, and necklace, \$28, **Pink Moon Bay**.



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That Homey Feeling

By Shayna Mace

When beloved local eatery Novak's closed back in 2019, Kathie Perkins and her husband, Wally, spotted an opportunity for a fresh start. The Barrington, Illinois, couple had owned a vacation home in Fontana for the last 25 years. They decided to pack up, move to the area full time and open a new business.

The couple tore down the old building and built anew. Kathie snagged a spot for her new home décor shop, Fontana Home. Two doors down, Wally co-owns Little Bar with Novak's former owner, Pete Novak.

Fontana Home's breezy aesthetic reflects the lake lifestyle of the area. Shoppers will find tableware, prints, lake-themed décor, gourmet kitchen items, vintage pieces and more. Kathie also hosts classes, such as painting lessons, charcuterie board arranging and more. Conveniently, the classes are held at Little Bar.

"I want [Fontana Home] to be a gathering place too," explains Kathie. "We love this community. We want it to feel like you're coming in our home here, and we treat our customers like that." 🐾



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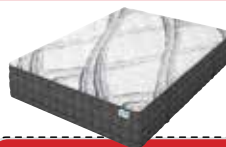
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The Beauty of Vintage

Unearth treasures and make your interiors more personal with the help of bygone pieces.

By Shelby Deering



We asked three area vintage pros to dispense their best words of wisdom for shopping pieces, learning as you go and weaving finds into your home.

Make it Personal

When it comes to shopping for antiques and vintage items, one thing's for sure: it has to appeal to your tastes and personality. Who cares if it's on-trend or not? If you love it, that's all that matters.

"I tend to look for something that makes me smile," says Therese Turnbaugh, who co-owns Walworth's Angelus Home & Garden with her sister, Jeannene Clark. "It's usually a particular color or something that sparks a good memory for me."



Philip Sassano, principal at The Design Coach, LLC, says that vintage items have a unique ability to connect with people as if they're "soaked in nostalgia."

And Tereasa Surratt, co-owner of Elkhorn's Camp Wandawega, has a simple question you can ask yourself: Does it speak to you?

She says, "If it makes your heart sing when you first see it, then grab it up."

Do Your Homework

While it's perfectly acceptable to snatch up whatever item

speaks to your soul, it can help to be armed with a little knowledge.

Surratt recommends having your smartphone handy when shopping to do "fast research" on something, to detect whether something is a knock-off, to price-compare online or just to see how "common" an item is.

You can also chat up vendors, sellers and proprietors and learn more about a piece that "stops you in your tracks," as Turnbaugh puts it.

"Many times, the seller will give you a history or details that will strike a chord and you will not want to leave it behind," she says. Once you get it home, you can further research it.

Also, shopping regularly can build up your know-how.

"If you shop the flea markets, you'll begin to know the prices as well," Turnbaugh says. "Just because there is a price tag on something doesn't necessarily mean that's the value."

She adds that there is plenty of information on the internet to figure out the general value of something.

Authenticate Items

If you really start to get into vintage shopping, you may want to start authenticating items — reproductions and knock-offs just won't do for your curated collection.



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"This is getting more difficult every year as quality reproductions are made available and often passed off as authentically vintage," Sassano points out. He suggests limiting your purchases to qualified and experienced dealers.

"I love to buy from established collectors and longtime salvage soldiers who can share their personal journey or discovery of a particular item," he says.

Turnbaugh advises being on the lookout for imprinted trademarks or stamps on items (this is where that homework comes in). Once you get familiar with particular makes, designers or manufacturers, you'll be able to spot these pieces a mile away.

"There are professional appraisers who can help authenticate an item if the buyer doesn't feel confident researching it," she says.

Have Spots in Mind for Pieces

Although vintage shopping, at its core, should be a carefree venture filled with flights of fancy, Surratt suggests being honest: "Do you have a spot for it? If you can't picture it in a specific place, then you probably don't need it."

Turnbaugh agrees that antiques should each have a place.

"If I was to start a vintage dishware collection, I'd want a display cabinet just for that," she muses. "I wouldn't throw my vintage items in with my everyday dishes. Same with furniture. If it's a single piece, make sure it's in scale with the other furnishings around it." 🐾

Shelby Deering is a freelance lifestyle writer living in Madison.

Where To Shop

The Lake Geneva area has many options for antique and vintage shopping.

