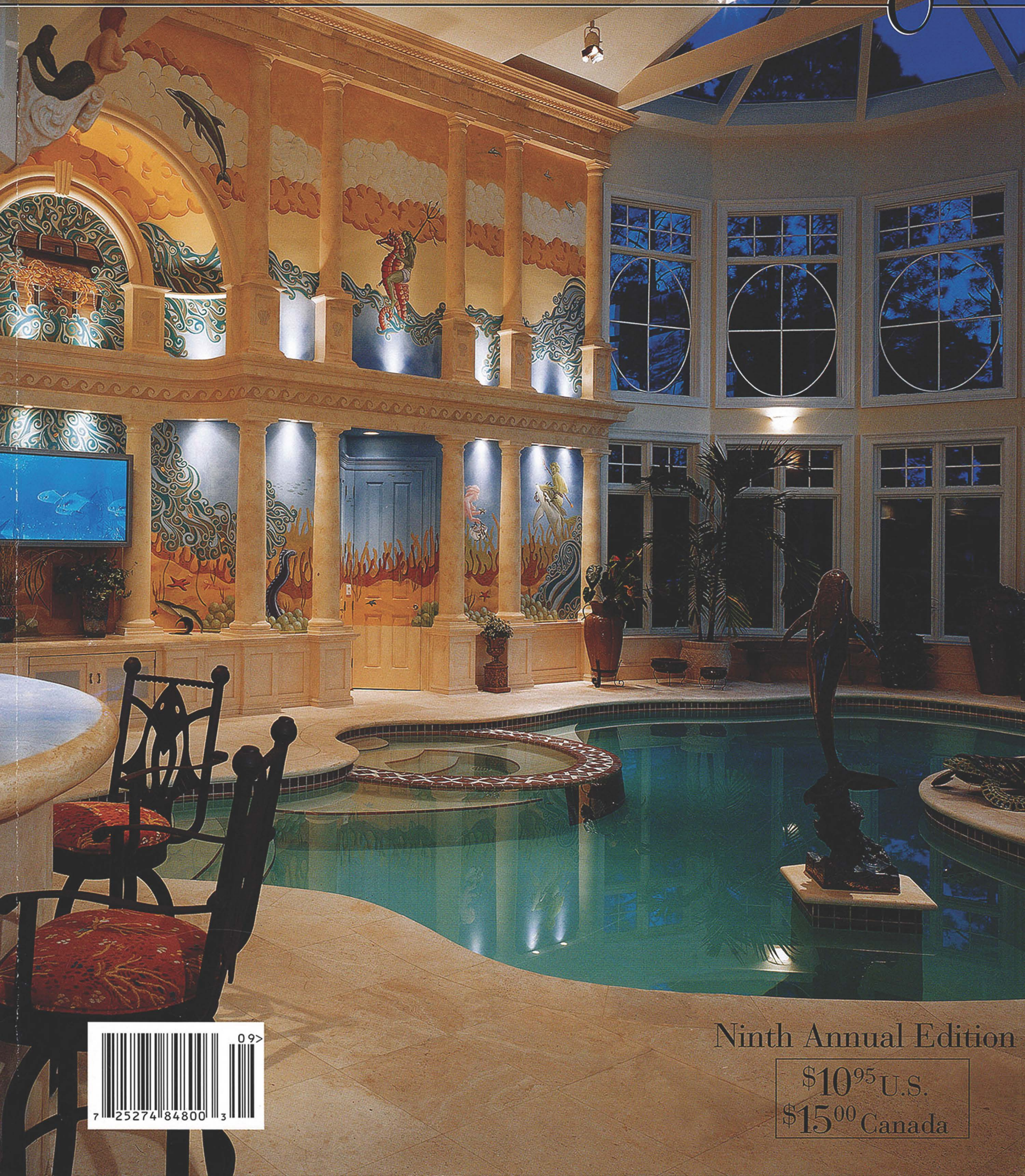


C A R O L I N A

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Windham says he is used to designing large homes for the area, but the average size is generally in the 5,000-square-foot range. "At that time, this house--at 19,000 square feet--was the largest my firm had tackled. Now, however, we're doing homes as large and larger."

