



THIS PAGE Light-filled rooms get a boost from transom windows and warm, espresso-colored floors throughout this home. OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT Shipshape details—the spindles, copper accents, and cedar shakes—reinforce the Eastern seaboard feel. LEFT The “Mercedes of all ranges” and a convection microwave oven in the island can please even the most serious cook.



Midwest Goes New England

Inverness beauty delivers family appeal

BY JESSICA ROYER OCKEN | PHOTOS BY LANDMARK PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN

Chicago may seem a long way from the Eastern seaboard, but this suburban Inverness home makes New England feel nearby. That was the idea, says Chris Noon, owner of Chestnut Hill Development, of the 6,300-square-foot home his company created. “We wanted something refreshing and exciting to those familiar with the luxury home market,” he says. “I’ve spent quite a lot of time in New England, and we tried to incorporate those memories and thoughts.”

The designers challenged themselves to make the home as authentic as possible—“as if it were transplanted,” Noon says. Even the exterior shutters have been faux-finished to aged perfection. This attention to detail yields a thoughtfully crafted home just right for family living.

Transom windows throughout the interior carry on the style and allow light and warmth to pervade the rooms. “They’re a graceful way to transition from one space to another,” says Noon. The home’s dark-wood flooring and white moldings convey a clean, spacious feel, enhanced by locating barely visible electrical outlets in the 10-inch base molding, rather than on the walls. Also an authentic detail, this provides a truly blank canvas for artwork.

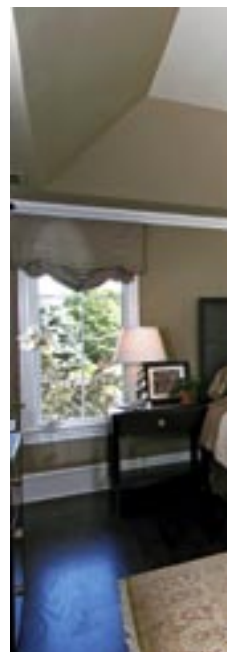
Chestnut Hill kept a team of trim carpenters busy for three months on the house, and their efforts show. The paneled columns throughout are their handiwork, as is the fabulous ceiling in the dining room. The double-octagonal tray has dental molding, which gives it the look of a gorgeous layer cake—excellent inspiration for formal dining.

Other first-floor features include a butler's pantry with a wet bar and a high-end icemaker said to make totally clear cubes. In the Julia Child-worthy kitchen, antiqued white cabinets and marbled-granite counters provide a backdrop for what Noon describes as “the Mercedes of all ranges”: a gourmet model with six burners and a griddle, double electric-convection ovens, and spice racks hidden in the hood. Drawers are equipped with a child-friendly “braking system” to prevent slams and pinched fingers. The pantry contains ample space for ingredients galore, as well as easy access to the central controls of the home audio system.

Nearby, the family and breakfast rooms include abundant windows to bring the backyard's beauty in. Framed by weeping willows, the well-landscaped green space is subtly distinct from the untamed meadow beyond and from the neighbors' yards on either side, creating a pleasant, open space for kids to play.

But the second level truly showcases family-friendly thinking. Two separate staircases lead to a central landing, to which all bedrooms connect. If a child is napping, come quietly up the back stairs, or if overnight guests come to visit, lead them up the front. Two bedrooms are connected to a Jack-and-Jill bathroom with two sinks for easy morning preparations. In addition to walk-in closet space and built-in shelves, these bedrooms come equipped with storage for all the holiday decorations, sports equipment, and art projects a growing family can generate.

The master bedroom offers a sumptuous escape for Mom and Dad, yet remains within earshot of the children. The master bath diverges slightly from the New England theme. With its Italian marble, air-jet tub, and separate shower, it more like a nice European hotel, says Noon.



BELOW Trimmed to a fare-thee-well, the living room shows off its panels, built-ins, and crown moldings. A wall of French doors bring the outside into this charming space.





BUILDER
Chestnut Hill Development

HOME LOCATION
Inverness

SUPPLIERS
Merrill Lynch
The Westye Group



The lower level includes radiant-heat flooring, as does the garage. The wine cellar extends into a tasting room with a seating area. The kids get yet another play area, which can be closed off behind a door. (Whew!) An exercise room meets Mom and Dad's needs with rubber flooring, a wall-mounted television, a mirrored wall, and an adjacent wood sauna. A guest bedroom and bath makes room for visitors, while the central media room can be enjoyed by all.

"Our goal is not a super-sized mansion," Noon explains. "Someone joked that this is the perfect home for a family that likes each other. You don't need an intercom system, and we're proud of that, but you do have some privacy." **MH**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES FEATURED IN THIS STORY, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 116.

TOP Multiple windows fill the master bedroom with a natural glow. **BELOW, RIGHT** The dining room's embellished tray ceiling is the perfect complement to this formal space. **LEFT** The richly hued wainscoting and coffered ceiling add dignified touches to the first-floor study.