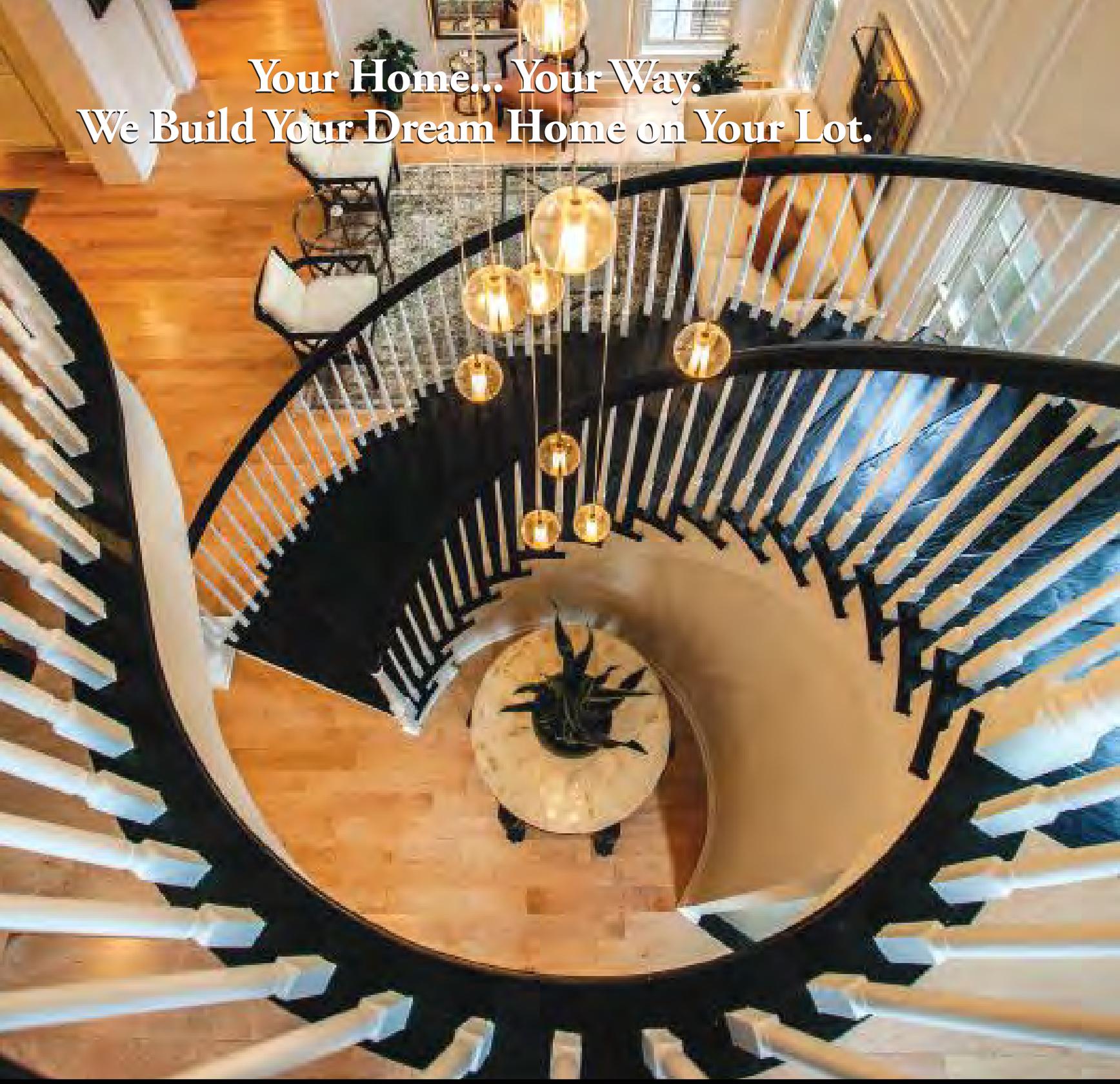


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INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DESIGN

# Asian Sensibilities

CREATING THE MASTER SPA OF THEIR DREAMS | BY TROY BLEWETT



After living in their 4,500 sq. ft., six-bedroom center hall Colonial for nearly 20 years, the homeowners decided to make some changes. Notably, they wanted to renovate their 145 sq. ft. bathroom into an open, free-flowing master spa with Asian-inspired accents.

