

Interiors CHICAGO

A 3x3 grid of colored squares. The colors are arranged as follows: Row 1: Dark Blue, Orange, Red. Row 2: Teal, Yellow, Red. Row 3: Cyan, Teal, Purple.

A 3x3 grid of colored squares (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) in a wooden frame.

HELLO, SPRING!

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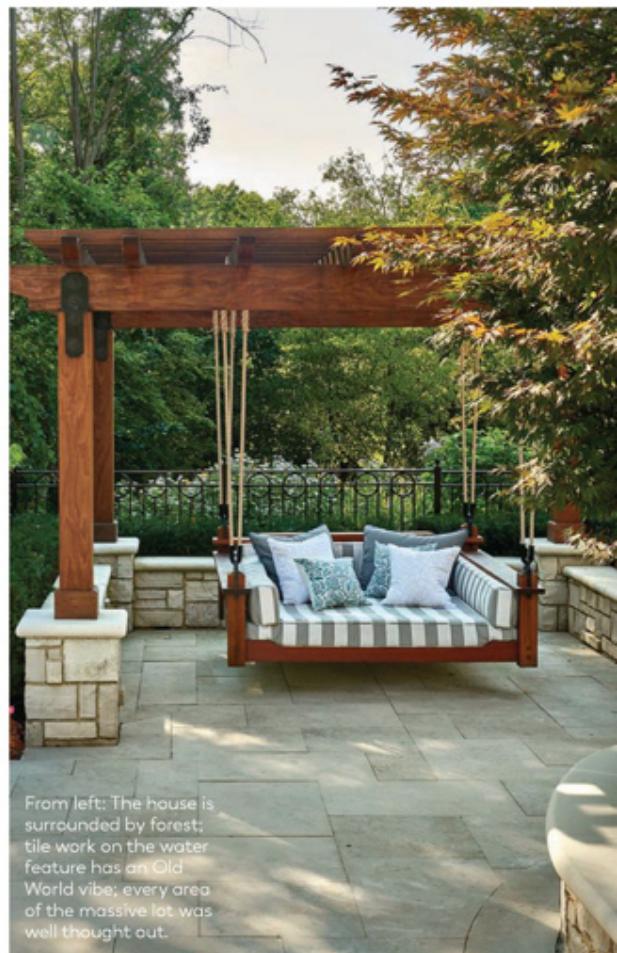
FLYING HIGH: COLLECTING ARTIST HEBRU BRANTLEY

DESIGN TRAVEL TO MOROCCO, PALM SPRINGS & THE SEVEN SEAS

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT: CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

"Even though the interior was a completely different project from the exterior, they flow well and are architecturally compatible," says the homeowner.





From left: The house is surrounded by forest; tile work on the water feature has an Old World vibe; every area of the massive lot was well thought out.

"I have a large family, and my vision was to have friends and family over for music, food, bonfires and swings."

-HOMEOWNER

children. "The soil was unstable." He adds, "The project was more than just a backyard design. It was a complete property transformation that included a master plan for the entire estate."

Undaunted by the complicated design and engineering issues, the entertaining-loving owner explains, "I have a large family, and my vision was to have friends and family over for music, food, bonfires and swings." The main focus, however, was somewhere to swim.

Glass tiles from Italy in various shades of blue line a modern heated pool that is only 4-½ feet deep in the center, the better to facilitate swimming laps and lively games of volleyball. "People think you can't use glass tiles in Chicago, but you can if you're careful and they are installed correctly," says Dziurdzik. "The tiles

give the pool a beautiful shimmer that's almost iridescent when the sun is setting."

The pool has a vanishing edge on one side and a tricky-to-execute wet edge on another where the water level seamlessly meets the pool deck. A stepped-up section the landscape designer calls a sun shelf hosts a pair of chaise lounges that sit in a mere 6 inches of water—as well as any cocktail-clutching partygoers in need of cooling off—along with a spa for 12 that is lined in the same glass tiles as the pool for continuity. Working closely with the designer who transformed the interiors of the house, Lauren Coburn, on some of the choices, a smart low wall of built-in cubbies neatly stores towels and sandals.

