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curve appeal.

WRITTEN BY LISA SKOLNIK | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ROBINSON

A LOT CAN HAPPEN ON AN ACRE, ESPECIALLY IF IT EDGES A MERCURIAL CROOK ON LAKE MICHIGAN'S SHORE. With a creek to the north, woods to the east and a dune-edged beach to the west, the trapezoidal tract a Chicago family bought in Grand Beach, Michigan, for their weekend retreat "encompassed every condition you can imagine," says architect and designer Elissa Morgante. Complicating matters is the way the creek flows, its velocity and the lake's tides that shift from hour to hour, constantly changing the depth of the beach, she notes.

ARCHITECTURE Elissa Morgante, AIA, and Fred Wilson, AIA, Morgante-Wilson Architects, Ltd.
INTERIOR DESIGN Elissa Morgante and Fred Wilson, Morgante-Wilson Architects, Ltd.
HOME BUILDER Ted Zimnoch and Adam Zimnoch, Ted and Son Construction Co., Inc.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Claire Kettelkamp, ASLA, and Ryan Kettelkamp, ASLA, Kettelkamp & Kettelkamp Landscape Architecture
BEDROOMS 5 BATHROOMS 6 SQUARE FEET 7,700





STYLE SELECTION

Robert Sonneman's versatile yet delicate pendant pairs a wispy silk organza shade with a steel frame. *Puri 22-inch satin nickel pendant, price available upon request; sonnemanawayoflight.com*

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The dramatic and variable nature of the land, where the views include lush foliage, lofty trees, stunning sunsets and foamy waves, is precisely what sold the home to the couple. "It makes you feel like you're 2,000 miles away from everything," says the husband. Historic provenance sweetened the deal. "It's on the site of the landmark Golfmore Hotel, and the garage was still standing," he adds. The retreat, built in 1922, was Grand Beach's major attraction before it burned down in '39.

A tiny '50s ranch stood on the site, "so we used it for four years to get a feel for the land," says the husband. "The clients ultimately asked us to design a house that would incorporate the garage, bridge the different landscapes and maximize the views," Morgante says.



SCENE STEALER

A sitting room at the farthest end of the arc-shaped house cantilevers over the lake to capture dramatic views. Barrel chairs by McGuire and an extra-long sofa capped with a chaise from Kravet offer an abundance, and thoughtful variety, of seating.



WOODWORKING CLASS

The architectural detailing and millwork in the house, so evident in the staircase, was custom designed to reference tradition but reflect a sleeker aesthetic. A contemporary, blackened-steel and mahogany console, made by furniture designer Chad Manley, is equally timeless.

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She and partner Fred Wilson, along with project managers David Ernst and K Tyler, thought out of the box, channeling a sweeping curve to fashion an innovative house that touches the garage in the woods, then fans out in an arc to embrace the lake. "It's shaped like a giant piece of macaroni, with 18-foot-deep rooms in succession from one end to the other," explains Morgante. Artfully abridged detailing that nods to neoclassicism is layered on top of the arched form inside and out, giving it a handsome demeanor with a contemporary vibe.



WINDOW SEAT

Vistas to the lake increase exponentially by eliminating the wall between the living and dining rooms. Botanical-print swivel chairs from Kisabeth Furniture in Fort Worth, Texas, and a custom dining table surrounded with curved seating play off the shape of the house.



SQUARE ROOT

Handsome oak cabinetry by Lambright Woodworking in Topeka, Indiana, sports acrylic panels in the kitchen, while Shangri-la granite from Marble & Granite Supply of Illinois tops counters and glass mosaic tiles from Mona Lisa Stone & Tile serve as a backsplash.



THE BACKSTORY

Landscape architect Ryan Kettelkamp notes that the curved geometry of the house creates an echo chamber, or a sweet spot within the middle grassy area of the upper garden.

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Radiating from the screened-in porch, set in the woods abutting the garage, comes the kitchen, its eating area, a dining room, the living room and a sitting room that cantilevers over the dune. Thanks to the home's design, each room has a wall of windows overlooking the water, though the living room sports windows on two sides and also captures forest views.

The second story holds five rooms, including the master suite sited over the living room, full face to the lake, while the below-grade garage anchors family and exercise rooms topped with a guest suite. To the husband's delight, the enormous garage is tall enough to do double-duty as a half-size basketball court, minus the cars.

The design proved astonishingly difficult to execute. "We were working on an irregular lot with variable grades, trying to lay an arc-shaped foundation in the dead of winter," says builder Adam Zimnoch. "It wasn't like we could measure the site from the property line, and there were ferocious snowstorms and brutal winds to contend with."



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They positioned the house with the help of surveyors and a sophisticated GPS system, and scheduled pours according to weather conditions so that the concrete wouldn't freeze, he explains.

The landscape design proved equally tricky. "We built off the curves, using concentric layers that splay out and step down to accommodate and conserve the dune," says landscape architect Ryan Kettelkamp. A stone wall ringing the home's upper garden defines its elliptical shape and borders the next level, which sports a deck and lap pool—again, both curved. Below that, the dune gently gives way to the ever-shifting beach.

Unwittingly, the design team paid homage to the words of the famed 19th-century British novelist and politician Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who said, "In life, as in art, the beautiful moves in curves." **L**

ON THE EDGE

Janus et Cie chaises man the cantilevered deck, edged with a glass barrier for safety's sake. According to Ryan Kettelkamp, the lavender ringing the upper garden thrives due to the warmth of the lake.



MASTER TREAT

In the owners' bedroom, which tops the living room and sits over the lake, architects Elissa Morgante and Fred Wilson updated their clients' existing furniture with a few stylish additions, including an end table from Room & Board and Sonneman's swing-arm sconces from Lightology.