“We wanted a better space plan, but also an interior design that would express our Asian sensibilities,” the owner says. “The existing space was cramped with a narrow shower; we were tired of its vanilla décor. We also knew we could gain floorspace by eliminating an

unused whirlpool tub,” the owner says, “but then what?”

To transform their dated space into the master spa of their dreams, the homeowners knew they would need a professional. They turned to Michael Nash Design Build and Homes in Fairfax.

## PROJECT CHALLENGES

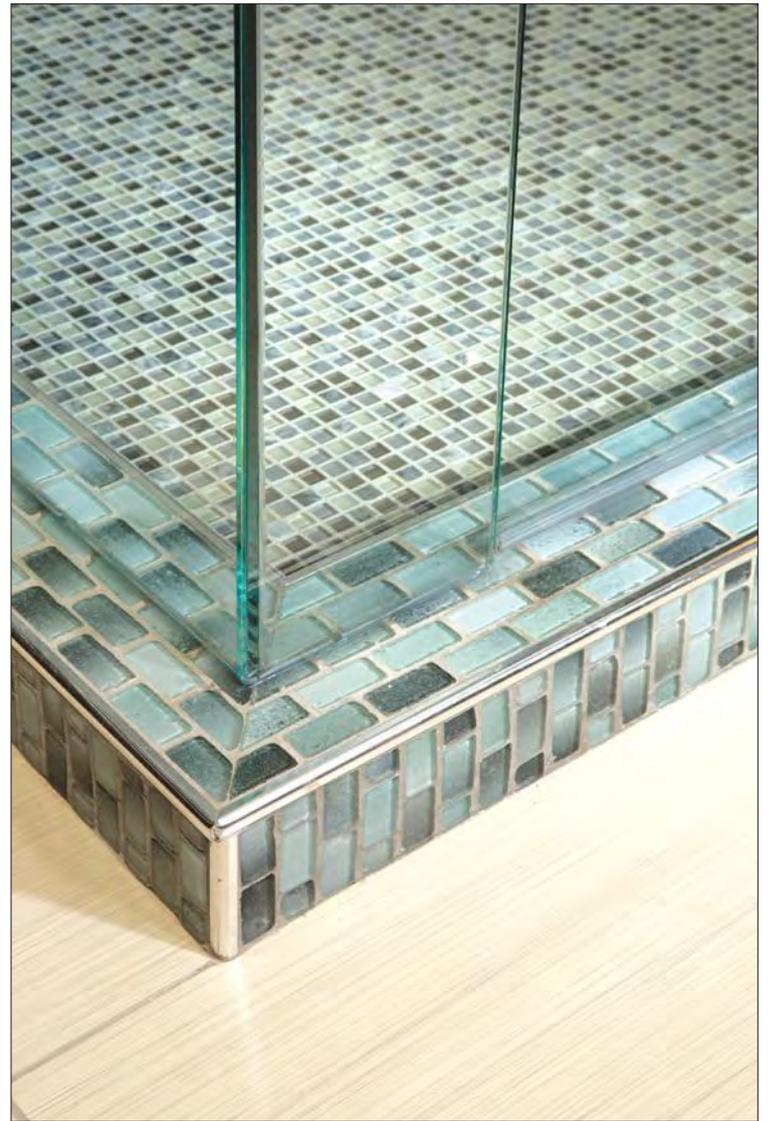
“The biggest challenge was to meet the homeowners’ desire for a spa-like experience with more storage space within the room’s existing footprint,” says Sonny Nazemian, president and CEO of Michael Nash.

