

A Grand Entrance



STORY BY STACEY FREED | PHOTOS BY MATT WITTMAYER

New home combines artistry and open spaces.

It started with a photo of a lakeside house with a gorgeous spiral staircase. This large Pittsford ranch with a walkout lower level was essentially built around it.

“The centerpiece was the grand foyer, with the circular stairs and rotunda,” said architect Jim Fahy. “That was a very important piece, and everything worked off that.”

“Everything” actually came from just about everywhere. The vision was a larger home with big living spaces, big closets and a private master suite with a separate area for children, and the homeowners spent years



(Opposite page) The staircase that started it all. (This page) The house engages with the large yard through myriad windows along the back, letting light pour in. A large granite kitchen island from Solid Surfaces includes a curved seating area set atop a custom-built pedestal.

collecting photos and inspiration from Pinterest and the website Houzz, pulling elements from all over and asking the designers to re-create what appeared in those photographs.

The staircase was a prime example. It's a work of art, ribboning down to the lower level with open risers and an iron banister with delicate, fanciful swirls echoing the curved two-floor niche it traverses. Backed by double-height windows and topped with a curved ceiling, the stairwell turns the entry into

something truly grand.

The stairs, built by Rick Gerrish of Staircase in Buffalo, were tricky because "the space is 90 percent glass—a unique feature I hadn't worked with in other homes," Fahy says.

Ketmar Development was the builder and also the supplier of the lot, which had some privacy and a view of the woods. The house, completed in November 2015, has an elegant, tailored look with curved edges and archways where walls meet.

The transitional style works well

with the open concept floor plan, with the public spaces—kitchen, living/great room, dining room—all working together.

Amy Kruger of Bryce & Doyle helped with space planning, cabinets and counters in the 6,400-square foot house.

"We had to be careful with the colors so it all blended together," Kruger says. "The colors in the great room flow between the wood flooring in that room and the cabinet colors and built-ins next to the fireplace. They're all the same tones. It keeps your eye within the space



Built-ins by Richard Doyle accent the living room/great room (top left), and vaulted ceilings make a statement in the dining area (top right). In the kitchen (above), local artist Rick Muto faux-painted the hood above the stove and also did a ceiling and bathtub surround in the master bathroom.

(Opposite page) The master bathroom is anchored by a standalone tub, with faux-painting of the surround by Rick Muto. The bar area on the lower level includes a professional-grade bar sink and custom bar and wine cellar designed by Gaetano Abate.

and doesn't interrupt your view. So you see those two spaces as a whole."

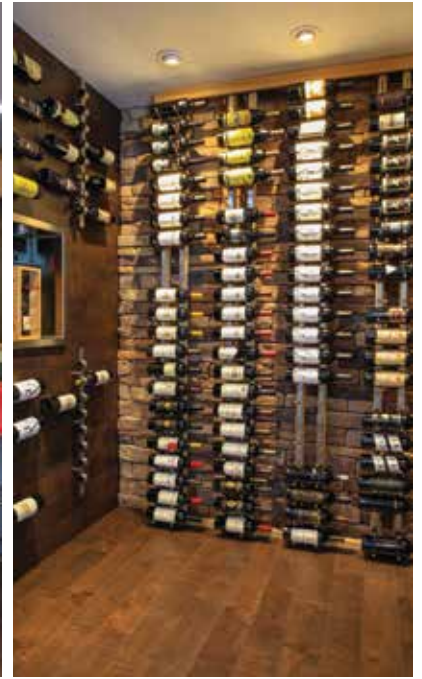
Many professionals collaborated on the house, including interior designer Anne Marie Weissend of AMW Interiors in Rochester, who helped visualize spaces and worked to find lighting, paint colors and furnishings and other materials. In the kitchen, she worked to create the colored glass backsplash by painstakingly placing individual tiles into patterns.

The kitchen is fully stocked with every amenity and appliance, from a built-in beverage fridge to a pot-filler, microwave drawer, and full-size Subzero refrigerator and freezer integrated into the cabinets. Kruger created different kitchen work zones. For instance, the area from the double ovens to the great room is set up with all the baking items to keep them out of the main work triangle, which is its own zone for prepping, cooking, and cleanup.

The kitchen opens into the living room/great room, which has two walls of windows and French doors. The third wall is home to a large fireplace with built-ins, done by Richard Doyle, with walnut veneer and back-lit LED panels.

"The trickiest part," Kruger says, "was scribing all the panels to perfectly fit the alcove with the proper reveals and corners."

Large archways herald visitors into the dining area to reveal a vaulted ceiling and



walls in peacock blue. The generous-size rooms don't stop in the main living spaces. The master suite includes two large walk-in closets and a master bathroom anchored by a standalone bathtub, with a surround that was faux-painted by Rick Muto to match the bath deck.

Behind the tub is a tiled wall that hides the zero-threshold shower, accessible from either side. Two sinks sit atop floating vanities in the his-and-hers space. But the "hers" side has a special makeup area, engineered by Richard

Doyle, with an integrated lift-up mirror and LED lighting built into its top.

The lower level, with its bar, wine cellar, guest rooms and gym, is just as elegant and put-together as the main floor. And the walk-out spaces both up and down bring the outdoors in.

"The covered veranda off the great room and the large gathering area on the lower level and patio areas are very important to the flow," Fahy says.

All the elements came together to create a unique blend, made possible by

people with the ability to re-create any look.

"Technology has elevated our sense of style as a generation," Kruger says. "It has changed our design methods. It used to be that everything was cookie cutter. Now, choices are limitless, and the industry is catering to that demand. Things that are popular in Milan are popular in Rochester, and we don't have to wait 20 years for them to get here." **R**

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Stacey Freed is a writer living in Pittsford.