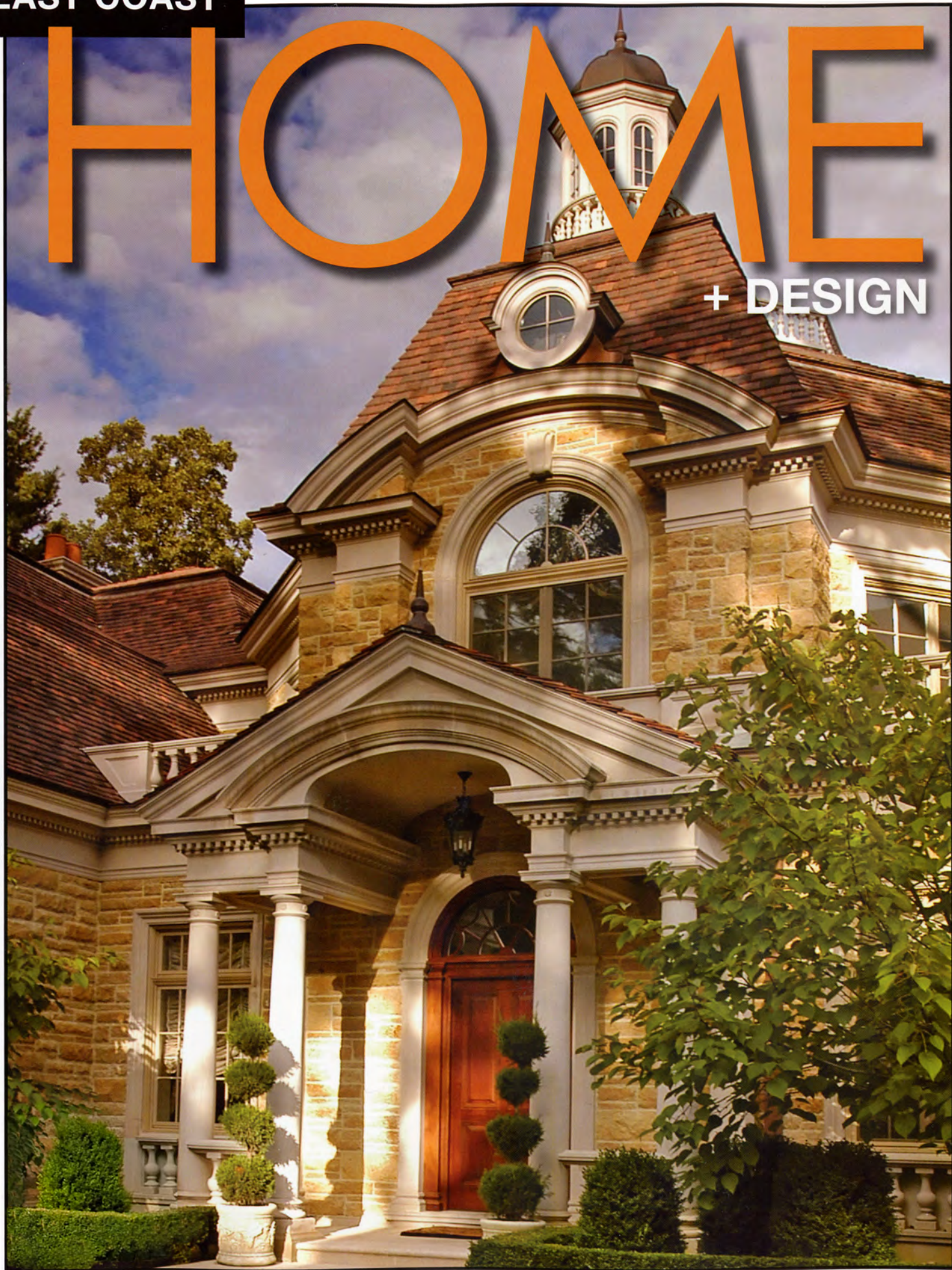


EAST COAST

# HOME

+ DESIGN





A French Pavilion style home.

**OPPOSITE** Looking through the kitchen, a breakfast porch was designed enhancing the prominent architectural style of linking structures within the home.





# A FAMILY AND THE SEA

*From the Far East to the Northeast: A Family Builds Their Treasured Home*

Y

*ou don't have to be twenty thousand leagues under the sea to know that the sea is everything. The architects at Wadia Associates shared Jules Verne's perspective when they designed this waterfront respite in Darien, by allowing the sweeping views of Long Island Sound to be a prevailing element.*

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STORY BY ELIZABETH ERVIN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN WALLEN









Hipped roofs and single story rooms placed on the front of the house minimize the enormity of the home and connote a more intimate feeling.









“The important thing with this house is the location, being on the water you can’t dictate your view. An architect doesn’t have the capacity to manipulate the land in the same way. The view dictates everything. How you lay out the house, where all the windows go. You ask yourself many questions and the answers come right away and then you work with what is left. Your only option is to work around your parameters,” explains Dinyar Wadia.

