



# Grand Manor Style

ENGLISH COUNTRY GRACE INFUSES A  
REMODELED HOME IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

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## GORGEOUS GLASS

French doors and coordinating windows connect the living room to the terrace.



**ELEGANT VIEW** Arched French doors flanked by windows, *opposite*, create a beautifully lit room.

**LOOMING LARGE** The fireplace, *below*, was made into a substantial element thanks to marble, sculpted molding, and floor-to-ceiling paneling.

**UNITED FRONT** Paint helps blend bricks used for the original home and a 1950s addition, *right*.



With elaborate millwork, hand-drawn plaster moldings, and hand-planed walnut floors, this house could be an English country manor. But the view from the tall mullioned windows isn't lush rolling hills—it's the bustling streets of Washington, D.C. To create this effect, architect Christian Zapatka orchestrated a near-total demolition of the interior of this 1887 home.

The remodel team started with the challenge of disparate structures. The original home embodied Italianate style: boxy structure, slim windows, and picturesque ornamentation. A small wing was added in the 1920s off the back of the home, and a large 1950s addition was tacked onto one side, and outfitted with cheap molding.

"What's great about this house is that it's spread out and has the long sweeps you'd see in a country house," Zapatka says of the now 9,600-square-foot home. "So our approach was to make you feel like you're in a beautiful English country house on a beautiful piece of land, though you're only on one-third of an acre in the city."

The owners wanted to emphasize the historical feel and create a home smartly designed for entertaining. That meant a state-of-the-art kitchen, ample gathering space, and a seamless flow from room to room.

Historic district and neighborhood boards could have complicated the remodel, wielding the power to nix every brick, shutter, and window. Fortunately, Zapatka and general contractor Tom Glass were well-prepared to present plans that would honor the character of the neighborhood. Zapatka has taught design and architecture history at Princeton University. Glass' company specializes in restoring historical homes. (The home is a recipient of a CotY award from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.)

Zapatka wanted to give the stately structure a more regal bearing. He turned to the hallmarks of neoclassical English country style: clear plans, as well as substantive molding and elaborate millwork.

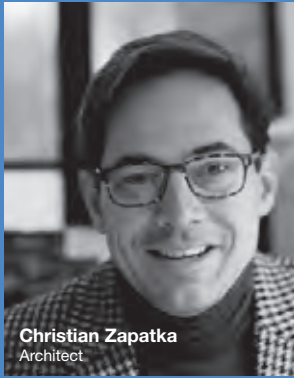
"The molding is almost heavy, and highly articulated," he says, pointing to the 36-inch-high wainscoting used

**STUNNING ASCENT** A cantilever-look stairway, *this photo*, seems to float across the entry. White risers and black treads heighten the drama.

**DISTINGUISHED DINING** Crown molding in the dining room, *opposite*, was created by hand with plaster, replicating that of British country manors.







Christian Zapatka  
Architect

**HISTORIC RELEVANCE**  
THIS SPECIALIST IN ARCHITECTURE'S PAST BRINGS HIS KNOWLEDGE TO A PRESENT-DAY PROJECT.

**Q** How did you decide on such a thorough demolition and renovation?

**A** There were three original parts, and they didn't tie together, especially inside. The middle part had Victorian qualities, such as corner fireplaces. The 1950s part had some cheap molding, and the interiors were really ordinary. But we recognized that there was a tremendous amount of available space.

**Q** In what ways did you reorganize that space?

**A** I don't like a group of unconnected rooms or a vast, open space. I try to create a series of large, comfortable rooms that flow into one another, but are still delineated by transitions.

**Q** What helped you achieve those clear transitions?

**A** Color. We used very strong colors. The owners saw the stairwell color in a magazine. It's a bluish gray with a tinge of violet. We finally got it right by mixing a Benjamin Moore color with a Ralph Lauren color.



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in many rooms. The study is paneled in walnut, and fireplace surrounds are modeled on 18th-century antiques. Window casings extend to the floor, a treatment that gives the impression of prominence and height, and walls are outfitted with raised-panel wainscoting and fluted columns.

Most of the plaster crown molding was created the old-fashioned way, drawn in place and slowly built up by hand. "You can't get a cleaner, crisper line than plaster molding," Glass says.

Even transitional areas received an elegant treatment. The dining room is connected to the entry by a 7-foot-deep paneled vestibule. The exaggerated opening almost feels like its own room.

**PARTY PREPARED** Designed for a serious cook, the kitchen, *above*, stands ready for any gathering with commercial-grade appliances, plus two dishwashers and sinks. **SUNNY OUTLOOK** A coffered ceiling in the family room, *opposite*, lays on the tradition, but tall windows topped with transoms keep the space bright.

## PALETTE POINTS

In the family room, a brilliant white palette—and yards of glass—help showcase the view.