As the scope of the project increased, the challenge became meeting the stringent guidelines and regulations set forth by the Wexford Plantation community, a gated development on Hilton Head Island. The design process itself took almost a year. "Our goal was to get as much house as possible on a restricted site," says Windham. "But we had to present detailed plans to the architectural review board, and meet



Two stories of outdoor eating and relaxing areas adorn the West exposure side of this impressive home.

Overlooking the Wexford Waterway system, the home's exterior features 2,000 square feet of porches and styling that hints of British Colonial. (left). The architect-designed pool, with cascading waterfall and Mediterranean style landscaping (below), is a stunning complement to the home's exterior.

A W O R K I N P R O G R E S S

WAYNE WINDHAM, AIA
Architect

DEBBIE KELLEY, IIDA
GREGORY VAUGHAN
Interior Design

JOHN MCMANUS
Photography

Everyone who worked on this waterfront project will agree: There are not enough adjectives to describe its beauty, grandness, and uniqueness. It has truly been, and continues to be, a work in progress.

The design process began eight years ago when a couple approached architect Wayne Windham, AIA, about building their dream vacation home. What began as a typical size home by Hilton Head Island standards, grew in square footage as the owners' wish list grew. "They

wanted something dramatic," says Windham, "since the home takes up three lots and is located off the Intracoastal Waterway along the Wexford Waterway System. At one point, we just set up the drawing boards on site. It sort of took on a life of its own."





Decorative columns and two “Gone With the Wind” style staircases greet guests as they step inside the foyer onto the Italian travertine floor.

specific height restrictions and set-back requirements.”

Builder Dan Lawrence, of Lawrence Construction (a division of Cambridge Building Corporation), began the building process in 1996. The house called for typical concrete blocks and footings, as well as wood frame construction. However, that is where its resemblance to the other project ends.

“This place was an artisan’s delight,” says Lawrence. “We had to hire many different master craftsmen to work on the home, and there was more millwork in this home than I have ever seen in my career. The fine detailing meant that each room was treated like a project unto itself. Each room required its different types of materials and craftsmanship. Many kinds

of wood were used: butternut, walnut, cherry, mahogany, and oak. It was complicated, but with the enthusiasm and

A massive chandelier by Art de Mexico, a beautifully painted dome ceiling, and Baroque-style benches with gold leaf accents set the tone in the foyer for the experience that awaits.



quality of workers involved, the house turned out to be a showpiece.”

A year and a half later, the traditional British Colonial mansion was nearly complete. The original owners, however, were unable to realize their dream project. Another family, who had already purchased a home on the island, quickly moved to sell it when they realized this home was on the market and stepped in to oversee the masterpiece’s finishing touches.

The owners, an investment banker and a Ph.D. in finance, wanted a home where their three school-age children and other family members could enjoy school breaks and summer vacations. Since they already owned a 1930s traditional English manor house in Connecticut, the family wanted a vacation house that was “just about as different as you can get.”

Windham says that when the new owners came on the scene almost two years ago, he did a walk-through with them and described the previous owners’ vision. For the most part, Windham says the new owners carried forth the original plan, but they also added their own touches. “When the project was halted, we were all



Because of the size, decorating the living room (approximately 26’ x 26’) was the most challenging for designer Debbie Kelley. She created conversation areas around the limestone mantel and marble inset fireplace with an eclectic array of chenille and textured fabric upholstery among other distinct accents.

heartbroken, but now with the new owners in the house, it has come full circle,” adds Windham.

According to Windham, some of the design elements that immediately impressed the new owners most were the two “Gone With the Wind” staircases that greet visitors entering the home through the massive 10-foot wooden doors, the two stories of glass in the entryway, the spacious

and airy 18’ x 24’ dining room, and the extensive amount of stonework throughout.

“It’s amazing how much stone was used in this house,” says Windham. “It’s by far the most I’ve ever seen used on a project.”

Indeed, John Baltzegar, owner of Stoneworks Inc., says “many containers” of stone were imported from Italy to be used in the home. He points out that Italian-cut stone

is best because the Italians have perfected an ancient tradition of cutting stone. “They have the machinery, the technology, and the skills,” he states. After the stone entered his facility, however, it often had to be recut to meet the house’s unique design specifications.

