

# TRENDS

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# Romantic touch

With curves, towers, turrets and cupolas, this home looks as if it's sprung straight from a fairy tale

When beginning the process of planning a new home, it's essential to have some sort of underlying theme or design direction to ensure the final result is cohesive.

For the owners of this 10,000sq ft home, their appreciation of romantic art and fine furniture was a key issue that needed to be recognized in the interior and exterior design scheme.

Architect Jan Gleysteen says that many people are attracted to traditional-style architecture – in preference to the spare,

more angular lines of contemporary styles – for the romanticism, richness of detail and sense of comfort it offers.

“The owners of this home collect romantic art, love music, play the piano, study ballet and already had a large collection of handcrafted furniture that had been specially made for them,” Gleysteen says.

“They wanted their new house to have a classic look, and the resulting building is really a hybrid. It combines the shingle look typical of a Cape Cod style with the



*Facing page:* Architectural detailing such as gables, bow windows, columns, dormers and circular windows give this home, designed by architect Jan Gleysteen, a classic, romantic appearance. The central part of the house is rectangular with a guest wing to the left and garages in a second wing to the right. To provide some protection for the front courtyard, the wings are set on slightly different angles.

*Left:* In contrast with the front, the back of the house appears to be on a grander scale, with many more architectural features and details.





**Top:** Curves are an integral part of the design of this home. The staircase is half an ellipse, and the stairs widen as they reach the upper level.

**Above:** The music room, used as a formal sitting room, is a feast of architectural detailing. It is octagonal with two squared corners that have backlit half domes above them. A curved balcony is reached from the upper level.

**Facing page:** The muted color scheme sets off the semi-circular windows and other ornate detailing.

clapboard cladding that's more popular in this part of Boston."

The house covers two levels at the front and three levels at the back. The main formal and informal living rooms are on the ground floor, games rooms are downstairs and family and guest bedrooms are upstairs.

Gleysteen has designed the front of the house so it blends into the neighborhood, while from the rear, the true size and scale are more obvious. A main rectangle in the center of the front is enclosed by angled











wings on each side. These give the house a more interesting shape and help to envelop the front courtyard.

"The angled wings also allowed us to preserve a 200-year-old maple tree in the front garden," says the architect.

Although the front façade of the home is much simpler than the rear, several elements help to give it a romantic flavour. A gable and a round window draw attention to the front door; a bow window in the front wall of the formal dining room is topped with a large gable; and three

dormers punctuate the second level of the guest wing on the left. A brick chimney on the far left wall of the house balances the garage wing on the right.

"By contrast, the rear is a sculptural explosion, with a cupola above the music room, a turret forming the master bedroom and several brick chimneys breaking up the roof line. The back is much larger in scale than the front of the house and it has been designed so it can be appreciated as part of the view from further down the garden," the architect says.



Curves link the central portion of the house with the side wings and the front to the back, and also play a pivotal role in the design of the interior of the house.

"This curvature helps to create originality in the flavor and style of the building," says Gleysteen.

"Curves help with space planning, flow and rhythm between rooms because the theme of round elements constantly crops up. However, curves are used in slightly different ways in each space."

The first flight of the staircase is half an

ellipse, with wide steps at the bottom that narrow slightly towards the first landing. A balcony at the top of the stairs overlooks the music room, which occupies a double height space in the house.

The music room, which is octagonal with two squared-off corners, looks onto the garden through large doors topped with semi-circular windows. The ceiling of the room forms a dome above the double-height space and lower ceilings above the squared-off corners are half domes.

