

INSIDE STORY

# Creating A Room With a View

A couple builds their dream vacation home around a panorama of Wisconsin's Lake Geneva



BY LAURA HINE

**S**haron and Tom Haverstock aren't boaters or avid swimmers. For them, a lake house is about the view; they wanted to look out their windows and see the serene waters of Wisconsin's Lake Geneva.

They looked for such a home for more than two years before finally buying a property in Fontana, Wis., with a neglected house on it. They spent three years demolishing the existing house, buying an adjacent lot to improve their views, and building a new house with a stunning panorama of the lake. In 2020—having spent about \$5 million including construction, land cost and furnishings—they moved in.

"When you walk in the front door, you can see straight down the lake," says Mr. Haverstock, 77, a retired investment banker. "That's a beautiful sight to enjoy every day."

The couple have long ties to Lake Geneva, having owned two condos in Fontana while their primary home was in nearby Lake Barrington, Ill. After Ms. Haverstock, 67, retired from her job as the executive vice president at the metal-forging company Scott Forge, they moved their primary residence to Naples, Fla. They now spend summers at their Lake Geneva home.

After purchasing the land, the couple assembled a team that included builder Scott Lowell and architect Todd Cauffman of Lowell Custom Homes, and interior designer Katie Wozniak of Katherine Elizabeth Designs.

The completed home spans about 6,450 square feet over three levels, with three bedrooms and offices for both Mr. and Ms. Haverstock. The lowest level includes the guest bedroom suites, a gym and a library. The main level has the sunroom, primary bedroom and a great room that contains an open-plan living-dining-kitchen space. The upper level has their offices and a family room with a wet bar. Both upper floors have expansive decks that face the lake.

"From the main level, you can almost see the entire lake, which is rare since it's such a big lake," Ms. Wozniak says. A folding glass NanaWall in the great room allows for indoor-outdoor living, and motorized screens allow the couple to enjoy the fresh air even on buggy nights.

Beyond the view, the couple spent a lot of time working with



Cost of land, construction and furnishings: \$5 million



The house spans about 6,450 square feet.

the design team to optimize the house for their lifestyle. Because they don't have children or grandchildren to accommodate, they gave priority to entertaining friends with elements like the 10-foot-high, all-glass wine storage feature in the main living area.

"The floating wine cellar is beautiful, but it's also functional," Ms. Wozniak says. "It serves as a natural separation between the traffic pattern of the hallway and the dining and bar areas."

And the kitchen? "I hate to say it, but I'm not a cook," Ms. Haverstock admits; it's also not her husband's forte. "But it's a great kitchen for entertaining." Ms. Wozniak set up two separate zones: The one closer to the wine feature is perfect for a bartender to serve the room, while the cook-

ing zone is tucked back and allows a caterer plenty of space to work.

Both upper floors have expansive decks that face the lake. At right, a 10-foot-high floating wine cellar in the living area.

Even in retirement, their home offices were still a priority. Mr. Haverstock requested a desk that could accommodate the four computer screens he uses for trading securities. "Each of our offices looks like us and reflects our personalities and what we wanted," Ms. Haverstock says. "The cabi-



walk down the stairs for floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, a lovely chair and a reading lamp," Ms. Haverstock says. "You can still see the lake and it's just a great use of space." Mr. Haverstock jokes that while he was worrying about his office and library, he forgot to look at the closet allocation, which greatly favors his wife: "I got the short end of that stick!"

Throughout the house, Ms. Wozniak kept the colors muted and neutral and chose transitional pieces for the furnishings—not too traditional, but not too contemporary either. "I wanted to create a timeless atmosphere," she says. "I used steely blues, water blues and navy blues, then layered in a little gold and taupe. It combines natural earth and water elements."

The palette also means the interior of the house doesn't fight with the lake views that motivated the entire project.

In a nod to Ms. Haverstock's long career at a forged metal manufacturer, Ms. Wozniak also worked in natural metals and forged elements. "The hood in the kitchen is mixed hammered metal with some bronze, some steel," the designer says.

The Haverstocks say they are thrilled with the end result. "It's an incredibly well-built house," Ms. Haverstock says.

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