“We started on the project in 1995 and had eight to 15 people on site for at least a year,” he says. “We brought a highly



skilled mechanic on the job to manage it. And it took at least six people in our fabrication shop in Augusta (Georgia) to complete three of the custom fireplaces. There is nothing like those fireplaces anywhere. They are made of travertine and are very detailed with architectural elements, columns, and moldings. And they are enormous. Everything was so uniquely customized that this job took a lot of design time with the owner, the architect, the interior designer, and our company. Nothing was standard. Nothing.”

Baltzegar explains that all types of stone were used — coquina, marble, granite, and limestone — for the floors, bathrooms,

and kitchen. “There are cast-stone columns and balusters, and travertine floor patterns that were very intricate and varied,” he says. “It was a very intensive job in terms of labor, planning, and materials. At the time, this was the largest residential project ever undertaken by our company. The magnitude of stone in that home is enormous.”

Also impressive are the up-to-the-minute features used in the home, such as the geothermal heat pump system that is tied into both the indoor and outdoor pool, as well as an Audio Access multi-room, multi-zone audio/video system installed throughout the house.

(Above) Passageways, like this one into the dining room from the central part of the house, showcase the many custom woodworking details evident throughout. The French Louis XV custom-made dining table and chairs by Designer Imports International are dramatized by the oversized, specially designed rug by Lacey Champion. Versace china, with a mix of Medusa and Barocco patterns, sets this formal table (below).



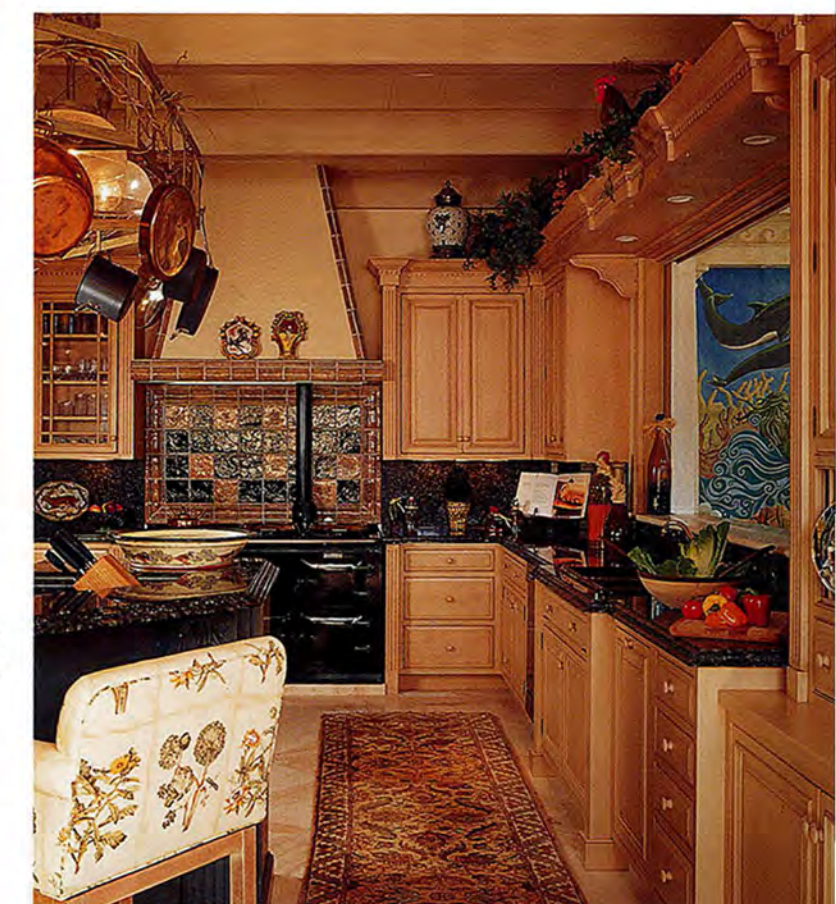
The kitchen seating arrangement invites one to pull up an upholstered bar stool to the granite countertops and settle in for conversation while meals are prepared in this state-of-the-art kitchen.

