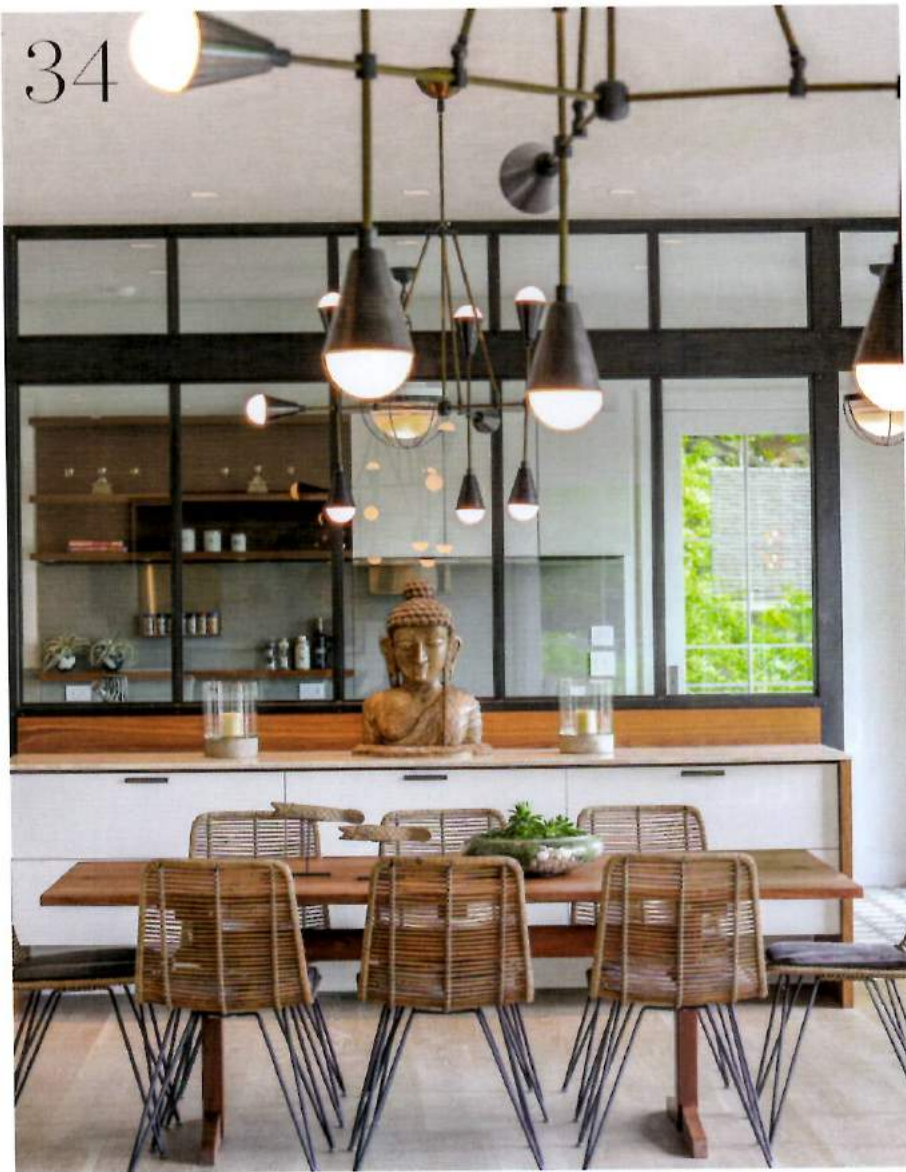


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The Most Influential //

Each year we honor some of the people who make Litchfield County a very special place. Thanks to our readers for helping us to discover another group of fascinating and caring people who are vital to our communities. **See page 47.**



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Water Love

When the Bernsteins found a lake-front property for sale they knew they planned a lakeside get-away that maximized views while preserving privacy as possible.

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Glorious Lake Waramaug

As toxic algae have banned swimming in some lakes, Waramaug has remained a gleaming exception due to some local diligence.

BY ELIZABETH MAKER

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Of Poetry and Bridges

Lisa Gray and her husband Alan Organschi, of Gray Organschi Architecture, worked with Steep Rock Association to design the pedestrian footbridge.

