

Let the summer begin



PHOTOS BY GREG HADLEY

To create more living space and a better indoor/out environment, Michael Nash designed an innovative rear elevation solution to a 16-year old Vienna (VA) colonial.

Three winning indoor/outdoor solutions

BY JOHN BYRD
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It's memorial weekend. Your neighbors are wearing white. Summer doesn't begin for several weeks, but everyone's thinking ahead, especially Sonny Nazemian, the founder and chairman of Michael Nash Design Build and Homes.

His 30-year-old design-build-remodeling firm has been widely recognized for indoor/outdoor solutions that seamlessly complement a home's beauty and functionality in all seasons.

By "recognized," one means: 191 "Contractor of the Year" (CotY) Awards (3 national, 34 regional, 154 metro Washington); 8 national and 28 regional Chrysalis Awards; 8 "Best of Houzz" awards; 17 wins from Professional Remodeler Magazine; 14 from Qualified Remodeler Magazine; 9 "Best of American Living" awards (National Association of Home Builders) and a steady stream of enthusiastic coverage from national, regional and local home and garden media.

The acknowledgment that counts the most, though, hails from a Northern Virginia fan base that just keeps growing:

"This is the time of year when homeowners want visual continuum between the house and grounds," the remodeler says. "And the larger proposition is to create a more functional and aesthetically-pleasing relationship between inside and outside. As remodelers, our challenge is to take what's there, and complete it." Three recent home remodeling projects illustrate:

Vienna: rear elevation solution is perfect for warm-weather living

"We started with a wish list," Sanjay Sardana recalls. "Our house backs into a wooded setting, so we wanted to take advantage of the view. We also wanted a better floorplan for a growing family."

As it happened, a chance encounter with Nazemian started a collaboration that eventually resulted in a 676-square foot sunroom, extensive decking, a ground-level patio and an upper deck off the master bedroom.

As the process took off, innovations flourished in every direction:

- The new sunroom inspired a family dining/entertainment arena circumscribed by a running course of seven foot windows; the spacious hexagonal footprint permits a significant increase in available light. The plan also captures "focal points" in the surrounding parkland.
- A Trex-surfaced decking system is accessed from both the old family room and the new sun room. Eye-catching designs on the 22-by-19 foot surface are elaborated in contrasting beige and redwood slats installed in alternating diagonal and parallel lines.
- A three-way staircase connects the deck to a ground-level flagstone patio. There's a second-level balcony off the master bedroom. Benches and planters are used on both levels to define traffic and gathering zones.
- Meanwhile, the interior design explores colors and textures accentuating the bold visual continuum in all directions.

Overall, a comfortably "open space" for enjoying a vista of ever-changing seasons.

"It's even better than we imagined," Sanjay says. "The change really completes this house."



The Trex-clad dining deck on the north side of the remade exterior provides the family with a convenient everyday spot for supping together while enjoying the breeze and leafy views. The LED posts provide light for evening use.

Fairfax: Addition plus reconfiguration open new horizons

"We had occupied this home for fourteen years, and were feeling cramped," Omar Dajani recalls. "We liked the neighborhood, but didn't see how we could enlarge the living space at all."

Restricted by a stem pipe lot and a rear elevation five feet above-grade, any large-scale change seemed out of the question. Nonetheless, Dajani asked Sonny Nazemian for an assessment.

"We recognized that a family room off the back tied-in with a reconfigured kitchen could accomplish the owner's goals," Nazemian says.

Yet existing rear elevation was also a bearing wall supporting the second floor. To make the addition structurally feasible, the Michael Nash team insinuated supports between the first and second floor, creating an opening for an expanded kitchen/family room.

To properly apportion the new living area, two vertical beams--encased in decorative molding-- now frame a four-stool dining counter situated between the kitchen and the new sunroom/breakfast area.

Meanwhile, there is access on opposite sides of the addition to a pair of well-articulated outdoor components: a dining deck on the north side; a flagstone patio with water feature to the south.

"My family loves these improvements," Dajani says. "There's an abundance of private sitting places, but also a dynamic environment for playing together. We are particularly pleased that we got a beautiful new home without moving."

McLean: Poolside optics

After searching several years for her dream house, Rima Bitar had purchased a property in McLean

with "lots of unrealized potential."

"There was a great view of the pool from the rear of the house," she recalls. "But from left of the foyer one entered a small living room-- which revealed a doorway on the back wall linked to a rear office with a bay window. A powder room in between flanked right. Overall, the left side of the house was too dark. Plus, we didn't want a home office, and the powder room was in the wrong place."

Bitar talked to several contractors, but none seemed to see the floorplan's systemic flaws.



The re-made interior of a McLean home employs "cooler" gray and white undertones that allow accent pillows to really stand-out in bold relief.

"Only Sonny got our vision," Bitar says.

From the start, Nazemian conceived the front-to-back chambers on the home's left side as a "great room" that would reconfigure into two well-delineated activity areas: up front, a formal salon with a fireplace accessed from the foyer to the rear and a music room where Rima would keep her classical piano.

To gain natural light and visual continuum, the remodeler introduced a structural beam mounted on vertical supports mid

room and removed the obstructive bearing wall. The vertical supports are encased in visually-sympathetic recessed paneling.

Meanwhile, the entrance from the foyer has been widened, and changed to an arch which reiterates existing window shapes. Fluted mullions trimming the arch provide an elegant profile reinforced by fine detailing throughout. The new flooring is wide-plank cherry wood with espresso-finish. In the back half of the room (next to the piano) a "built-in" cadenza speaks to the

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