Angelus Home & Garden

angelushome.com

Elkhorn Antique Flea Market

elkhornantiquefleamarket.com

Lake Geneva Antique Mall

lakegenevaantiquemall.com

Maple Park Antiques of Lake Geneva

facebook.com/people/Maple-Park-Antiques-of-Lake-Geneva

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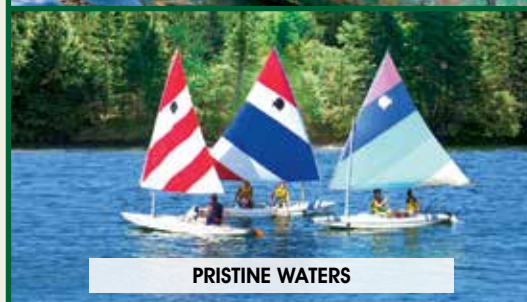
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Beauty Underfoot

How to choose the right flooring for your home.

By Maura Keller

Flooring is an essential component to every home and is quite literally the foundation of every room's aesthetic. From rich, exotic hardwoods to pre-engineered luxury plank to stunning handmade tile or porcelain, flooring is crucial to tying together a home's overall look.

When choosing flooring, think about its function and location in your home, your lifestyle and its durability.

"With the variety of different types of flooring available today, it can get quite overwhelming," says Linda Kreye, head of sales and design at Four Seasons Flooring in Delavan. "There's only one rule you must keep in mind when choosing flooring, and that is flexibility. Each type is excellent depending on the intended occupants of a house, a room's function, your budget and so on."

Dianne Fasano, owner at Bella Tile & Stone in Lake Geneva, says when selecting tile or stone in the home, it's key for homeowners to think about their design aesthetic and where the flooring will be used in the home. This is especially important in areas that have moisture — such as spaces that guests use to enter a home after water activities.

"Also, maintenance is another factor people should consider. Natural stone is very beautiful, but does require resealing every few years based on amount of use," Fasano says. "Whereas tile or porcelains are basically maintenance free."

Here's a quick and easy explainer on kinds of flooring, what to consider when making your flooring decisions and how each type can be ideal for different areas in your home.



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Carpet

Pros: Carpet is fairly inexpensive. Compared to other flooring types, carpeting tends to be cheaper. It's also quieter, softer, versatile, hides dirt in most cases, and it's easier and faster to install.

Cons: Carpet will show wear and tear and does require maintenance, including frequent vacuuming and cleaning once or twice a year. Carpet isn't ideal for areas with a lot of moisture or outdoor activity.

Hardwood

Pros: Hard and heavy, there is nothing quite like natural wood flooring. With stylish grain patterns and unique species in a variety of hues, wood flooring provides beauty and charm underfoot. Also, hardwood comes in various widths, can be fine milled or hand scraped.

Hardwood floors also provide a neutral background that allows for a multitude of designs, thanks to the variety of species available. It can be easy to maintain.

Cons: Hardwoods can be expensive, susceptible to moisture damage and can be easily scratched. They also typically need to be refinished over time. And, areas that have heavy, daily sun exposure may experience fading or lightening.



Vinyl

Pros: Vinyl flooring has come a long way in the last several years. It is relatively indestructible while also being resistant to moisture.

"It is the easiest of the floor options to install and is usually the most inexpensive," Fasano says. "When selecting vinyl flooring, it is important to look at the wear level. Vinyl

flooring can range in wear from 12 mil to 20 mil. The higher the wear number, the more durable the vinyl will be over time."

Vinyl flooring is durable, easy to install, requires little maintenance, has an attractive look and is water-resistant.

Cons: Vinyl can be damaged more easily than some other types of flooring. Also, fading may occur with direct sunlight. This material is also not biodegradable.

Laminate

Pros: Laminate is made from pressed wood. It's more durable and resists scratches, moisture, and wear and tear. This type of flooring is also easier to clean.

Cons: Even though laminate is more durable, it is not as visually appealing. The lower qualities of laminate may have artificial-looking wood grain textures.



Ceramic and Porcelain Tile

Pros: Ceramic and porcelain tile are probably the most interesting and creative of the flooring types. Some options include natural stone, cement, terra cotta and an array of porcelains.

"In the last 10 years, tile options have changed dramatically," says Fasano. "We are seeing far more color and shapes of all tiles with brighter colors being an absolute trend in 2023."