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Flower Power

Anyone who's gardened vigorously for hours knows it's a workout. Pre-gardening conditioning pays off.

BY VICTORIA SECUNDA



NEWLY BUILT The Bernsteins worked with Washington architect Harold Tittmann, who designed the 2,800-square-foot Colonial-inspired contemporary home. On the second floor, sliding glass doors, a wrap-around mahogany deck, and thoughtfully selected lighting enhance the open, airy floor plan. Warm oak flooring, and a zinc bar top continue the organic theme.

water love

BUILDING A RESPITE ON THE LAKE

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY WENDY CARLSON

PANORAMA Lake views on each floor and a spacious terrace for outdoor dining, the lake house is ideal for summer entertaining. On the second floor, a wrap-around mahogany deck enhance the airy floor plan. To preserve the openness, a glass and steel wall was installed to reduce noise and cooking smells between the kitchen and main living area.



TAMARA AND BRAD BERNSTEIN ARE WHAT ONE MIGHT CALL AQUAPHILES. “My husband loves being on a lake. We all waterski and for years we rented places near the water,” explains Tama. “But every year he’d ask me, ‘So where are we going to put our boat this year?’” Then they came up with the crazy idea to build a lakehouse not far from their weekend house in the Merryall section of New Milford.

As it turns out, it wasn’t such a crazy idea. When the Bernsteins found a property up for sale on Lake Waramaug in 2015, they knew they had found the ideal location to build a lakeside get-away that would double as a guesthouse.

Brad is a managing partner in a private investment firm in New York and Tama runs her own interior design firm, Tamara Meadow Interiors. Since they both have hectic schedules, they spend much of the week in Manhattan with their two teenage sons. But on weekends, everyone regroups in Litchfield County and heads for the lake.

The Waramaug property originally came with a small 1950s-era house that sat up on a hill, which made trucking down to the water a hike. The structure also needed major updating so the Bernsteins decided to start fresh and build a new house with easier access to the lake. They worked with Washington architect Harold Tittmann who designed the 2,800-square-foot Colonial-inspired contemporary.

A key consideration in designing the house was maximizing the views of the lake while preserving as much privacy as possible. From the start, the slope of the rocky terrain presented a big challenge. But, within a year, the construction was completed, which was record time considering building it required blasting through solid rock.

LIVING WELL Tama chose a modular sofa by Living Divani that consists of different components arranged with back-to-back seating so that the sofa faces both the fireplace and the lake. Depending on the mood, guests can enjoy a serene view of the lake or lively conversation around the fire.