*Page 43: Michael Nash built the custom vanity out of mahogany with a marble countertop; it has plenty of space for the homeowners’ personal effects.*

*Above: Securely placed behind two floor-to-ceiling glass walls, the 8.5 ft. x 4 ft. open shower sits on multicolor tile flooring.*

*Opposite: The entrance to the suite is through a pair of solid mahogany doors, mounted on a mahogany frame above a marble sill.*





The Michael Nash team basically gutted the original bathroom and started over. They removed the rarely used tub, capturing its floor space for a new shower. They also removed two small vanities that sat on opposite sides of the tub that provided little counter space or dressing area. Finally, they relocated extensive plumbing and flue chases for the new design to work.

The homeowners also wanted their walk-in shower to hold the water in without having a curb. To achieve this effect, the team raised the bathroom floor so the shower base is about an inch lower. As a result, the floor bevels toward the drain, and there's no need for a built-in lip.

## A BATHROOM TRANSFORMED

The new design features a walk-in shower and several strategically placed built-ins. A custom-designed vanity and a window seat add functionality and comfort. The interior design balances textured surfaces, glass-tiled walls and a subtle interplay of colors and tones.

Securely placed behind two floor-to-ceiling glass walls, the 8.5 ft. x 4 ft. open shower sits on multicolor tile flooring that connects it visually to the ceiling and to the

brown and tan wall tiling in a soft grass-weave pattern.

Not only are there recessed cubbies for personal items, but the "rain" shower has a digital regulator that allows each bather to program his or her preferred temperature and water pressure. There are also several hand-held body spray options.

"Water is very important to Asian culture," the homeowner explains. "We were looking for an interior design that would present the effect of water cascading. The blue-green glass tile around the shower window seat accomplishes this. Everything is pleasingly accentuated, yet well-ordered, tranquil and relaxing," he says.

Michael Nash designed a custom vanity out of mahogany with a marble countertop. It has plenty of space for the homeowners' personal effects. Additionally, a custom medicine cabinet with a frosted glass door serves as a divider between his and her sinks.

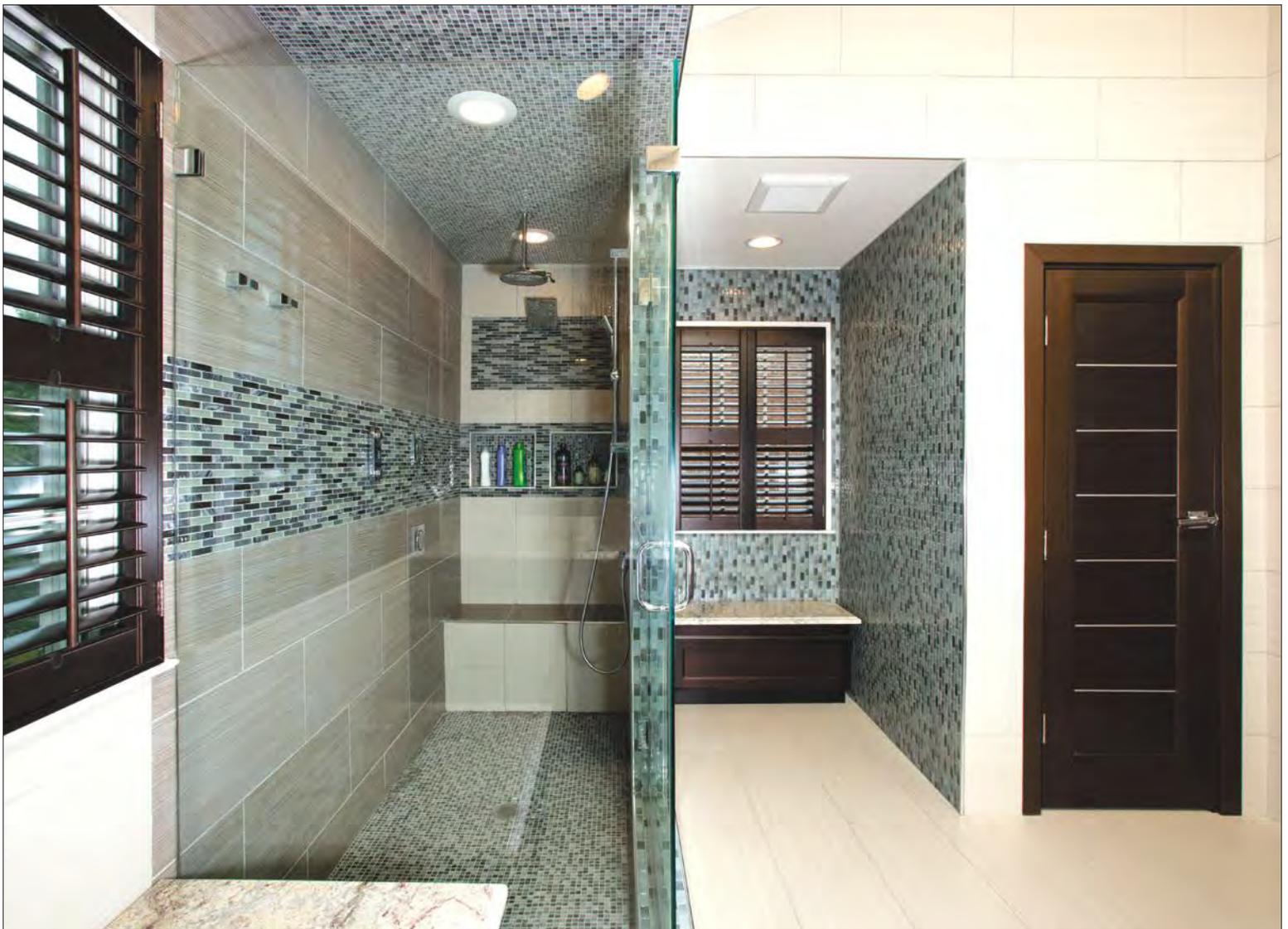
A discrete water closet is the only part of the space hidden behind walls. Additional storage is provided via a custom cabinet installed above the toilet.