Tile flooring is strong and has a beautiful appearance. It is resistant to moisture and stains, bacteria and allergies, abrasion and extreme heat. It's also easy to clean. Tile is available in a staggering variety of shapes, patterns, sizes and colors. Tile can also be installed practically anywhere in the home.

Cons: Tile can be expensive compared to other types of flooring. The grout between tiles needs to be actively maintained, especially in high-traffic areas. Staining, crumbling and mold are all issues to look out for.

"Tile is also infamous for cooling down during the winter months," Kreye says. "Installing radiant heating is a game-changer if you want to keep your tile floors warm underfoot. However, radiant heating can be a pricey add-on — but well worth the investment."

Luxury Vinyl Plank

Pros: Luxury vinyl plank flooring is durable and is scuff- and dent-resistant. It's also a cost-effective way to bring style in your space.

This material is sometimes cheaper than traditional hardwood, and can offer a similar look. Luxury vinyl plank has near-infinite options for looks mimicking materials like wood, stone and color palettes to match any décor.

Cons: If your room has a lot of natural lighting, this can lead to fading in spots over time. Luxury vinyl plank cannot be refinished. 🐾

Maura Keller is a Midwest-based freelance writer and editor.



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Down to Earth

Bring the outdoors inside with these five tips.

By Shelby Deering | Photography by Martin Menocal, Menocal Pictures



Think back to the last time you went on a hike or sat in your garden. Did you ground yourself in the moment? Did it ease your nerves and lift your spirits? If so, it's not all in your head.

In a study from the journal *Mind*, 95% of participants reported an improved mood after spending time outdoors. Another study, published in 2014 in the *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, cited that people start feeling these positive effects after only 15 minutes outside. It's no wonder that during the pandemic and in these stressful times, many of us are craving nature more than ever before.

This desire to experience more of the outdoors has crossed over into our homes. It's called biophilic design, and it's quickly becoming a leading interior design trend.

Stemming from a Greek word for "love of living things," Joy Pontrello, creator and principal designer of Madison-based Joy Interiors, specializes in this approach, and defines it as, "an evidence-based, revolutionary design movement that focuses

on the human connection between nature and the built environment." Biologist E.O. Wilson introduced the concept of biophilic design in 1984, and it is now widely accepted that our home and work spaces can significantly influence our physical and mental wellbeing.

And since we spend 90% of our time indoors, as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports, it only makes sense to bring nature in.

"Humans have evolved in the natural environment for millions of years and have lived in an urban industrial environment for only the past 200 years," Pontrello points out. "Therefore, we are not well-adapted to our current environment." On the flip side, the designer says that biophilic aesthetics can improve "creativity, productivity, happiness, health and wellbeing."

If this sounds like a design approach you'd like to harness in your own home, read on for Pontrello's top tips.



Photo by Michael Kaske

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Maximize Natural Light

Pontrello recommends removing anything that obstructs the flow of natural light into your space. Remove heavy curtains and valances, move furniture away from windows and open your blinds. Install sheer curtains that bring in natural light but still provide privacy when needed. And don't forget to clean your windows regularly.

Use Natural Materials

"A key way to harness biophilic design and the power of nature is by utilizing natural materials," Pontrello says. This means incorporating bamboo, cork, sustainable timber, stone and rattan into your home, which, as a bonus, are sustainable materials, too.

Embrace Patterns Witnessed in Nature

If you look around, nature is all about patterns, and you can weave them into your spaces. Pontrello says that hexagon or botanical leaf motifs evoke "a positive human reaction." Fractal patterns, or series of patterns that can be seen in the veins of leaves and frost on a window, can be calming.



"You can emulate these patterns in your home with wall tiles, natural wood grain, wallpapers in geometric designs and décor and accessories that take inspiration from nature," Pontrello says.

Decorate With Plants

As one of Pontrello's favorite design elements, she says that plants "instantly freshen and make a space feel alive." She says that if you don't have a green thumb, choose sturdy plants that are more forgiving, such as pothos, monstera, pilea and snake plants. "Save the more demanding plants, such as the fiddle leaf fig and ficus, for when you gain experience," Pontrello advises.

Beautify With Color

Color is an excellent way to connect to nature and it significantly influences our mood, says Pontrello. First, consider the function of the space. There are calming hues, and tones that can stimulate energy and excitement — and everything in between.

