

# ML MAINLINE

THE ART + CULTURE + LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

# ML100

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# THE MAKING OF A DREAM HOUSE

Three years ago, tempted by the notion of year-round sunshine and golf, Richard Zakroff suggested to his wife Shelley that they buy a house in Florida. But Shelley would have none of it. "I have a better idea," she said. "Let's build our dream home here on the Main Line near our family and friends." Soon after, the planning began.

The Zakroffs, excited about the possibility of building a home perfectly suited to their unique needs and desires, culled together a team of experts that could turn their dream into a reality.

First on board to assist with their grand project was well-known Main Line architect Peter Batchelor of Paoli. Peter, known for his classically styled custom residences, has done extensive work in the Main Line area, creating expertly crafted personalized homes. "This has been one of my most challenging but rewarding projects," says Peter "The Zakroffs have become dear friends—and Rick's golf game certainly has improved."

Peter's goal was to design the architectural plan for a home of astounding quality with an open layout incorporating the latest in technology, safety and functionality. But this was no easy task. Months of critical meetings and a multitude of revisions, occasionally discussed over the front nine at Peter or Richard's golf course, ensued while the search for the perfect plot of land began. "I resorted to taking the clients to dinner to gain an understanding of them as well as gain their trust," said Peter.

Next to join in the execution of the Zakroffs dream home was Nar-

A magnificent floating spiral stair with ornate wrought iron railing blends perfectly with the 18 X 18 Marble floor tile with black granite inlaid accents and custom rail light fixture at the circular entry.



berth interior designer Christina Waters. Christina's ability to interpret a client's personal style and translate it into a beautiful, functional esthetic while eliminating the anxiety typically associated with such large scale projects was just what the Zakroffs needed. "I enjoy getting my hands around large-scale, complicated design projects and helping the clients ease the stress of making so many minute decisions that can often be mind boggling. The Zakroffs looked to me for direction and all was a success" says Christina.

While the bones of the plan had been drawn up by Peter, Christina worked on executing the design of all the esthetic details of the massive project from start to finish. The monumental task of drawing, detailing, calculating and verifying, to perfection, for the general contractor and the sub-contractors every detail and design feature from exterior stone, roof color and window trims, to cabinetry, tile design, plumbing fixtures, lighting and much more had to be done. "Christina is not like the big named designers with overbearing personalities that in effect get in the way of a project." Her ability to work with the subs and attack every issue that came up with ease and efficiency astounded us. She had no problem climbing

a ladder to the second floor to layout the apartment plan, picking up molding scraps to redesign an out of balance door detail, lugging tiles up steps for the installers or taking us to the high end showrooms to select cabinetry, plumbing fixtures, hardware and lighting." The hundreds of

Above: The two story turreted front entry with hand selected stone blend, custom mahogany doors and lush landscaping make for a striking first impression.

# STONE + GLIDDEN

ABOVE AND BEYOND HOME AV

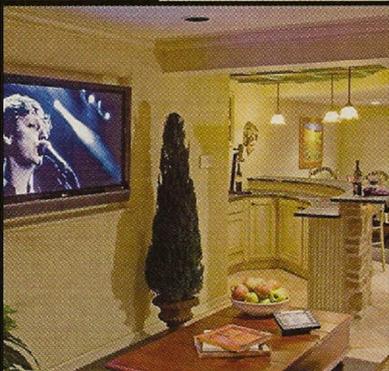
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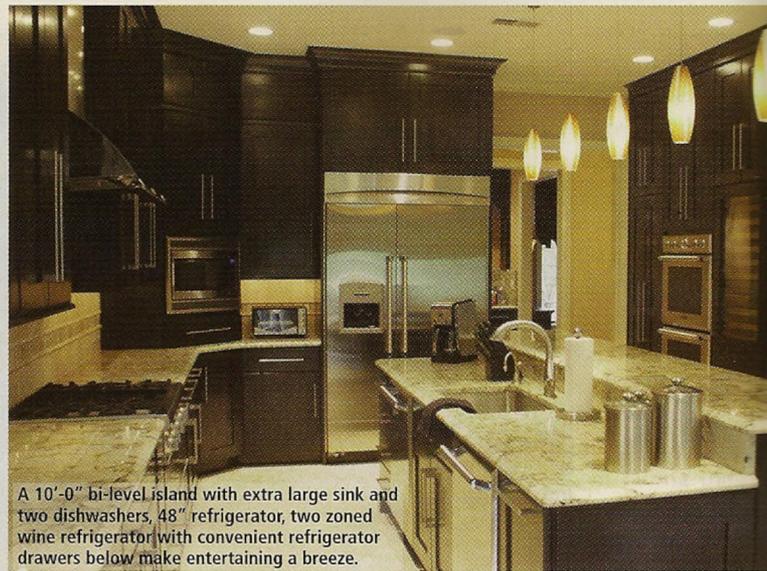
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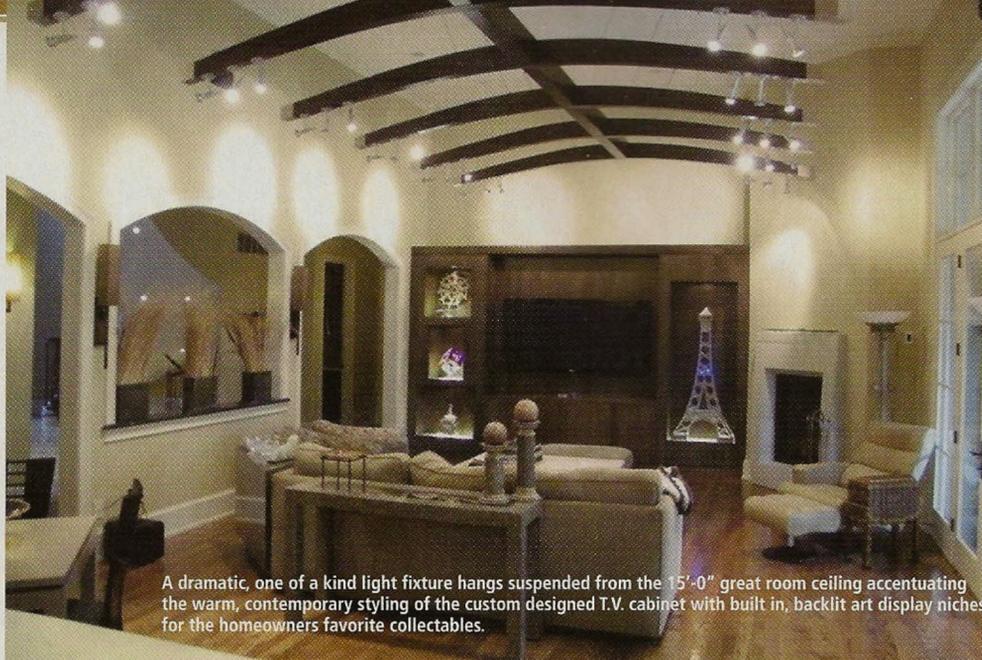
A 10'-0" bi-level island with extra large sink and two dishwashers, 48" refrigerator, two zoned wine refrigerator with convenient refrigerator drawers below make entertaining a breeze.