Finally, the entrance to the suite is through a pair of solid mahogany doors, mounted on a mahogany frame above a marble sill.

*Above, left: Tile flooring connects visually to the ceiling and to the brown and tan wall tiling in a soft grass-weave pattern.*

*Above, right: The design raised the bathroom floor so the shower base is about an inch lower. As a result, the floor bevels toward the drain, and there's no need for a built-in lip.*

*Opposite: The bathroom's new interior design balances textured surfaces, glass-tiled walls and a subtle interplay of colors and tones.*



## SELECTING THEIR REMODELER

Selecting the right contractor is the key to any successful renovation. While the homeowners often thought of remodeling, it wasn't until a family member hired Michael Nash to execute a distinctly Asian-influenced interior for her home that they—surprised at how powerfully the makeover affected them—began to push forward with their own renovation.

It was during this phase that Tran and Lin began wandering into the Michael Nash showroom on Lee Highway in Fairfax, exploring its vast warren of rooms filled with fully assembled bathrooms, complete with accessories, tile, countertop and woodwork options.

Having already spoken to a number of bathroom designers, the homeowners were impressed with the on-site staff, many of whom hold industry certifications in kitchen and bath design (CKBR).

"We had certain ideas when the research began, but needed professional guidance," the homeowner says. "The showroom soon became the place where we could compare and contrast colors, textures and styles at our own pace. Since the facility offers every finishwork option, we could take our time uncovering the ideas with which we wanted to live."

"There are more decisions to make when doing a bathroom than in renovating any other part of the house," Nazemian says. "Homeowners really need to do their homework. Knowing the details and options they want is a big advantage and a key to a successful project."

## AWARD-WINNING RESULTS

Like all great remodeling projects, the results of this bathroom renovation speak for themselves. The makeover was named a Bronze award-winner in the residential bathrooms category (\$30,000-\$60,000) by *Professional Remodeler* magazine and previously had captured a Contractor of the Year (CoTY) Grand Award from the Metro DC Chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI).