Fortunately, many colors found in nature are also very on-trend right now, such as earth tones that include sage, terra cotta and muted blues.

"I used to be a minimalist with color, but now I love bringing color into spaces," explains Pontrello. "Start by experimenting with an accent wall. Another way I love bringing color in is with wallpaper — there are so many styles that are inspired by nature." 🌿





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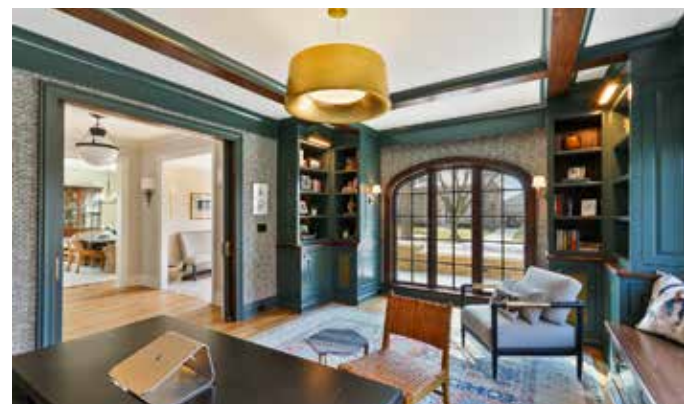
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An Inviting Retreat

Farmhouse meets lake house in this stunning home renovation.

By Tasha Downing | Photography by Chris Kayser, Kayser Photography





Peter and Jean Witty, high school sweethearts from Woodstock, Illinois, had each spent time in Lake Geneva on family trips when they were young. After they married and had kids, the couple continued the tradition with their three children, choosing to celebrate major life events like Jean's 50th birthday, college graduations and engagements lakeside at their favorite getaway spot. In 2021, the Wittys had the opportunity to purchase a home called Stoneheart they had rented in Fontana with gorgeous views of the water.

The couple brought in Jeff Auberger, remodeling consultant and designer with Stebnitz Builders, to do a whole-house remodel. All but one room was torn down — the home's hearth room remained standing throughout the entire process. Jean was dedicated to preserving this circa-1936 classic sitting room with its fireplace and two magnificent beams.

"The hearth room has an incredibly timeless design, and we paid homage to the previous home by preserving it," says Auberger. "The space features large, ornate beams and a classic fireplace, which we enhanced to modernize the room a bit."

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 Homeowner Jean Witty worked with an interior designer on tile, paint and furniture selections throughout the home. For accent walls in the dining room (*top*) and behind the television, she chose Benjamin Moore's popular Hale Navy shade. The stove (*bottom*) features a soft geometric tile backsplash.



As a third generation-owned company, Stebnitz Builders has been handling special requests like this for over 50 years, and the Wittys were extremely pleased with the results. In the newly-designed hearth room, the couple has showcased a 1965 Steinway Baby Grand piano that Jean's father, Richard Peters, bought for her mom, Carolbel Peters, a classical pianist. Multiple generations of the family have enjoyed its beautiful music and continue to do so today.

A delightful addition to plans for the home was the sleeping porch on the second level. "My grandparents in Monmouth, Illinois, had an old-fashioned, Midwestern sleeping porch designed to escape the summer heat before air conditioning came along," says Jean. "Ours turned out beautifully. It's a three-season room, and Stebnitz added amazing vinyl windows you can lift up in sections."

Aesthetically, the couple's goal was lake house meets country farmhouse. They sought help from Tammy Schmidt at Novel Interiors, who provided advice on design combinations for color, tile and plumbing fixtures for the kitchen as well as the 5½ bathrooms. The decor is a combination of new pieces and vintage, sourced locally. The Wittys also

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 "Our carpenter, Chris Egner, nailed each of our design goals," says Jean. "In addition to maximizing views of the lake, it was also important that we incorporate certain design features from the original house, like a notable, circular window (right), prominent eaves and walls built with stone from the original property."





hung several beautiful watercolor paintings by Peter’s mom, Donna Jill Witty.

Auberger says the design for the rich, dark brown wood floors on the main level was very intentional, regarding both the wood and stain selection. Downstairs, the Wittys opted for vinyl plank flooring to suit the casual entry and living areas.

“We used luxury vinyl planks from a local vendor, with a distressed yet modern look and finish,” says Auberger. “I love the durability of these floors.”

