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Colonial REVIVED

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Two New York designers reinvent a 1930's Dutch colonial in a lakeside Charlevoix neighborhood.





A WEST COAST FAMILY
BOUGHT THE HOUSE
AS A SUMMER COTTAGE,
loving its essence
IF NOT ALL ITS
PARTICULARS.



CLOCKWISE FROM LOWER LEFT: The spacious sun porch, a focal point of the original house, was restored but little changed in the otherwise transformative remodel project that brought in as many as 60 workers a day. Simple, parklike landscaping is low-maintenance and neighborly, allowing passersby to share the view. A new circle drive connects the house to the street.

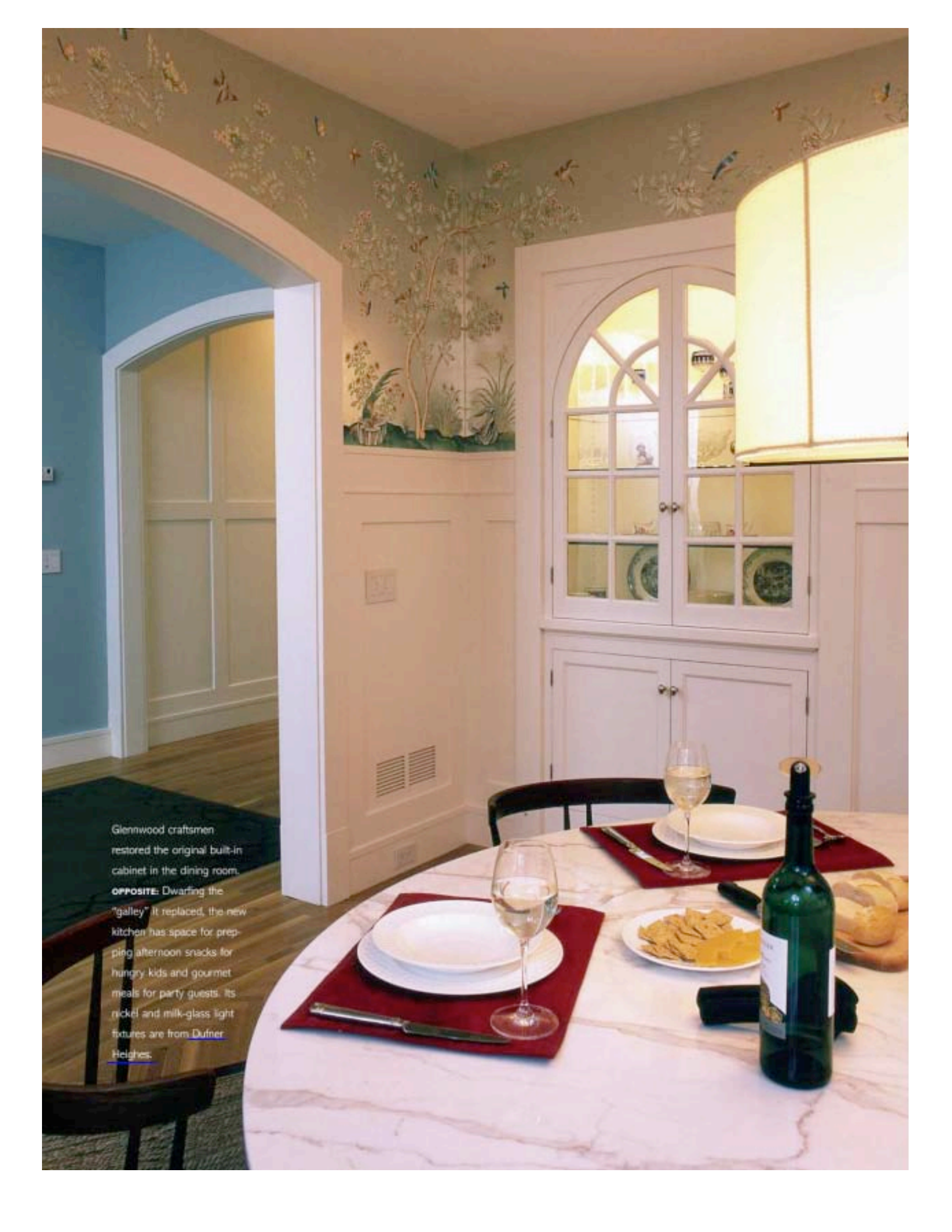


A visitor passing the stately Dutch colonial on a lovely Charlevoix side street might well assume that the house has been meticulously maintained but barely changed since it was built in 1930. With its multi-pane windows, square-pillared carport and hand-laid brick drive, it appears to be a classic example of this genre revived in the early decades of the last century.

But as the locals know, the house is the recipient of an extreme makeover from which it emerged decidedly more elegant than it had ever been, rebuilt with a blend of fine craftsmanship, cutting-edge technology and uptown design that has received national attention.

When the house went on the market earlier in 2003, it was in decent shape with many original features: plaster walls, oak floors, a stone fireplace and a service staircase. Its galley-sized kitchen and cobbled-on breakfast nook were dated, but its front-row seat on Lake Michigan made it a hot property.

The house captured the imagination of a West Coast family, which bought it for use as a summer cottage, loving its essence if not all its particulars. The family commissioned its



Glennwood craftsmen restored the original built-in cabinet in the dining room.