"These elements all combine to create

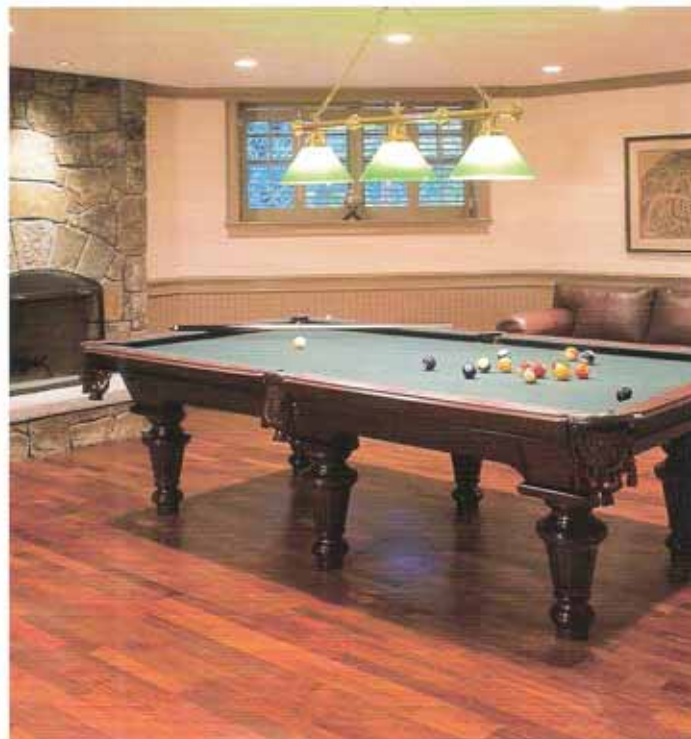
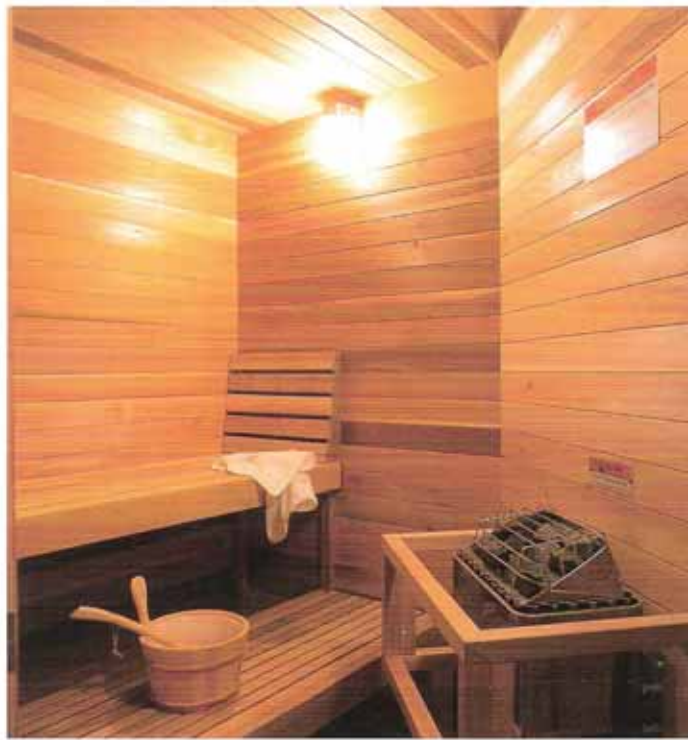


*Facing page, top:* The formal dining room, which opens off the main hall, has high wainscoting and wide scotias that create enclosed sections of wall where paintings can be displayed.

*Facing page, above:* The kitchen is a classic rectangular design with a large island to divide cooking and seating areas.

*Above and left:* The library walls are covered with timber paneling and bookcases. Strutwork on the ceiling follows a Regency English design of three interconnecting diamonds that connect at key points to the cabinetry.





a room that is dramatic and exciting to be in. To emphasize the complex structure of the architectural detailing, we have kept to a muted color scheme," he says.

The same attention to detail is found in the series of archways leading to the back of the house from the front hall. Fifty-six individual pieces of trim, pilaster, column, keystone and paneling have been brought together to create the intricate detailing seen in this opening.

Ceilings in the house are in a variety of shapes and heights to achieve

different effects for each space. As a linking element, curves appear in one form or another in every room.

To create a formal scale and texture, beams run along the ceiling in the dining room. In the kitchen, the ceiling is lower on the outer edges to make the room appear inviting, and it is raised in the middle so the space feels larger.

In the library, the ceiling follows a geometric pattern, with fancy strutwork forming three overlapping diamonds that start from key points in the cabinetry.

Curves are incorporated in the fluted pilasters on the tops of the bookcases.

Upstairs are the master bedroom in the turret, family bedrooms and, on the opposite side of the landing, the guest wing.

To create a more informal character, the architect has taken a completely different approach to the lower level of the house, which contains the bar, games room, gymnasium and sauna. The décor is darker and more solid, with a large, rough-hewn bluestone fireplace in the games room and black trim on the windows.

**Architect:** Jan Gleysteen, Jan Gleysteen Architects (Wellesley, MA)

**Main contractor:** Marc Kaplan, Sanford Homes

**Interior designer:** The Patterson Group

**Structural engineer:** Charles Chaloff Consulting Engineers

**Siding:** Clapboard siding

**Roof:** Cedar wood shingles

**Window/door joinery:** Pella Windows

**Flooring:** Antique oak

**Paint:** Benjamin Moore

**Lighting:** Lightolier

**Heating:** Hydro-Air HVAC, Trane, Viessmann

**Home audio:** Environmental Technology Center

**Fireplace:** Rumford fireplace kits by Superior Clay Products

**Chimney pots:** Superior Clay Products

**Stairs:** Custom made by Colonial Stairs

**Elevator:** Beckwith Elevators

**Kitchen designer:** Dalia Kitchen Design

**Chimney manufacturer:** William Ohs

**Kitchen cabinets:** Cherry with walnut finish

**Countertops:** Green granite

**Refrigerator:** Sub-Zero

**Dishwasher:** Bosch

**Bathroom vanity:** Kenyon Cabinetry

**Photography by Kallan MacLeod**

**Facing page, clockwise from top left:** The sauna, gymnasium, billiards room and bar are all on the lower level of the house. Simpler detailing and darker colors give this area of the house a less formal look than the main living areas.

**Above:** Overlooking the back garden, the master bedroom is in its own turret on the upper level of the house. The room has a barrel-vaulted ceiling above the bed, and the walls are painted in a soft celadon green to create a feeling of calm and peace. Along the side walls of the bedroom, built-in cabinetry with beveled and glazed doors creates a boudoir-like atmosphere.





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