The property sits on a hillside in Fontana with amazing views, and Auberger jumped at the chance to maximize those views in the new plans. “We enhanced the ability to see Geneva Lake from every angle inside and outside the home by 200-300% with the redesign,” he says. “Now, nearly every room in the house has incredible views of the water.”

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The three-season sleeping porch (top) has quickly become a family favorite. Says Peter: “I think [my son] would rather sleep up there instead of his bedroom, given the choice!” Elegant white marble countertops in the bathroom are complemented with brushed gold fixtures (bottom).





“Nearly every room in the house has incredible views of the water.”

— Jeff Auberger



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 A Notre Dame-themed pool table (*top*) in the upstairs great room entertains guests and harkens to a long line of Notre Dame graduates in the Witty family. New bedroom furniture was purchased from Penny Mustard Furnishings (*middle*).



.....
 In the original homestead, the fireplace and mantel in the hearth room were set in white plaster. The fireplace was redesigned using local stones and master carpenter Jerry Potter crafted a dark mantel with millwork in a detailed rope pattern that matches the molding on the original beams.

Based on the recommendation of Jean's brother, John Peters, a restoration ecologist for over 30 years, the Wittys decided to remove all invasive, non-native plants from the hilly backyard, which equaled almost 90% of the plant life. They planted five new trees and spread a prairie mix seed on the hillside. They look forward to seeing the backyard come to life over time. They also hope to replicate a flowing spring water feature from the original homestead.

With a home that beautifully melds touches from the past with a modern, functional design, the Wittys appreciate their lakeside abode.

"Ryan Hibl, our production manager, and Jeff Auberger were incredible partners throughout the entire design and build process," says Peter. "From the beginning, they understood the importance of this project to our family and worked tirelessly to make our vision a reality." 🐾

Tasha Downing is a Chicago-based freelance writer.





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Dan Sojka of C&D Landscaping created an inviting front yard. The team used stones originally located behind Stoneheart to create support walls for the front porch and patio area. "My family came to love Fontana and Lake Geneva because of my dad, Don Witty," says Peter. "It was a dream of his that someone in the family could own a home in the area. He died in 2019 before we could make that dream come true, but his passing helped inspire us to purchase Stoneheart when the opportunity came along."



8,500 SQUARE FEET | 6 BEDROOMS | 7½ BATHROOMS

A Designer Dream

A Geneva Lake home is smartly designed with tons of high-end touches and plenty of outdoor space for family and guests to enjoy.

By Melanie Radzicki McManus | Photography by Aimee Mazzenga





Spending quality time with family and friends has always been a top priority for one Illinois couple. And for many years, their vacation home on Geneva Lake was the site of many happy gatherings. Over time, however, the home no longer adequately served their needs. They wanted more room, for one thing, plus an enhanced outdoor living area with amenities such as a pool and covered seating. So, they decided to build a new place on the lake's north shore.

To help them realize their vision, the couple tapped locals Jason Bernard of Lake Geneva Architects, Scott Lowell of Lowell Custom Homes, and Suzanne Glavin and Melinda Cahill, co-founders and principal designers

of North Shore Nest, an interior design studio in Glenview, Illinois. For more than a year, the group collaborated with one another and the couple, culminating in the creation of a stunning, new vacation home perfectly suited to the homeowners' needs.

One of the couple's main goals was to make entertaining easy. This was achieved, in part, by incorporating two islands in the kitchen. One is used for food preparation and has two sinks, while the other is used for informal dining and setting up buffets. In addition, everything the homeowners need to prepare a buffet — such as plates and napkins — is handily tucked into that island's drawers.



Top: The home's screened porch offers great lake views, plus has an eye-catching coffee table from Made Goods that was created from reconstituted stone.

Left: The kitchen's two islands serve distinct purposes. The island closest to the stove features two sinks and is used for meal prep. The other island is for casual meals and when buffet-style dining is on the menu.



“What we’ve found working on a lot of vacation homes is that it’s a different way of living,” says Glavin. “You need to design [the] home so it’s very easy and efficient to bring large groups together — [and] the homeowners can easily pull things out and put them away [after gatherings].”

That type of efficient design is evident in the lower-level bar, which features French doors leading out to the home’s covered patio and pool. This setup makes it easy for the family and guests to grab a snack or drink and head outside.