Nazemian credits his design and production teams for the awards. "We have a very diverse talent pool, so the call to outperform the perceived limits of budget inspires us," he says. "In the end, it's our collaboration with our client—coupled with experience and creativity—that yields a stand-out result. To me, the prizes simply confirm that our values are in the right place." é

*"We have a very diverse talent pool, so the call to outperform the perceived limits of budget inspires us. [But] it's our collaboration with our client—coupled with experience and creativity—that yields a stand-out result."*

—Sonny Nazemian

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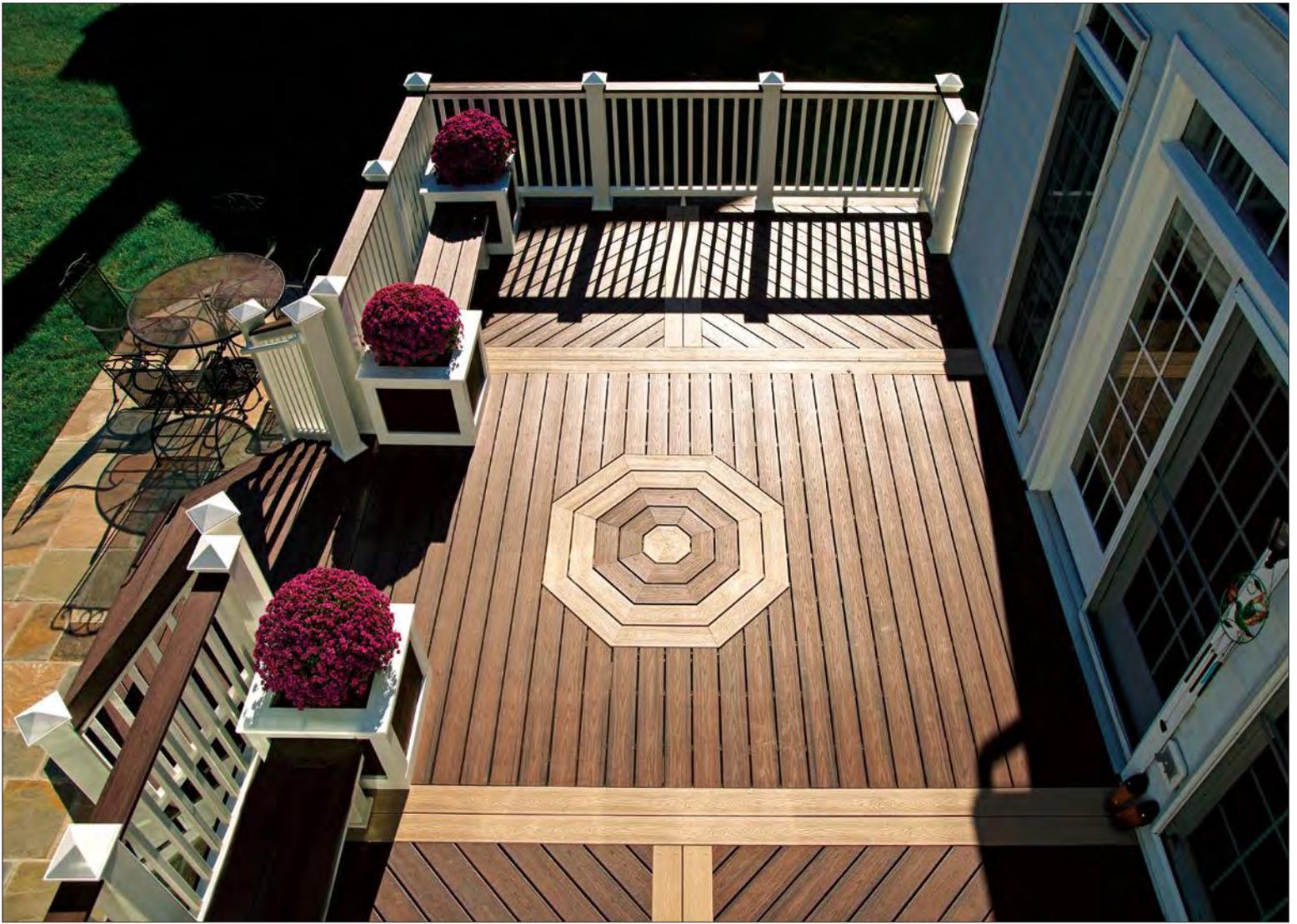
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INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DESIGN

# Creating Scenic Overlooks

BRINGING THE OUTDOORS IN | BY TROY BLEWETT

*Above: The imaginative design features the juxtaposition of light and dark low-maintenance composite Trex decking.*

*Opposite: Step from the stunning 26' x 26' sunroom onto the deck which opens to this home's scenic backyard.*

Wanting to enjoy their backyard more than ever, the owners of this Colonial-style home commissioned an exterior renovation that took full advantage of the home's scenic views, natural light and interior design.