Windham explains that the geothermal system uses ground water for the heating and cooling exchange by taking the necessary water out and putting it back into the ground. Thus, the system is highly efficient and very quiet.

Consultants and installers for the audio/video system were Audio/Video Architects, which has been doing business on Hilton Head Island since 1988.

“The goal was for the family to be able to listen to different types of music in different rooms at the same time, or the

Custom wood cabinets, and a reproduction Aga cast-iron propane stove (that always maintains a consistent temperature), give this kitchen its warmth and charm.





From the eat-in kitchen area, family members and guests can enjoy a view of the stunning indoor pool. By far the favorite spot in this home is the elaborately designed indoor pool room with the hand-painted two-story mural of a Neptune scene. A home theater system in the pool room is one of four that are linked to a multi-room, multi-zone audio/video system (at right).

same music throughout the house if a party was in progress," says Wayne Auman, owner. The company also met the owners' needs for "complete flexibility" as well as "simple operation."

He says, "Everything can be controlled

from a central closet. And it's extremely simple to operate . . . at the touch of a button using key pads."

The greatest feature of the speaker system, which is by Sound Advance, is that with proper installation, it is literally invisible.

"You install the speakers flush with the sheet rock before the walls are finished. Installed professionally, they are seamless and invisible. We had to provide the owners with a layout of where all the speakers are in case they want to hang more pictures on the wall."





An opulent gold and purple color scheme, velvets, and trims offer a royal setting for guests in one of the six bedrooms in the home.

Adds Auman, "It's an inobtrusive, but simple, system. These were such wonderful clients to work with because they like being on the cutting edge of technology."

Also tied into the whole house system are four flat screen plasma televisions ranging in size from 42 inches to 61 inches. And the owners are planning to add a hi-tech home movie theater to the 3,000-square-foot attic space in the near future.

From a decorating standpoint, the new owners found the home at just the right time — before real personality and life were given

to the interior. "We wanted a place that was just right for our kids, friends, and family," according to the owners. The couple met with Interior Designer Debbie Kelley, IIDA, who had worked for two and a half years with the previous owners. An instant rapport was formed. "I had put so much into the project that I was so happy to be able to continue on and furnish it for the new owners," she says.

According to Kelley, the new owners initially devoted much time traveling from Connecticut to Hilton Head Island to oversee the interior development. Kelley learned their interests and tastes and had

to adjust her thinking somewhat in terms of the vision the previous owners had for the house versus the new owners' ideas. The new owners, for example, were much more interested in color.

"For a while we Fed Ex'd colors and fabric swatches back and forth," says Kelley. "And they came down and went over ideas with me. The husband even went on a buying trip with me to High Point, N.C. But then we developed a relationship, and a trust evolved. They finally said that they did not need to approve every element. 'If you

find it and feel it belongs in the house, then buy it.' "

Kelley was responsible for overseeing the phenomenal murals the house boasts. Most impressive is the two-story Neptune scene that is painted among the columns and arches of the indoor pool room. Kelley commissioned artist Joe Doolan of California, with whom she had worked on past projects, to paint part of the mural on canvas to be installed at the top part of the wall. The bottom part of the wall was painted on-site by Doolan.

It was important to the owners and to Kelley to showcase the architectural details of the home — such as the elaborate moldings, columns that help define the spaces, and the two sweeping staircases in the foyer — while at the same time creating some warmth. "You think there is no way to make a home this large cozy," she says. "There is so much stone, tile, and granite. But I made certain that all the colors, fabrics, and furnishings were chosen with a goal of achieving warmth."

One strategy for developing an inviting ambiance was to select just the right area rugs. "I worked with the Lacey Champion factory to have them make rugs that followed the shape of the rooms." One of her favorites is the dining room rug with its central circular design. The formal French patterns in the rug "perfectly" highlight the Louis XV arm chairs with "Floral Lattice Chenille" fabric and round dining table made exclusively for the home by Designer Imports International. Finishing off this setting is china by Versace, featuring a mix of Medusa and Barocco patterns.