Glavin and Cahill designed this space using a darker palette to give it a cozy, lounge feel. But instead of incorporating the same hardwood flooring found throughout the house — impractical in an area where



The home’s arched front door is a showstopper, while guests can unpack their bags in the home’s bunk room, which sleeps up to 12. An office allows the homeowners to get some work done, when necessary.



Top: The lower-level bar opens to a covered patio and pool, which overlooks the lake. Durable porcelain tiles, which mimic the look of wood, were selected for the flooring.

Right: The primary bathroom features an elegant shade of blue that warms and elevates the space, while the daughter's rattan bed frame beautifully sets off its white linens.





Top right: The home's arched front door makes a pleasing contrast with the façade's numerous peaks.

Left: In the back, the homeowners and their guests can enjoy both covered and alfresco patio space.





Top left: Mainly Basket chairs and a Summer Classics table beckon guests outside.



Top right: The lounge and media room is next to the lower-level bar.

Bottom: The guest bedroom features Schumacher wallpaper and a Mr. and Mrs. Howard for Sherrill Furniture bed.



people will be coming in and out wearing dripping bathing suits — they used large porcelain tiles from Lake Geneva’s Bella Tile & Stone, which have a handsome design that mimics wood.

The home’s overall aesthetic, the two say, is a melding of the home with the lake, hence the extensive use of a variety of blue tones throughout spaces, accented with warm woods, wicker and brass. A wealth of lakeside windows also invites the water into the space.

“This home really lives from the inside to the outside, and from the outside to the inside,” says Scott Lowell. “It seamlessly connects the inside with the outdoors.”

But while the home exudes a casual, lakeside vibe, it’s also decidedly elegant. In the kitchen, for example, hand-painted Italian tiles on the hood wall add color and flair, while hand-woven rattan stools from



Top: The patio's screens can be pulled up and lowered whenever for unobstructed lake views.

Right: The bunk room bathroom is bold and playful with a nautical feel.

Georgia's Mainly Baskets provide texture and warmth. The front entry features a dramatic, large arched door, complemented by a V-groove ceiling in natural white oak and a navy blue metal light fixture from The Urban Electric Co.

Downstairs in the bar, Geneva Cabinet Company used a striking Farrow & Ball blue paint on the cabinets, which are beautifully accented by the ceiling's white oak beam detail and two Ralph Lauren pendant lights.

"We bought those ceiling pendants before the bar was fully designed because we loved them and their size," says Cahill.

The result of everyone's careful collaboration is an elegant yet unpretentious getaway where it's easy to kick back and relax.

"This home is really built to make family memories," Cahill says. 🐾

Melanie Radzicki McManus is a freelance travel writer and speaker based in Sun Prairie.



14,500 SQUARE FEET | 10 BEDROOMS | 11½ BATHROOMS



A Timeless Getaway

Classic touches, cozy spaces and a healthy dose of lake-inspired style are all in this grand waterfront abode.

By Melanie Radzicki McManus | Photography by Shanna Wolf



For nearly two decades, an Illinois couple and their children enjoyed vacationing in Glenwood Springs, a lakefront community in Fontana. But over the years the couple began to entertain more, and the home they owned there wasn't spacious enough to adequately accommodate their family and friends.

"There are 25 people in my wife's family and 45 people in mine," the husband says, "and we invited them over every year. We thought it would be nice to have family stay at the house, and for everyone to have their own bathroom."

So when the couple noticed three adjacent lots for sale on Geneva Lake, they snapped up two of them. Then they tapped Ron McCormack, co-founder

of McCormack + Etten Architects, to help design their new home. The result? An impressive 10-bedroom, 11½-bathroom home with plenty of space for their family and guests.

"This was one of my favorite jobs for sure," says Ron McCormack.

The couple wanted their new home to have a cottage feel, and McCormack says that despite its considerable size — 14,500 square feet — it exudes a relaxing and even cozy aura.

"There's no space [in the home] that doesn't invite you in," he says, "or that's uncomfortable spatially." And the homeowners agree.



The homeowners appreciate having a pot-filler over the stove, as it means they don't have to tote heavy pots of water from the sink. "When you're making corn for 20 or 30 people, you have some big pots to fill," says the husband, adding, "Although you do have to empty the pots at some point!"



The ceiling in the home's dining room mimics a ship's wheel. The room's circular shape is echoed not only in the ceiling, but in the dining room table, area rug, bent-glass windows and chandelier.





