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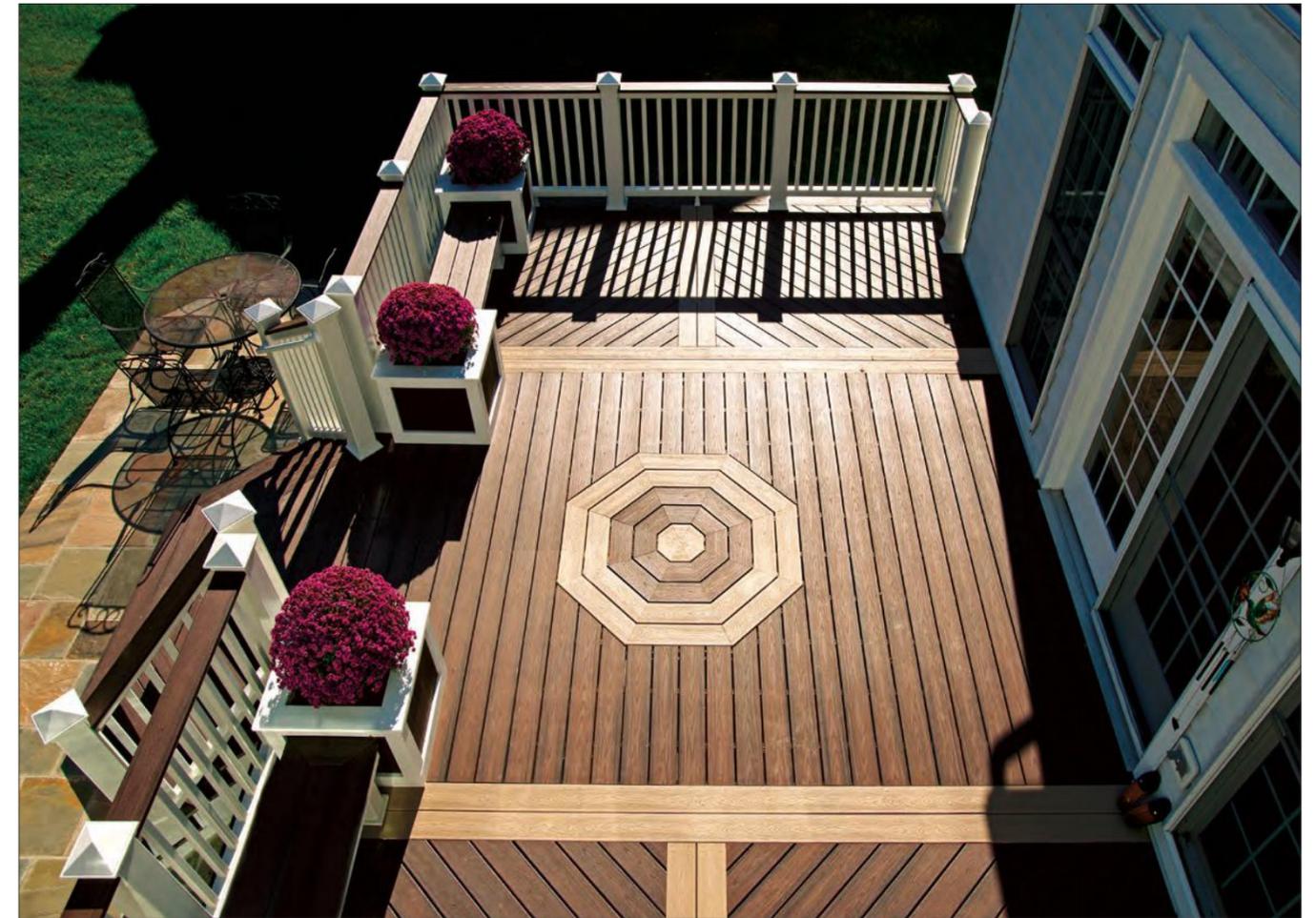
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INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DESIGN

# 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.