decisions the Zakroffs had to make became a controllable task in having Christina to give them the proper guidance.

First glance at the new residence on Williamson Road shows a house incorporating elements of a traditional French Chateau with decidedly European sensibilities on a grand scale. The home makes a bold statement in the upscale Gladwyne neighborhood with its steeply pitched rooflines, turreted entrance, mahogany doors and striking exterior. Next Level Construction, an expert framing company used by high end builders throughout the area, was responsible for putting together the great bones of the project. Next Level's thorough attention to detail and ability to understand and execute the building of the challenging roofline's and turreted entry way with amazing speed and accuracy set the upbeat tone for this exciting project. The Zakroffs' request for a home with an exterior unique to the area—which is rich with traditional center hall colonials clad in gray mica and granite—was achieved with a custom stone blend of soft neutral hues accented by lilac, gold and pink. Phil Santangelo of Pinnacle Stone Products, LLC in Parkersburg hand-selected the blend of stones used on the exterior to emulate a photo shown to him by the client. His dedication to getting it right came through when large scale stone boards were brought to the site for approval by the expert design team.

The unique footprint of the home's lot brought about yet another challenge. B. DeMichele Enterprises, Inc., one of the area's leading landscape design firms, was given the task of making the property's challenging contours as elegant as the architecture. Owner Blase DeMichele personally appointed one of his best landscape designers to oversee all aspects of the properties complete customization. From blanketing the ground with thick carpets of sod, terracing two backyard slopes, and constructing a complementary stone walkway and boulder wall to hand picking each tree and shrub to suit the climate and the owner's personal style. Peppered with decorative shrubs and grasses, sustained by a modern sprinkler system, and accentuated with outdoor lighting, the resulting landscape is more than just the perfect welcome mat; it's a living invitation into the beautiful new home.

When entering the home, the grand two story circular foyer is accentuated by a floating staircase with an ornate expertly detailed wrought iron railing and dramatic marble floors set on a diagonal. Warm neutral tones envelope the walls while floors in creams and rich browns with striking black accents set the perfect backdrop for the owners vibrant contemporary art and lighting collection. Richard, who has a passion for designing



A dramatic, one of a kind light fixture hangs suspended from the 15'-0" great room ceiling accentuating the warm, contemporary styling of the custom designed T.V. cabinet with built in, backlit art display niches for the homeowners favorite collectables.

with motorized plantation shutters above for added privacy. The combination of rich brown marble floors and counters, Durango limestone and creamy off white custom cabinetry with simple linear detailing sets a spa like feel in the room. Imperial Marble and Granite, supplier of the beautiful counter surfaces throughout the home, offered top rate customer service and

expert attention to detail for the monumental project. One glance at the detailed tile design is evidence of the fact that no detail was denied the utmost attention necessary to build the perfect dream bath.

Just off the home's center core lies the ultimate in outdoor rooms. Repeating the open, airy, light infused spaces on the interior of

the home, the glass enclosed loggia is a welcomed retreat after a long day. The 15'-0" ceiling from the adjacent great room is carried into the expansive room tapering to a 10'-0" high wall of windows around the perimeter. The 500-square-foot space features large scale sliding windows with transoms above and below to allow an uninterrupted view of the beautifully landscaped back yard while keeping unwanted critters and unruly weather out. The room is complete with wonderful details like a traditional bead board ceiling with playful tropical ceiling fans, a built in barbeque, unique tile selected to withstand the northeastern climate changes and expertly placed access doors for the owners furry friends to come in and out as they please. A coordinating tile was used at the barbeque backsplash as an accent to the dramatic hood making it a focal point in the outdoor room. A cozy wrought iron seating arrangement and table for six complete the inviting space.

In designing their custom home the Zakroffs knew convenience was key. From incorporating a first floor master suite into the plan, adding an elevator and four-car garage to gating the property to keep pets Jazzey and Casey safe. To add an extra level of protection when enter-

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