A fountain along the back pool wall dribbles water from a vintage gold ornament and engages guests sitting around the fire pit, while a nearby custom hardwood swing suspended by ropes comfortably seats four adults. Though the fire pit is only a few feet away from the pool, "it has a completely different feel," says Dziurdzik. "You don't see or hear the pool. There's just the sound from a little water fountain. It was designed for a quiet respite from the busy area."

At the other end of the limestone paved terrace, an elaborate outdoor kitchen with Viking appliances is ready to serve the 100-plus guests the owner regularly hosts for Fourth of July and graduation parties. Nearby, a 20-foot pergola of South American hardwood provides shade for dinner parties in the sunken dining terrace.

From top: The dining area continues the light blue and gray palette from the interiors designed by Lauren Coburn; chaises outfitted with cushions in JANUS et Cie fabric sit on a pool deck to cool sunbathers.



“Everything that’s on the pool deck was really well thought out,” the owner explains, “from the scaling of the project to the placement of the various amenities.” Other elements include a custom iron ornamental fence designed for the pool and front stair railings. “The shapes are whimsical and pick up on architectural details throughout the house,” says Dziurdzik.

Carved out from the front lawn is an auto court made from crushed granite and limestone Dziurdzik designed, giving visitors and residents alike a sense of arrival. Old-fashioned Chicago alley pavers line the driveway, while seasonal flowers add to the impressive welcome.

But perhaps the most dramatic change occurred at the very back of the house. Invasive buckthorn and an awkward slope were transformed into a grass lawn that is perfect for badminton, football and barefoot frolicking.

“We recreated a native prairie in the backyard,” Dziurdzik says of the area beyond the pool and terrace. “The soil was so soggy, there wasn’t much else we could do.” In fact, in some areas, water was 12 inches below ground. He cleared out about half an acre of undesirable wooded area, and over

the next four years replanted thousands of plants that thrive in wet soil, including cardinal flowers, yellow flag iris, Virginia bluebells, asters and Joe Pye weed. “We planted Kentucky coffee, bald cypress and sugar maple trees. The owner wanted a mixture of mature and younger plantings but knew it would be several years before his vision of a naturalized garden would surface,” Dziurdzik explains.

The landscape designer also added aquatic plantings to a small pond and a wood-chip path to walk around the gardens. “It was fun doing something with nature and bringing it to its original state,” says the homeowner.

Dziurdzik praises the owner for taking his time to do a thoughtful renovation. “He wanted to make it more inviting for his family, but he didn’t rush to do something quickly.”

For his part, the owner is more than happy to host his family and children’s friends for special celebrations. “It’s a very relaxing environment to entertain on a large scale when necessary or a smaller scale just for the family,” he says. “People have fun with it.” As for the pool and terrace, you would never know they haven’t always been there. ■





The site of the expansive terrace was once marshy bogland. Native plantings were incorporated and preserved as much as possible into the new design.

DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE

Single-family home

LOCATION

Western suburbs

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

& ARCHITECTURE

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CIVIL ENGINEER

Cross Engineering & Associates Inc.
crossengineering.net

POOL & SPA CONTRACTOR

Downes Swimming Pool Company
downespool.com

BUILDER

Woodridge Deck & Gazebo Co.
deckandgazebo.com

IRONWORK

Iron Impressions
ironimpressions.com

RESOURCES

JANUS ET CIE

Fabric on custom porch swing and chaises
janusetcie.com

HENRY HALL DESIGNS

Teak furniture by fire pit
henryhalldesigns.com

LAUREN COBURN INC.

Interiors and custom outdoor furniture design
laurencoburn.com

MCGINTY BROS. INC.

Native plant restoration
mcgintybros.com

MCKINNON AND HARRIS

Upholstery fabric
mckinnonharris.com

VALDERS STONE & MARBLE INC.

Limestone pavers on terrace
valdersstone.com

VIKING

Outdoor kitchen appliances
vikingrange.com