OPPOSITE: Dwarfing the "galley" it replaced, the new kitchen has space for prepping afternoon snacks for hungry kids and gourmet meals for party guests. Its nickel and milk-glass light fixtures are from [Dufner Helges](#).



DUFNER HEIGHES ON **STYLE**

Outside, the house is a disciplined example of the Dutch colonial revival period, every detail as authentic as possible. But inside, this style is only one of many incorporated into the decor.

The kitchen, for example, is outfitted with retro chairs and bar stools. The light fixtures are downright funky, different in every room.

But for a real trip across time and space, enter the dining room. Above the traditional colonial paneling is wallpaper hand-painted in traditional Chinese style. The table is a cow-spine, marble-topped affair design by the Dufner Heighes firm, accompanied by Japanese-inspired chairs from George Nakashima Woodworks. Against one wall is a 200-year-old English scribeboard, a hand-carved mouse running up its leg.

"We didn't want to go in and make everything Dutch colonial," explains designer Daniel Heighes Warner. "Pulling things in from other periods makes the house comfortable and really personal," he says, adding that mixing styles can make any room a little more warm.





Colonial Revival

THE NEW OWNERS ASKED DESIGNERS DANIEL HEIGHES WISMER AND GREGORY DUFNER TO SAVE WHAT THEY COULD OF THE *original style.*

favorite New York City design firm, hired a local builder, and launched a fast-track project that kept the Petoskey-based Glennwood Custom Builders busy from fall to summer.

The new owners asked designers Daniel Heighes Wismer and Gregory Dufner to save what they could of the original style—but only after modernizing its infrastructure and making the house comfortable for their four children. Accomplishing the former, as Wismer decided once he'd inspected the tiny kitchen and old wiring, required drastic measures. The breakfast nook was demolished and the house stripped to the studs, inside and out. Crews added steel supports under the floor; replaced the plumbing; installed new HVAC equipment, moving noisy mechanicals outside and underground; and updated the electric system, including the latest in whole-house lighting and audio.

The designers gained kid-friendly space by creating bedrooms in the unfinished attic and finishing the basement with a new outside entrance, cubbies and an après-hot-tub beach shower. They added a two-story wing featuring a handsome guest suite above a kitchen and an eating area that boasts 500 square feet of elbow room. The old kitchen was

ABOVE: Designers kept the center-hall layout on the main floor, a hallmark of Dutch colonial style. An existing archway between the dining room and hallway was enlarged and stylized, and an identical archway added in the family room. New windows were sized to the original openings—smaller than the lakeside windows for privacy from the street.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The upstairs sleeping porch provides a fresh-air view of Lake Michigan, in the guest bedroom, as elsewhere in the house, finely crafted built-in cabinetry provides ample storage and simplifies furnishings. Fixtures in the bathroom are made of polished nickel, not chrome, for a mellower shine.



converted to a butler's pantry, and the four original second-story bedrooms were converted into two.

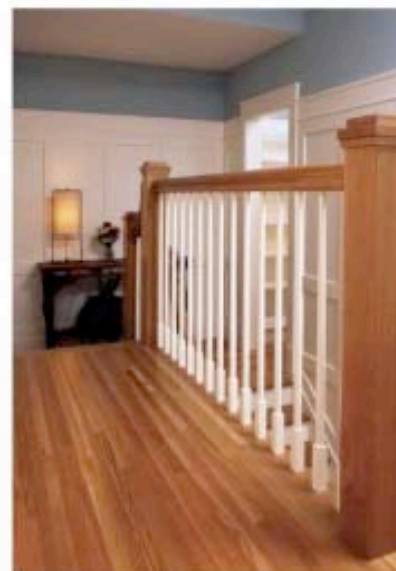
In the midst of the new construction, Wismer and Dufner worked to preserve original details. When Glennwood's crew uncovered a small section of clapboard beneath the vinyl siding, the designers ordered custom-milled planking to match the original wood. They designed the new two-berth carport to the same specs as the smaller one it replaced. Inside, they restored a built-in cabinet in the dining room and reused some of the doors.

Overall, however, the designers were less concerned with returning the house to its vintage condition than with enhancing its period style. For inspiration, Wismer says, they studied Dutch colonials in New York City—revivals and older originals—and determined that the front entrance needed to be more "important." So workers removed a small arched overhang and replaced it with a square-pillared portico, topped with a railing copied from the original three-season room.

On the main floor, Wismer and Dufner added archways and wainscot paneling where none had ever been. They upgraded the bathrooms with new marble panels, penny-round tiles and period-inspired plumbing fixtures. And in the dining room, which made the cover



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FOR THIS HOME ON PAGE 74.



FROM LEFT: Now accessible through an outside entrance, the basement's tile floors, shower and a wall of cubbies and closets accommodate sandy feet and beach gear. The main stairway was entirely rebuilt, its structure reinforced and its Craftsman design accentuated.

of national magazine *Metropolitan Home*, they accentuated the motif with new herringbone oak flooring and new silver metallic wallpaper, gorgeously hand painted by Chinese artisans. For the whole house, they chose windows that could have been installed in 1930, with chunky muntins that complement the thick interior trim.

Throughout the project, the designers were involved in the smallest details, ordering only the best in materials and techniques, says Glennwood's owner Jeff Collins. He opens a kitchen cupboard, built in a cabinet shop owned by one of his trim carpenters, and points to two strips of wood cut in wave patterns—old-style, adjustable shelf supports, painted blue to match the inside of the cabinets. "It's that sort of craftsmanship you don't see today," he says. 🏡

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