

CHICAGO

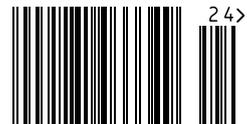
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# lake effect.

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THE MOST COMPELLING REASON TO LIVE ON A LAKE IS FOR THE VIEWS. Yet, after a very long search on the North Shore for just the right lakefront property, the 1937 French Provincial that one family bought didn't relate to the water at all.

Nor did it suit the sleek aesthetic and easy lifestyle they had honed with their three sons in a modern 1970s split-level across town. A renovation done in the 1980s had given the lakefront house a campy demeanor, with mirrored walls, Grecian columns, French Provincial wallpaper, rams' horn hardware and bejeweled faucets.

ARCHITECTURE Fred Wilson, AIA, and Elissa Morgante, AIA, Morgante-Wilson Architects, Ltd.		
INTERIOR DESIGN James Dolenc and Thomas Riker, jamestomas, LLC		
HOME BUILDER Matthew Kurtyka, Windsor Builders, Inc.		
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Drew Johnson, Rocco Fiore & Sons, Inc.		
BEDROOMS 6	BATHROOMS 11	SQUARE FEET 15,000



#### STYLE SELECTION

With a nod to contemporary design, the resilient acrylic and Plexiglas craftsmanship of this unique side table fashions a modern accent to almost any living space. *Tea Table*, \$444; [plexi-craft.com](http://plexi-craft.com)



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Nevertheless, what the house did have were good bones, a gorgeous façade and loads of potential. “If we were going to move there from a house we loved, it had to be worth our while,” explains the wife. “This was a very special property. We figured we’d just revamp the kitchen and master suite and streamline the interiors.”

Yet, once they brought on architects Elissa Morgante and Fred Wilson, the project kept growing as they realized the home’s many shortcomings. “They needed to open up the house to the lake,” says Wilson. “It ran parallel to the water and didn’t take advantage of the views at all. And most of the windows that did exist lakeside were small and covered with heavy metal shades to block the sun.”



**NEW TRADITIONS**  
A deft mix of textured and patterned fabrics complements the living room’s original cypress paneling and lends sophistication to the space. Stylized motifs, such as the ikat pattern on a pair of Gary Hutton Thomas chairs add exuberance to the serene palette of creams.



**CHECKMATE**  
The home's original 1930s glamour is most evident in the foyer, which sports an existing black-and-white marble tile floor. Dazzling contemporary pieces that feature a traditional vibe—namely a Bella Figura chandelier from Edward Ferrell + Lewis Mittman and a CR Currin table—play to the vintage charms of the space.



**SILVER STREAK**  
In the dining room, the ceremonial demeanor of a magnificent Dennis & Leen chandelier from Holly Hunt and custom chairs by jamesthomas, fabricated by Eurocraft, offset the Nina Campbell wallpaper from Osborne & Little and a lively Barbara Barry carpet from Peerless Rug Company.

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The overwrought décor, at odds with the home's elegant architecture, was also an issue. "You had to pick through the house to see the bones," says Wilson. The same was true of the once-stately grounds, which "were totally chaotic," says landscape architect Drew Johnson. "Over the years, each of the owners did their own thing, so there were all these walls breaking up the property and diminishing the sightlines to the lake." Says the wife, with a laugh, "We ended up touching every square foot."

Decades of inappropriate interventions were removed, reducing both house and grounds to a clean slate. From there, the front façade was restored and given a gracious new courtyard and entry drive, the grounds were reoriented to relate to the lake, and a majestic pool and deck got a total overhaul. "The goal was to make it look like we were never there, as well as attain landmark status," explains Wilson.



**VIEW FINDER**

To give the reconfigured family room architectural significance to match the rest of the home, the floor-to-ceiling Marvin Windows were topped with divided transoms and the ceiling was detailed with coffers. Nancy Corzine sectionals and a pair of coffee tables from Niedermaier anchor the room.



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Inside, only the living and dining rooms remain intact, though they were also painstakingly refurbished. The biggest gestures on the first floor merged the kitchen with the butler's pantry and turned a dark library and screened-in porch into a spacious, airy family room with expansive floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the lake.

Marrying the family's streamlined contemporary aesthetic with the home's more formal historical demeanor was a challenge left to designers James Dolenc and Thomas Riker. The modern fixtures, finishes and furnishings that the wife originally thought would work well in the home, "wouldn't do the setting justice, but über traditional wasn't an option," says Dolenc. He and Riker skillfully helped the wife outfit the home in mostly clean-lined transitional options, and they added personality and depth with a smattering of significant antiques.

#### KITCHEN COMBO

The architects used a mix of cabinets designed by Mick De Giulio for SieMatic and reference several periods to give the newly enlarged kitchen a timeless spirit. Countertops are from Stonecutters, backsplash tiles from Ann Sacks and pendants from Boyd Lighting at Donghia.



**CONNECTING FLIGHT**  
A meticulously detailed breezeway that ends with a mudroom was the sole addition to the home, but a pivotal one because the garage was previously unattached. The new L-shaped construction also connects the outdoor parking area to the house. Tiles from Materials Marketing clad the floor.



**ETERNALLY ALFRESCO**

A former mudroom was transformed into this year-round alfresco eating area with a coffered beadboard and beamed ceiling and glass sliders that bring warm weather in. The new sunroom features an arched wall framing a panel of Chicago common bricks installed in a herringbone pattern.

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Vintage Italian black dressers in the foyer found by the designers at Blend Interiors in Los Angeles add a touch of glamour to the already alluring space, while a curvy metal-and-antique glass lantern from Urban Electric Co. glimmers in the hallway and vintage shelving from Modern Times creates the perfect note in the sunroom. The designers kept the master suite's furnishings soft and welcoming with a Paris Writing Desk by Maxine Snider and an Empire chair by Niermann Weeks.

The entire second story was also reconfigured, especially the master suite, which had absorbed the attic to become a loft in the '80s. A deftly detailed vaulted ceiling gave the room back its architectural vigor and allowed the



**FRESHEN UP**

The home's existing outdoor area was completely updated, with the deck being redone in finely honed bluestone and the pool retiled and refinished to give the water a deeper hue of blue. The furnishings are from Janus et Cie.



**SLEEP EASE**  
 A new vaulted ceiling makes the once-lofted master bedroom much more intimate, while serene sand and blue furnishings lend it tranquillity. A cushy daybed designed by jamesthomas and fabricated by Eurocraft is paired with Philip Nimmo's Ellittico side table.



**AHEAD OF THE CURVE**  
 Independent his-and-her bathrooms were united to create an opulent oval-shaped bath off the master suite. The curved custom mahogany cabinetry was precisely templated to assure a snug fit into the space. Mirrors in pivoting frames are by Acrotek.

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owners to reclaim the attic, which proved to be “one of the trickier aspects of the reconstruction,” says builder Matthew Kurtyka. The attic, reached via a new stairway that connects the two spaces, became the husband’s office and received a large dormer with windows overlooking the lake, of course.

Copious water vistas and landmark status were both realized at the project’s completion, as well as acceptance. “We never thought we’d be so at home in a more traditional setting,” says the wife. “But the blend of styles and glorious views strike the perfect balance.”