

# SIMPLY PERFECT

EUROPEAN SOPHISTICATION MEETS EASY LIVING

BY PATRA TAYLOR | PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOLGER OBENAU



This house is all about relaxing—on a rooftop deck, on a pergola-shaded terrace or by the pool.



The family room's 23-foot-tall vaulted ceiling is graced by a stone fireplace by Francois & Co. Reclaimed wood lintels complement the solid beams on the ceiling.

It's unusual for new clients to bring an armload of design books to the first meeting with their building team. But according to Steven Kendrick, owner of the Lowcountry-based Structures Building Company, that's exactly what one Northern Virginia couple did. As it turns out, all the amazing photographs they brought with them that first day unleashed a wave of creativity that carried the entire team through the design-build process and resulted in a finished home unlike any Structures has built to date.

"I'd be hard-pressed to define the home's style," says residential home designer Neal Van Dalen, who quickly tuned into the owners' eclectic inclinations. "The final design was driven by the features the owners wanted in the house rather than any particular style."

Located on a cul-de-sac along Molasses Creek, the 4,385-square-foot home enveloped in an established Mount Pleasant neighborhood is convenient to the town's amenities and offers easy access to downtown Charleston. Originally conceived with an old-world flair, complete with parapets and stucco, the exterior of the home ultimately evolved into

Calacatta Gold marble was selected for the countertops and tall backsplash in this bright, airy kitchen. Reclaimed wood shelves and art collected by the homeowner contribute to the European ambience.

a low-key facade that features wood lath siding and a hip roof. Bucking the neighborhood's "big front door" tradition, the garage, with studio apartment above, hugs the wedge-shaped homesite's narrow entrance and connects with the main house via a breezeway.

Built around a strong axis, the dramatic interior retains elements of the owners' initial European concept. "When you enter the home, you look straight through a sequence of openings that carry the eye out to the yard, the pool, the fountain at the end of the pool, the marsh and Molasses Creek beyond," explains Kendrick, who has been building high-quality custom homes in the Charleston area since 1999. "The owners loved the idea of a big hall as their main living space. With 23-foot ceilings, this big hall flows from family room to dining area to kitchen, flanked by a raised stone fireplace on one end and a custom plaster and reclaimed oak range hood and a cooktop on the other. So there's always something to intrigue you—to pull you into the next space."





**Above:** In the wine room, Arto signature Artillo cement floor tile from Melcer Tile perfectly pairs with the warm wood.

**Opposite:** The pantry's soapstone sink and counter were custom made by AGM Imports.

In the high ceiling, project manager Dave Hargis installed a series of 150-year-old oak trusses reclaimed from Pennsylvania barns. These textured beams, coupled with the natural light flowing in through a dormer, add a measure of grandeur to the space. "We tucked all the service spaces, including the

wine cellar and butler's pantry, off of the main living space, similar to the nave of a church," notes Van Dalen.

"The light-colored walls in the main living space are a perfect backdrop for the couple's massive art collection, which grew out of their world travels," says Structure's design manager,





There's no better place to relax or entertain than on the terrace with its calming view of Molasses Creek. Pool by Aqua Blue Pools.

Deborah Way. "Rather than using molding around the doors, we incorporated decorative oak lintels above the doors, which add a nice detail to the design without distracting from the artwork."

With the master suite hidden away on the ground floor, guests can enjoy private time on the second floor, which features two spacious guest bedrooms and a luxury bathroom. The second floor also includes a home office, located away from day-to-day distractions.

The couple opted to maximize their home's outdoor living space with a rooftop deck, dining patio, pool with a travertine surround and a pergola that shades a comfortable sitting area.

"This is such a special home," says Way. "I love to look back at all the inspiring photos and see how we carried out the actual install details. Our clients were so much fun to work with and were open to new ideas throughout the process. They saw the process through, from start to finish, and I think that's reflected in the final result."

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