Perhaps the most inviting room is the family room, with its deeper colors, Ralph Lauren leather chairs, three-way

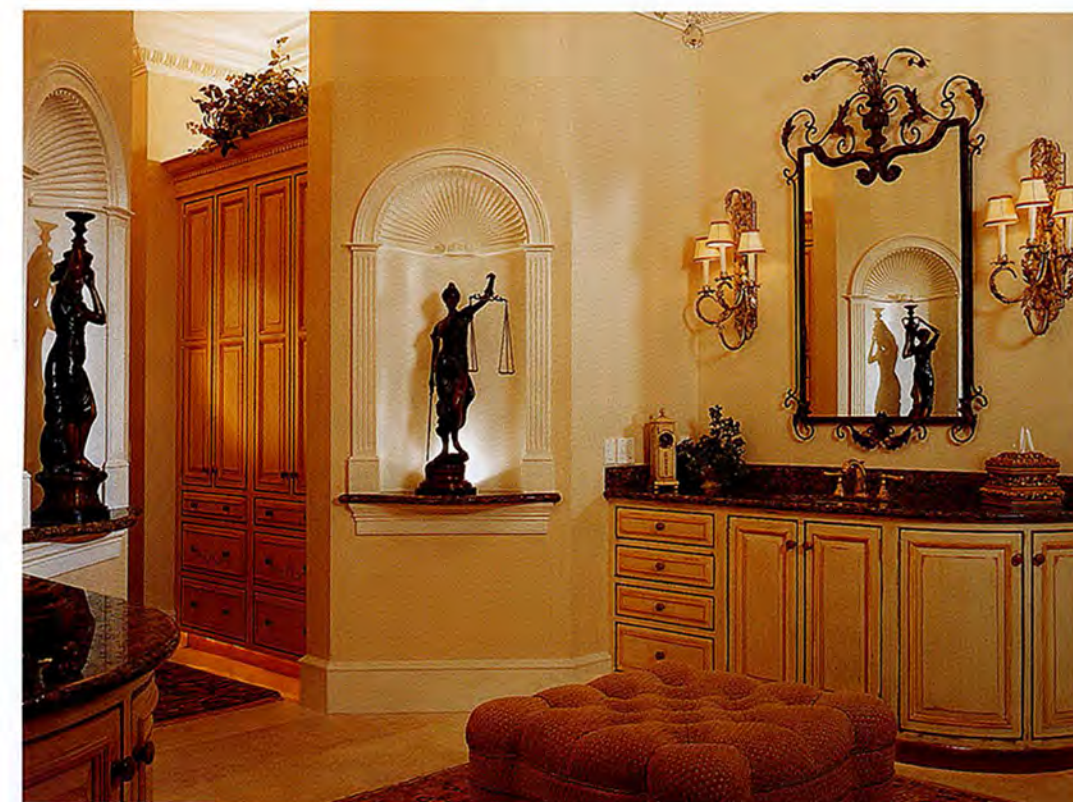


Darafeev gaming table, and conversation piece map-motif table from the John Richard Collection. "The entire home started out with a sort of old world feeling. Then it became much more formal and

French," says Kelley. "But overall, it is very eclectic and very sophisticated."

The most challenging room was the living room, which is approximately a 26' x 26'

Fit for a king and a queen, the master bath is Grecian in design. Focal points include the gold button-tufted pouf ottoman, domed ceiling, dramatic chandelier, and Greek statuettes.



