

Outdoor Living Ideas

Bathroom Issue

Princeton Masterpiece

designNJ

NEW JERSEY'S HOME & DESIGN MAGAZINE

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VISIT 3 SOUTH JERSEY HOMES
SKYTOP VIEW IN BERGEN COUNTY
DESIGNER REIMAGINES HER SUMMIT HOME

ARCHITECTURE | BUILD

Making the Grade

In Princeton, a home is configured to take maximum advantage of a sloping site



BEFORE

COURTESY OF THE ARCHITECT

This Princeton home, designed by architect Catherine M. Knight, contains expansive spaces, modern décor and an assortment of amenities, including a home theater, a wine cellar and an elevator. The interiors are airy and ideal for all the activities a young family enjoys. But the outdoor areas were just as important to the homeowners as the indoors. The large property features both wooded areas and large swaths of lawn; it also includes a fairly steep slope. That's where Knight, a member of the American Institute of Architects and owner of Knight

The exterior of the home has a traditional style in keeping with the other homes in the neighborhood.

INTERVIEW BY MARIROSE KRALL | KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM PHOTOS BY TOM GRIMES PHOTOGRAPHY | OTHER PHOTOS BY DON PEARSE PHOTOGRAPHERS INC.



CATHERINE KNIGHT
Knight Architecture
Princeton
609-252-0474 | knightarch.com

The glass doors at ground level open to an entertainment area and a guest suite.

Architects LLC in Princeton, saw an opportunity — a way to create more of a connection with the outdoors, which was just what her clients wanted.

DESIGN NEW JERSEY: What is the architectural style of the home?

CATHERINE KNIGHT: It could be considered contemporary or transitional colonial. The area is a mix of suburban styles from the 1960s through recent vintage. The owner was interested in an open interior with a modern flow, but we went with a traditional exterior to blend with the neighborhood.

DNJ: What did the homeowners want from their new residence?

KNIGHT: The family is from Canada; they planned to spend a lot of time outdoors. We created diverse outdoor spaces that included a lower-level entertainment area and a generous screened porch with bluestone terrace at the main living level. The owners also wanted to enhance the beauty of the sloping, private, wooded property with an interior design that is clean, functional and open.



First Floor



Second Floor

The dropped ceiling in the foyer adds interest to the two-story space. "It allows indirect light to wash the ceiling, and it's a stunning location to suspend the light fixture," Knight says.

"The two-story foyer with the dramatic, open mono stringer stair with timber treads welcomes everyone into this home," Knight says. "The glass stair rail adds a sense of transparency to the space."





OPEN FLOOR PLAN | The open floor plan allows for sight lines across the home's main level.

KITCHEN | The kitchen, which Knight calls "Modern Alfresco," is "designed for serious cooks with two dishwashers, two sinks, a six-burner range with a griddle, a butler's pantry and a food pantry."



DNJ: How did you maximize the flow from indoors to outdoors?

KNIGHT: Taking advantage of the sloping site, we were able to open the home to grade on the first level at the front of the house and at the basement level at the back of the house. The kitchen, which serves as a gathering space for friends and family, provides convenient access to the large bluestone terrace and screened porch. The family dining area and great room open onto the bluestone terrace as well, with lots of light from the southern exposure. The oversized screen porch was carefully



The attic, located over the three-car garage, features a study/playroom. According to Knight, "The children fell in love with the attic. This space was turned into a children's paradise."





designed to act as a family hub with seating and dining areas, a large grill, two kegerators, a linear fire bar, a recessed television and infrared heaters allowing for multi-season use. The guest suite also has access to a private lower level terrace at grade.

DNJ: What are the eco-friendly elements of this house?

KNIGHT: The family is environmentally conscious. The home features radiant heat and an 18kw solar panel system that is capable of generating 21,500kw per year. The solar panels are located on the west- and south-facing house and porch roofs. They are cutting edge, acting as roof shingles to provide a sleek appearance. The wall shingles are NuCedar [a PVC product that reduces heat absorption, keeping interiors cool]. The white oak character-grade floors are finished with a no-VOC European oil finish in a custom color.