## In the Details

Carefully crafted molding and beautiful architectural elements are key to Georgian style that's classic, not fusty:

**FASHIONABLE STEPS** Wrought-iron patterns, *opposite*, and box details turn the staircase into a design element.

**ENDS WELL** A spiral finishes the handrail with a flourish, *above left*, while a fluted pilaster marks the end of the paneling's descent.

**TRIM PERFECT** Vitruvian molding, *above right*, with ears at the top, combines with fluted pilasters. Bevels and hollows enhance the detailing with light and shadow. **A STURDY BEGINNING** Handcrafted plaster molding, *left*, creates crisp lines at the base of this pilaster, which begins at a large box base. Heavy molding, such as the adjacent wainscoting, is rich with detail—perfect for Georgian architecture.

## CUSTOM FLOORING

Distinctive patterns in the parquet floors subtly change the tone from room to room.



**NEOCLASSICAL BEDROOM** Vitruvian-style window casings, *opposite*, topped with projecting ears, are echoed in the fireplace. **MARBLE MASTERY** The master bath, *below*, impresses with an elegant mix of tile. **INSET TUB** The bathtub, *right*, benefits from handsome hardware.



In another nod to the British manor, Zapotka used flooring to draw clear boundaries. Formal marble paving marks public areas, and wood floors cozy up family living spaces.

While the homeowners wanted classic style, they didn't want traditional cramped rooms. To open large, gracious spaces for entertaining, the renovation team moved load-bearing walls.

The main floor was reinvented with impressive views, room for crowds, and spaces meant for circulation. From the front entry, the view extends back to a new addition featuring a bright curtain of French doors, windows, and transoms. The bright and open addition also allowed for a new breakfast and family room and kitchen.

Designed with entertaining in mind, the kitchen is command central for large fetes, with a 48-inch-wide refrigerator, a separate freezer, large range, and a pair of

warming drawers. "It's not supposed to be a live-in country kitchen, but a big production center," Zapotka says. However, a built-in island also makes the room a comfortable place for the family to eat on a busy evening.

The private upstairs holds the family's bedrooms. The master suite spreads across the entire face of the home—80 feet—with substantial closet space and a large bathroom.

The basement, excavated to raise the ceiling height, houses additional bedrooms, a catering kitchen, and the nanny's quarters. The renovation team also fit in a cherry-paneled billiards room and wine cellar.

Meanwhile, the attic was converted from a small dark space into a living area with an elaborate new staircase. With new dormers installed, the now cheery space is finished with built-in desks and is used for the children's rooms. Uniting the exterior, where three different bricks clashed, was no less



challenging. “It looked like two or three houses,” Zapatka says. The team had to maintain the original structure, so they erased the disparity with dove-gray paint and historically accurate shutters. New windows at one corner help to unify an awkward connection between new and old.

With so much detail and so much space to address, the construction team had to get creative to meet the homeowners’ one-year deadline. To save time, the new hand-planed walnut floors, modeled after floors at Versailles, were finished off-site. The project was finished in 11 months.

“It’s a wonderful, livable house,” Glass says—“a combination of great living spaces and great entertaining spaces.”

Architect **Christian Zapatka** Builder **Tom Glass, Glass Construction**

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**CLASSICAL ELEGANCE** The straight and sturdy style of Tuscan columns, *above*, defines the face of a window-wrapped addition.