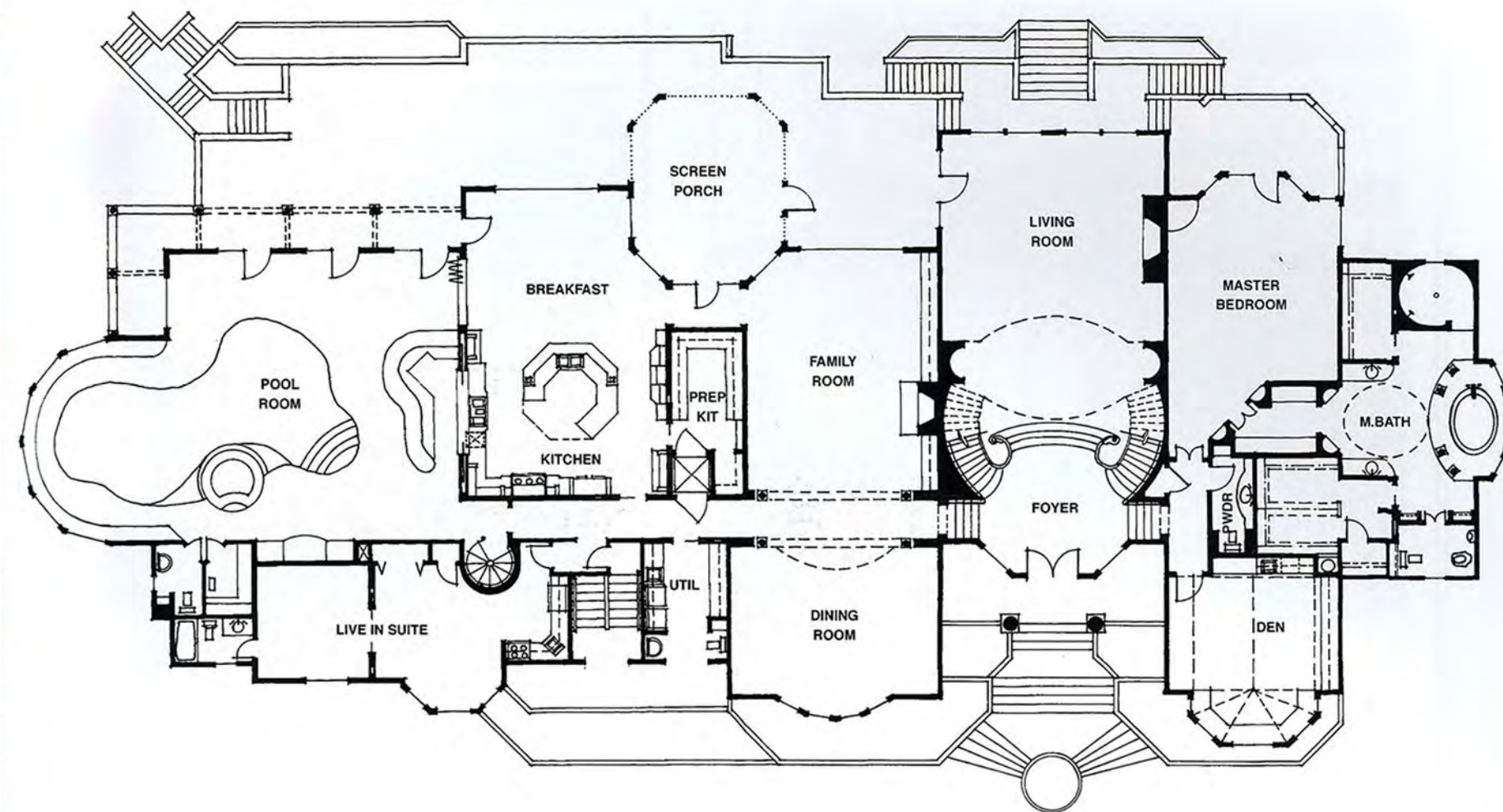


The massive butternut, hand-carved fireplace mantel gives this family room an old world feel. Leather chairs are by Ralph Lauren, and the map motif cocktail table with leather tooling is from the John Richard Collection.



space. "It's a very large space and the fireplace is not exactly centered," says Kelley, "so the difficulty was in creating intimate conversation areas with the fireplace as the focal point." One of the seating groups gathers around a hand-carved oval wood cocktail table with a stone top (by Hickory White) and faces the fireplace, which is adorned with a custom-made iron egret fire screen.

"This project has been challenging simply because of the scale of it," expresses Kelley. "But it's also been an absolute dream project. The owners could not have been nicer. And to see their faces when they see what I've done. It makes it all worth the countless hours spent working on the house."



A WORK IN PROGRESS

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In the formal garden area, interlaced bricks give the walking paths a cobblestone look beneath the vine-covered pergola.