The couple decorated their home with paintings and photographs of Geneva Lake. Here in the den, a photo by the late Bruce Thompson showcases the colorful fall foliage along the lakeshore.



The homeowners wanted a statement piece for the powder room on the home's main level, so they opted to create a vanity from a handsome piece of furniture topped with a striking, blue bowl.



This eye-catching and geographically accurate rendition of Geneva Lake is inset in the foyer's floor. "It's a great conversation piece," says the husband. The medallion is crafted from hickory, walnut and maple burl.



“It’s casually elegant, yet nice and comfortable,” says the husband. “There are no vases to knock over!”

One of the home’s more popular rooms is, of course, the kitchen, which features a built-in Miele coffee machine, plenty of storage, a coffered ceiling, and stunning, underlit onyx countertops. Onyx is a translucent stone that allows light to pass through it, says McCormack, so in the evenings the countertops emit a pleasing, warm glow. The island also conceals a television within the butcher block to allow easy viewing while cooking.

The homeowners initially worried the kitchen was too big, particularly the island. But once they began using the space, they found it to be very functional. “You can have a lot of people in that kitchen and still feel like no one’s hovering over you while cooking meals,” the wife says.

One of the more striking spaces in the home is the dining room. It’s a circular room that boasts the best views on the property, and the homeowners say the house was essentially built around this space. The room also

↑ One of the couple’s favorite places is the screened porch, where they often enjoy pre- or post-dinner drinks. The table was crafted from one of the walnut trees felled to make room for the home, as an acknowledgment of the land.

→ This bedroom is reserved for one of the couple’s adult children. Her Cavapoo – their grand-dog, Harper – clearly enjoys the space, too.





↑
The home has a pool room in the lower level, which features walk-out access to the lake. “Ron [McCormack] made a point to ensure a lot of light came in here,” says the wife, “so you don’t feel like you’re in a lower level.”

←
The homeowners wanted to create a welcoming space, and this two-story foyer is a stunning entry point into the home.

contains impressive custom millwork and attractive beam patterns, for which McCormack’s firm is known — and which can be found throughout the home.

Another careful consideration by the homeowners was to incorporate in-floor radiant heating throughout, including the screened porch, effectively turning it into a nearly year-round space, McCormack says. The homeowners definitely appreciate the porch’s heated floor, as well as its elevated fireplace hearth, which they say is great for propping up your feet.

The couple was very environmentally conscious throughout the process, trying to disturb the land as little as possible during construction. That meant limiting the number of trees felled. A few did have to come down, however, so they had their builder create a coffee table from one walnut tree as an homage to the property. That coffee table is an eye-catching accent on their screened porch — although the homeowners note it’s extremely heavy.

“If we want to move it a little bit, we have to have a couple people push it with their feet,” the husband says with a laugh. “It might weigh a ton.”

The couple has been enjoying their Geneva Lake vacation home since 2011, and spent a lot of time here during the COVID-19 pandemic. And it’s definitely served its intended purpose.

“This house was built around our family and friends,” the wife says, “and they all love it.” 🍷

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Better Than Ever

This tranquil lake home has a sunny disposition and an airy, coastal vibe.

By Tasha Downing | Photography by Shanna Wolf

Karin and Paul Lundstedt had been visiting Lauderdale Lakes for many years when a property next door to some old family friends became available in 1996. They initially renovated the home, but more than 25 years — and three grandchildren — later, the home was ready for a complete rebuild to take the family into their next generation.

“We aren’t quite ready to give up our home and connections in Libertyville, but my husband and I were definitely looking ahead to the next 20 years,” says Karin. “We wanted to create a space for our growing family to gather and a place we can grow old together.”

Enter Randy Thelen, president of Thelen Total Construction, Inc., a company with a strong reputation for building gorgeous lake homes for almost 50 years. According to Karin, Thelen’s catchphrase was “aging in place,” and his goal was to build a home for the family to enjoy for many years, structured to accommodate any needs that may arise as the couple got older.

“Randy is such an expert, he came up with so many ideas we wouldn’t have thought of,” says Karin. “For instance, the home is two levels and we left space in case we want to add an elevator in the future. The space is used for closets right now, but if we ever needed to [add an elevator], it would be easy to convert because it’s framed and ready.”