**TERRACE VIEW** The sunny breakfast room, *right*, looks onto a shaded bluestone terrace.

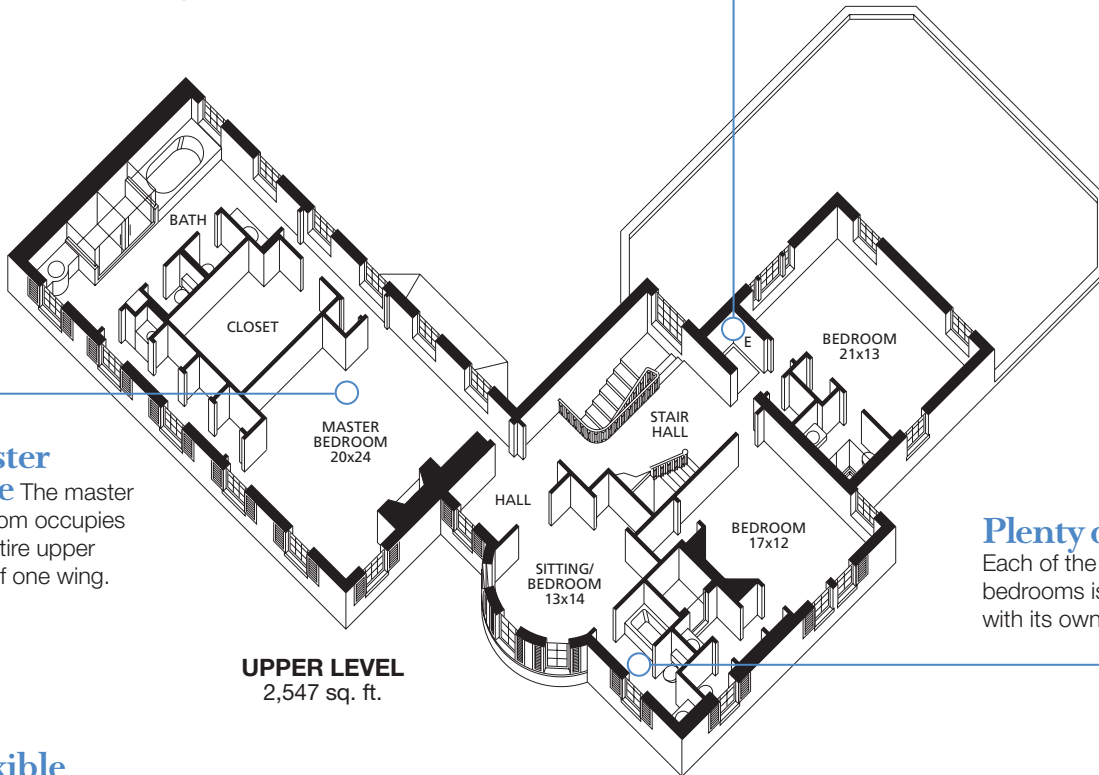


# Private and public

Renovated with entertaining in mind, this expansive home contains a main level designed for easy guest circulation. Upstairs, there's plenty of private space for family bedrooms, including a sumptuous master suite.

## Easy access

An elevator off the hallway connects with the kitchen and tuck-under garage.



## Master suite

The master bedroom occupies the entire upper level of one wing.

## Plenty of baths

Each of the upper-level bedrooms is outfitted with its own full bath.

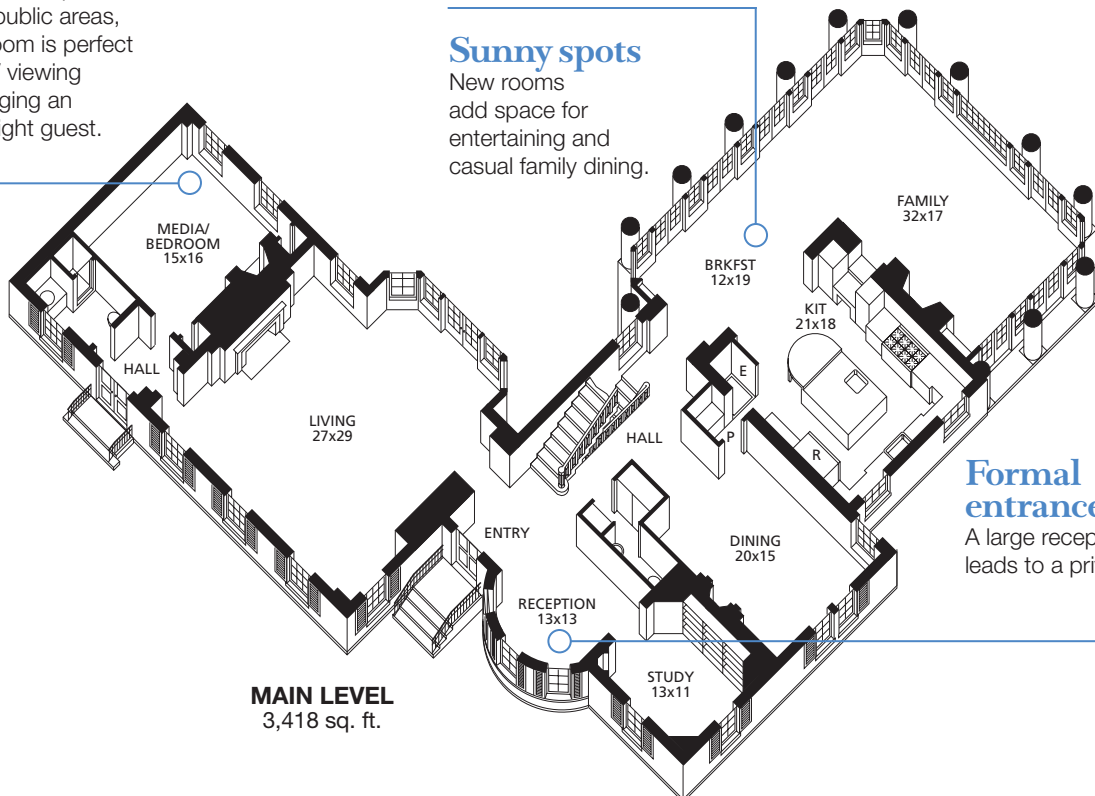
**UPPER LEVEL**  
2,547 sq. ft.

## Flexible space

Separate from public areas, this room is perfect for TV viewing or lodging an overnight guest.

## Sunny spots

New rooms add space for entertaining and casual family dining.



## Formal entrance

A large reception area leads to a private study.

**MAIN LEVEL**  
3,418 sq. ft.