After tearing down the existing structure, “the home was built to exude an air of intimacy,” cites Wadia. The design of this Americanized French pavilion still features connecting structures, such as the garage and a breakfast room. The garage was the only part of the original home that had been preserved. Hipped roofs and single story rooms were positioned in the front lending perfect symmetry to the façade of the house. “Once someone wants a formal European style home it has to be symmetrical, if you have an element to one side it must be mirrored,” Wadia notes.

The Mankato Kasota, a soft crème colored limestone with a cleft face, lends a chiseled look to the home’s façade and is complimented by a warm Ludowici clay tile roof that was combination of old tiles from the previous roof and new. Indiana limestone was selected for exterior detailing. Such exterior ornamentation whispers to the Asian inspired elements that are found on the home’s interior. The Regency style pavilion entrance was designed to emit the French and Asian influences. Careful attention was paid to delicacy and proportion in the placement of four smaller columns rather than two chunkier styles at the doorway.

**ABOVE** Small details, such as using half circle transoms at the top of the windows, allow for natural light to pour into the rooms and enable the homeowners to take complete advantage of their view.

**OPPOSITE** At the beginning of the design process the clients requested a French formal interior for their Living Room. By designing the room to be octagonal, Wadia was also able to maximize the views.



Stepping through the stair hall, the panoramic view of Long Island Sound is the dominant feature that draws one into the octagonal shaped living room.













**LEFT** The family room's mahogany beams trace the ceiling while the coffers were painted to appear light.

**BELOW** The dining room is decorated with hand-painted Chinese wallpaper from Gracie and Sons.

**OPPOSITE** After spending many years living in Asia, the homeowners wanted their home to reflect their travels and Eastern experiences.

In keeping with the exterior intimacy of the house, the inside is designed without any corridors. Everything flows from the stair line, keeping the downstairs open and the upstairs private. Wadia explains that, “while such an open lower floor plan is not ideal in every home; it is spectacular for this property. Each room flows into one another, maintaining perfect symmetry and breath taking views and they all start from here.” Wadia did stress, however, that it was important for the homeowner’s to be able to enclose certain rooms for privacy or to contain noise. The architectural solution to not obstruct the views with traditional doors was to install pocket doors between key rooms such as the family room, dining room, and kitchen.

The stair hall rotunda’s dominant feature is its decoratively painted plaster cupola and faux painted marble columns. “When the decorating began we decided on the faux painting and it really transformed the home. It subdued the grand details and added simple flow and transitions from space to space,” Wadia acknowledges. A wrapping custom-designed mahogany staircase is adorned with hand forged lotus leaves in the balusters which are made from a combination of gunmetal and bronze.

Stepping through the stair hall, the panoramic view of Long Island Sound is the







**ABOVE LEFT** The stair hall rotunda's dominant feature is its decoratively painted plaster cupola. When the decorating began the faux painting really transformed the home.

**LEFT** A wrapping custom-designed mahogany staircase is adorned with hand forged lotus leaves in the balusters which are made from a combination of gunmetal and bronze.

**ABOVE/OPPOSITE** In the interior, everything flows from the stair line, keeping the downstairs open and the upstairs rooms private.





dominant feature that draws one into the octagonal shaped living room. As it is important to see as much of the view as possible, half circle transoms were added to the top of the glass French doors, also allowing more natural light to flow into the room.

Wadia recalls, "Upon initial consultation the clients came in with a photograph of a French formal interior. This is what

they requested. The Living room perfectly matches that photo."

After spending many years living in Asia, the homeowners wanted their home to reflect their travels and Eastern experiences. Hints of chinoiserie-inspired millwork and intricate moldings flow throughout the house. The dining room is decorated with hand-painted Chinese wallpaper from Gracie and Sons, while the family

room is framed with custom designed chinoiserie paneling.

This room's mahogany beams trace the ceiling while the coffers were painted to appear light. Further detailing such as the small corbel at the top of the columns subtly link to the outside pergola and the lattice work above the doorways and in the back of the family room are reminiscent of the Far East. Other features



such as the leaded glass doors were made to work as a delicate nuance nodding to Asian influence.

On the upper level the four bedrooms are positioned in the back of the house with direct and side views of the Sound and petite Juliet balconies. Daily amenities such as laundry were also installed on this floor for convenience.

From the years spent abroad, the family acquired mementos from their travels. "A chief concern in this house," shares Wadia, "was that it would provide them with a venue to display these items." Throughout the home, the homeowners' pieces are displayed in numerous niches carved into the walls and door openings.

From front to back, inside to outside, Wadia finds that "the overall effect is one of lightness and delicacy with a nod to the Asian influence that inspired the design." ■

## RESOURCES

### **Wadia Associates**

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