

SMOOTH MOVES

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LUXURY MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE, EVEN FOR A COUPLE SO SIMPATICO THEY'VE BEEN BLISSFULLY MARRIED FOR 34 YEARS. Such was the case for two North Shore empty nesters that decided it was time to sell their sprawling 1930s colonial. She wanted to move to the city; he preferred a short commute to his suburban office. So they compromised, deciding to build a smaller home nearby.

INTERIOR DESIGNER Steve Kadlec, Kadlec Architecture + Design
ARCHITECT Ernest A. Grunsfeld III, FAIA, Grunsfeld Shafer Architects
HOME BUILDER Jeff Rizzolo, Rizzolo Brothers Company, Inc.
BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 5 SQUARE FEET 5,000





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Negotiations ensued: Her dream was to build on a strikingly rugged piece of property hugging a ravine; he wanted the luxury of a lakeside lot. "I figured that if we were going to be that close to the water, we might as well be *on* it," says the husband, who shared his thoughts on "her" property the very day she thought they'd buy it. "I was upset at first," she says. "But as we were driving away we saw a 'For Sale' sign on a wooded lot a half-block away, right on the lake."

The 90-foot-wide property came with several covenants, however, including a stringent setback. Wary, the couple consulted Evanston architect Ernest A. Grunsfeld III, FAIA, of Grunsfeld Shafer Architects, whose modernist-inspired contemporary work they had long admired. He deemed the lot "quite lovely" and suggested that the setback wasn't an issue. "I convinced them to build even farther back so the trees would become pieces of sculpture," he notes. With that, the couple bought the lot and added to the design mix Chicago-based architect Steve Kadlec, of Kadlec Architecture + Design, who specializes in interiors.

The team in place, the couple immediately expressed their particular version of luxury, and it didn't include the dazzling façades, colossal kitchens and statement-making furnishings that had become routine in lakeside residences. "We didn't want the house to attract attention from the street, and we didn't want huge rooms we didn't need," explains the wife, who instead allotted the space where they'd use it most.



DINING À DEUX
The rift white oak dining table designed by interior designer Steve Kadlec seats 16, but can be split and enlarged (with matching leaves) into two tables that seat 30 for large dinner parties.



WHITE WASH
The main entertaining space houses the formal living and dining areas, and delivers the spectacular lakeside view the homeowners insisted upon.

**MASTER PLAN**

In the master bedroom, Kadlec hid huge walk-in closets behind creamy lacquered wood panels, and custom designed a bed to "float" in front of the concealed doors.



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That meant large open spaces for entertaining; a trim yet functional kitchen and master suite; and, most importantly, lakeside views wherever possible, especially in the gym. "We're huge workout people," says the wife, "but we've always had to exercise in the basement."

Grunsfeld shaped the house in a modified H configuration to increase the exterior wall space and organize the home into three distinct zones: private spaces, including a study and a master bedroom, to the north; public spaces, like the multipurpose living area, in the middle; and utilities, namely the kitchen and garage, to the south. He topped the center of the H with a second level to hold the coveted gym and two guest bedrooms. The design allows the kitchen, main living area, master suite, gym and a guest bedroom to face the lake. Edged in glass, these spaces also create a spectacular two-story rear elevation.

STYLE SELECTION

This clean and contemporary piece, available in several colors, lends an air of creativity to a multitude of spaces. *Large Rain Drop Vase, price available upon request; jardinsenfleur.com*



SLEEK CONTEMPORARY PIECES
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STONE STORY
The same limestone tiles that clad the floor create a simple yet stunningly sculptural fireplace surround in the living room. The painting above the sofa is by artist Suzanne Caporael.

**CORNER TABLE**

An elegant dining area is actually an informal eating nook in the kitchen, and parallels the master suite on the opposite side of the home's H-shaped silhouette. Both have 270-degree views.



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Inside, Kadlec fulfilled the wife's request for "nothing fussy, oversized, uncomfortable or involved." Sleek contemporary pieces, many custom designed by Kadlec himself, grace the home yet let the lake view take center stage. Its only rival: the icy-white sea-like limestone floor that flows smoothly across the entire first level—a luxury the couple didn't put on their wish list but now celebrate. It was a feat to achieve, says builder Jeff Rizzolo, of Rizzolo Brothers Company, Inc., in Libertyville. "It's actually made up of 2-by-2-foot tiles that had to be wet ground after they were installed to get that seamless look. It was an incredibly laborious process," he confides.

The couple now look forward to their first summer in the house, and to enjoying the lush grounds designed by Lake Bluff-based landscape architect Scott Byron of Scott Byron and Co. Wide ledges that terrace down to the lake (an eco-friendly move to conserve the bluff) give the couple more space to entertain—and that's a luxury both husband and wife agree on. **L**

STYLE SELECTION

Made of solid macassar ebony, the sleek curves of this table are emphasized with a high gloss finish, making it a handsome addition to any room. *Spider Game Table*, \$13,200; homedesign.com