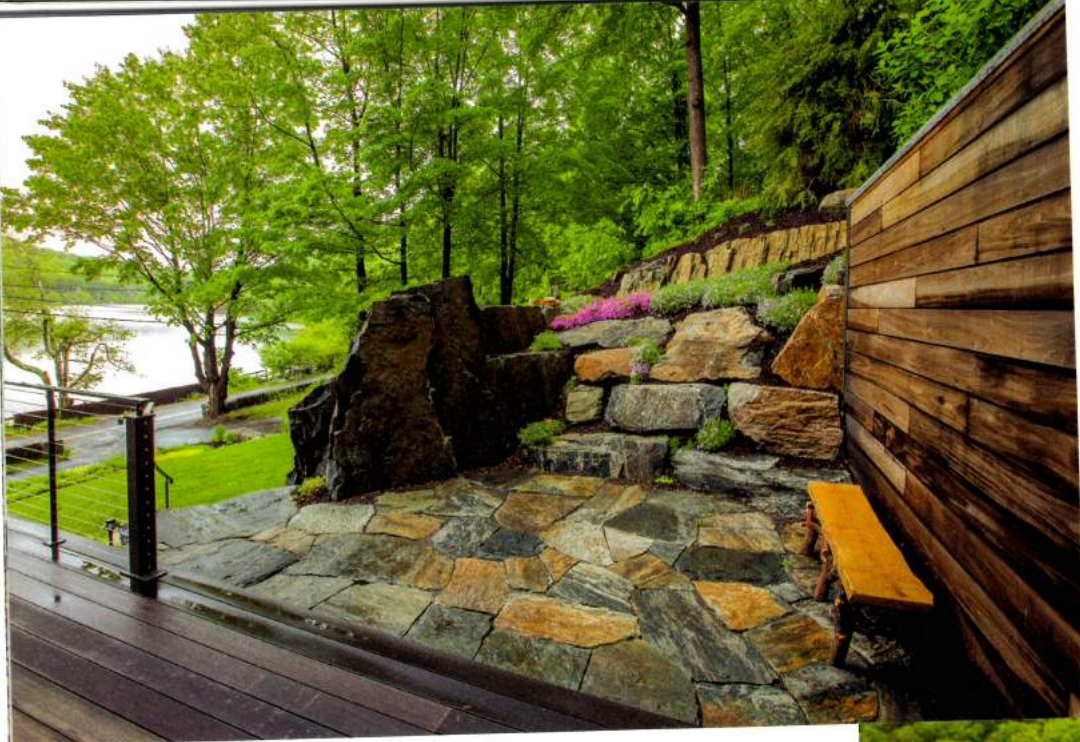


In the end, all that extra stone came in handy for installing steps, stone walls, and several terraces. Two Adirondack chairs set on a natural rock outcropping just above the house offer yet another quiet retreat, and a sort of outdoor man-cave for Brad.

Tama chose a palette of earthy, organic colors to create the sense of a peaceful, restful atmosphere throughout the house. And especially because it's a lake house, the house had to be simple and easy to care for from the bottom up. The ground floor was designed for busy summer days when the family spends most of the day out on the boat. Having a laundry room, bathroom and shower, and a small kitchen area all located just steps away from the dock made slogging back and forth in wet bathing suits less of a fuss.

Tama has spent years sourcing materials for her clients so she has developed an almost photographic memory and can recall where she purchased every item in the house, including the pair of 1790s French benches she picked out at a Paris market more than 20 years ago as well as the Cleo Baldon bar stools she fell in love with in Los Angeles a decade ago. When she travels, she picks up new pieces, some of which have worked their way into the decor: a pair of iconic Swedish candle holders, an enormous wooden Buddha the couple picked up in India, and yet another smaller Buddha from Tibet.

With panoramic lake views on each floor and a spacious terrace for outdoor dining, the house is ideal for summer entertaining. On the second floor, three sets of sliding glass doors, a wrap around mahogany deck and thoughtfully selected lighting enhance the open, airy floor plan. Warm oak flooring, wood cabinetry, granite counters, and a zinc bar top continue the organic theme.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

In designing the house, a goal was maximizing the lake views while preserving privacy. From the start, the slope of the rocky terrain presented a big challenge and required blasting through solid rock. In the end, all that extra stone came in handy for steps, stone walls, and terraces.



There had to be good synergy between the architecture and the interiors. “Design is a collaboration,” say Tama. “So it’s great to work with an architect who is talented in an area where I’m not.”

Tittmann designed the narrow horizontal gas fireplace, framing it with gunmetal steel panels that tie in with the other steel elements in the house. Custom design steel shelves inspired by Dutch furniture designer and architect Gerard Rietveld complete the modernist surround. Tittmann custom-built a glass and steel wall, which reduces noise and cooking smells between the kitchen and the main living area but preserves the openness of the floor.

One of Tama’s favorite features is a modular sofa by Living Divani that consists of different components that have been arranged so that the seating faces both the fireplace and the water.

Tama moved a pair of reupholstered Gustavo Pulitzer-Alba Lounge chairs from her other house and her father’s George Nakashima dining table to further create a mix of mid-Century modern and newer contemporary furnishings.

Upstairs, the master bedroom, guest bedroom, and a cozy library/family room offer more generous views of the lake. Tama had all interior materials ordered before construction was even finished, but upstairs she notices she has a few finishing touches left to do. A part of the room is taped off for a new rug, a trunk has yet to be moved into the bedroom, and a bedside tray is on order.

But when a designer lives in the house he or she designed one has to wonder if it ever really is done? “My son said to me recently, ‘Mom you’re never really going to be done, are you?’ And, you know,” says Tama, “that was pretty astute of him. I feel when I’m done tweaking, I’m ready to move!” ■