In addition, the original home on the property was “deconstructed” and

the building materials were repurposed. A company called Details from Baltimore took the house apart piece by piece for reuse. The firm provides job training for people in need and reduces the amount of material sent to landfills at the same time.

DNJ: What were some of the challenges of this project? How did you deal with them?

KNIGHT: The sloping site was a challenge. The original home was not in the same place as the new one; it sat almost sideways in relation to the street and was built on the high portion of the lot. We placed the new house parallel to the street and built across the slope, allowing the lower level access to grade. We also made use of the grade by placing a swimming pool changing room and bathroom under the terrace. We were able to make the slope of the site an asset with the numerous French doors on two levels.

DNJ: What do the owners like best about the home?

KNIGHT: They enjoy hosting large events that involve cooking and entertaining. The house has wonderful gathering spaces as well as smaller, more intimate areas. **DNJ**

SOURCES Overall: architecture and design of cabinetry, beams, flooring, stairs, toilet rooms and trim details, Knight Architects LLC in Princeton; builder, C. Raymond Davis & Sons Inc. in Princeton; color selection, Leddy Interiors in Princeton; light fixture and tile selection, homeowner; house deconstruction, Details. **Front Exterior:** garage doors, Artisan Custom Doorworks; NuCedar siding, Jain Building Products; stone wall, Ace Stone Supply in Lawrenceville; windows, Marvin Windows & Doors; roofing, GAF Materials Corp. in Parsippany; E.F. Chapman Fresno Framed outdoor sconces, Visual Comfort. **Back Patio:** fire feature, Spark Modern Fires; 54-inch built-in grill and rotisseries, built in single-side burner, 16-inch outdoor paper towel dispenser, 20-inch trash/recycle center, 36-inch storage door/double drawer and 36-inch True Width Access Doors, Lynx Grills; custom grill hood, Vent-A-Hood; armchairs, dining table and chairs, Restoration Hardware; ceiling fan, Big Ass Fan Co.; recessed screens (not visible), Phantom Screens through Garden State Retractables in Freehold. **Foyer:** wall color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; flooring, Rubio Monocoat; custom staircase and railing, Ebénisterie de la Chaudière. **Dining Room/Family Room:** wall color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; sofa, high-backed chair and low chair, Ligne Roset in New York City; dining table and chairs, Calligaris. **Kitchen:** ceiling color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; custom stove hood, Vent-A-Hood; custom cabinets, Beams Custom Woodworking; cabinet hardware, Emtek Products; countertops, "Raw Concrete" from Caesarstone USA; faucets, Dornbracht; pendants over island, Studio Italia Design; stools at island, Blu Dot in New York City; refrigerator and range, Sub-Zero and Wolf; dishwasher, Miele Appliances Inc. in Princeton; flooring, Rubio Monocoat. **Basement:** wall color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; fireplace stone, Talio Ledgerstone from Modulo; floor tile, Porcelanosa in Ramsey; sofa, high-backed chairs and stools, BoConcept in Paramus; custom bar cabinetry, designed by Knight Architects and fabricated by Beams Custom Woodworking; cabinet hardware, Emtek; faucet, Dornbracht; hammered satin nickel sink, Linkasink; countertops, "Raw Concrete" from Caesarstone USA. **Upstairs Hallway:** light fixture, Foscarini; barn door, Lemieux Doors/Masonite Windsor stained "Classic Navy" by Benjamin Moore; wall color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; light fixture behind sliding barn door, "Link" from LZF Lamps. **Attic/Playroom:** wall color, "Classic Grey" by Benjamin Moore; flooring, Rubio Monocoat; swivel chairs, BoConcept; ottoman, Gus* Modern; circus tent, Ikea.

As Featured in the August/September 2019 of