"Our house backs up to a beautiful wooded area, so the lack of views from the rear was really a wasted opportunity," the homeowner says. "Additionally, our first-floor layout wasn't meeting our family's dining and entertaining needs. We thought an addition might address these issues, but didn't know where to start," he says.

*"It's the creativity and innovative thinking of our team that distinguishes the quality of the home improvement we produce. We set a high standard for ourselves and we're honored to be recognized for our efforts."*

—Sonny Nazemian



## THE PLAN

The homeowners turned to Michael Nash Design Build & Homes in Fairfax to create the renovation of their dreams.

First, a glass-enclosed hexagonal sunroom was added off the back of the kitchen, capturing the parkland view from multiple angles. Then, a first-floor deck was built off the sunroom and was connected to it and the home's family room by French doors. A small staircase leads down to a large flagstone patio. Finally, a large second-story balcony sits atop the sunroom, connected to the master suite.

## THE CHALLENGES

As with all renovation projects, this one had its challenges. "We were aware of loose soil compaction in the area targeted for the sunroom," says Sonny Nazemian, president and CEO of Michael Nash. "The backyard was mostly fill dirt which lacked the density needed to support a structure the size of the proposed sunroom," Nazemian says.

After doing soil tests, the project's team found it would need to excavate nine feet to properly secure the addition. Instead of a traditional basement, they employed footings linked to a retaining wall built at the





*Above: The sunroom addition with its lower and upper decks make the home "better than we imagined," the homeowners say.*

*Opposite, clockwise from top left: Michael Nash Design Build and Homes has created this scenic overlook from the deck to the beautiful trees below; the sunroom addition with its elaborate decking opens onto a 12' x 20' multi-colored flagstone patio, which complements deck design and colors; a different view of the overlook; the sunroom in all its many-windowed splendor; and the sunroom offers easy access to the kitchen.*

end of the new footprint. This plan supports the loads needed to keep the new structure stable.

A second challenge involved inserting a major steel I-beam in the middle of the addition itself to handle the roof span load of the second floor balcony.

## THE RESULTS

Importantly, the results speak for themselves. "It's even better than we imagined," comments the owner. "It completes the house. From the sunroom, we can enjoy the setting regardless of outside temperatures."

"And the upstairs deck has been an unexpected bonus. Because of the tall trees, it's very private. My wife and I can sit quietly and enjoy a cup or coffee or tea, or even use it as a place to practice yoga. The kids love it, too. The open air and beautiful view bring a great new pleasure to our lives," he concludes.

Added space offers a family dining/entertainment area circumscribed by a running course of 7-ft. windows with transoms. The spacious hexagonal footprint permits a significant increase in available light, and the design is also positioned to capture several "focal points" in the surrounding parkland.

## AWARD-WINNING RECOGNITION

The renovation won a "Contractor of the Year" (CotY) award for Michael Nash Kitchen and Homes. The innovative indoor-outdoor solution was named the Washington-area's "Best Residential Exterior" in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry's (NARI) metro DC chapter.

"It's the creativity and innovative thinking of our team that distinguishes the quality of the home improvement we produce," Nazemian says. "We set a high standard for ourselves and we're honored to be recognized for our efforts."

## DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- Stunning 26' x 26' sunroom provides multiple viewing angles of this home's scenic backyard.
- Low-maintenance composite Trex decking is used for main-level and second-story decks.
- A 12' x 20' multi-colored flagstone patio complements deck design and colors.
- The spacious upper deck off the master bedroom provides privacy and serenity.