The doorways and hallways are also wider to accommodate for potential mobility issues and light switches were strategically positioned — all details that would be more difficult to retrofit later.



When it came to rebuilding the home on the property, they leaned on Thelen's expertise.

"The most difficult part of this project was adapting the house to the terrain," says Karin. "We really wanted to use all of our frontage and maximize the views, and Randy was able to [utilize] every inch because he is very knowledgeable about the village and building requirements."

To enjoy their water views, the couple was able to double the depth of the home's screened porch to 16 feet, adding more indoor/outdoor living space.

"The screened porch is quite unique," says Randy Thelen. "One can relax under the warmth of radiant heaters at the dining table or lounge by the cozy brick gas fireplace while enjoying a cool breeze off the lake. Entertaining is easy watching the big game on the wall-mounted TV or preparing a meal on the attached grilling deck. This is truly an outdoor great room."

Top: Karin Lundstedt selected the clear glass pendant lighting in the kitchen and an open airy chandelier over the dining room table. Her goal was to keep the lake view front and center.

Bottom: White countertops and cabinets provide a peaceful palette as the sunshine pours in through windows in the light-filled kitchen.





Randy Thelen recommended his daughter's interior design company, Katherine Elizabeth Designs, and Karin loved their choices. The team helped choose colors, cabinets, tile, plumbing and light fixtures during the building process.

Top left: Karin found a refrigerator to match her playful lower level kitchen decor at Home Depot. She says it has the vintage Smeg look — but for one-third of the price.

Top right: Cabinet company Distinctive Designs by Peggy crafted all of the cabinetry throughout the home, including the gray-blue cabinetry called Dusk from the Yorktown line, featured in the kitchen and primary bathroom.



Top: Clear vinyl pull-down shades keep out the wind and rain, and layers of membrane beneath the porch also keep wind and bugs from getting through.

Bottom: The larger couch and table sizes offered at Restoration Hardware fit the space Karin was looking to fill. To optimize the lake views, she chose swivel chairs for the porch and throughout the home.





Top: For the rustic fireplaces, Thelen used Halquist Basswood Grey stones with limestone caps, supplied by Lakes Brick and Block. "The joints were slightly raked to give the fireplace a more textured look and feel," he says.

Middle: Colorful floral pillows pop against the muted blue tones and call out to the blooms just outside a bedroom window.

Right: Karin chose linens and rugs from Serena & Lily's extensive line of blue-themed bedding and also found a woven headboard with a nautical vibe that added to the coastal aesthetic.



Karin chose to decorate in blue tones paired with cream, shopping at a few favorite stores like Crate & Barrel, Restoration Hardware and Serena & Lily.

“The cream couches are made with a performance fabric from Restoration Hardware and they are fantastic,” says Karin. “We’ve got grandkids and things spill, but they clean right up.”

The lower level has enough space for a guest family to stay and have some privacy if desired, and includes a smaller kitchen with a dishwasher, microwave, sink and fridge.

“We wanted to keep the lower level playful, and I was looking for a Smeg refrigerator look but didn’t want to pay the price,” says Karin. “I found a little light blue one from Home Depot for a third of the price!”

In the end, Karin and Paul got a new home on an original property that was customized to grow with them for years to come.

“Our goal was to create a timeless design with an architectural style to fit the lake,” says Thelen. “With the owners’ vision, we used specific design elements to make the home comfortable and relaxed, while also combining degrees of style and elegance.” 🐾



Bottom: The vintage-inspired bathroom in the lower level was designed with durability in mind. The vinyl floors can withstand moisture and dirt, and the subway and penny tile on the walls is fashionable *and* functional. The acrylic wall-mounted sink adds to the look.



Top: Thelen worked with Breezy Hill Nursery on the home's landscaping, as he believes that site planning and landscaping should be intertwined to achieve a homeowner's overall aesthetic goals.

Middle: Diane Cline Landscaping designed the home's gorgeous window boxes.

Bottom: Thelen suggested adding a small boathouse near the dock, which Karin didn't realize was possible with current rules. "That little 10-by-15-foot structure really saves us from hauling stuff up and down [the stairs]," she says.





The Stars Align: A group of women and men hang out on the steps of Yerkes Observatory, circa 1910. The grand building, which is an astronomical observatory and houses the world's largest refracting telescope, was constructed between 1895 and 1897. Today, visitors can book a variety of tours of the observatory.

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