

DESIGN + DECOR

CONNECTICUT
NEW JERSEY
NEW YORK

THE GREAT OUTDOORS ISSUE

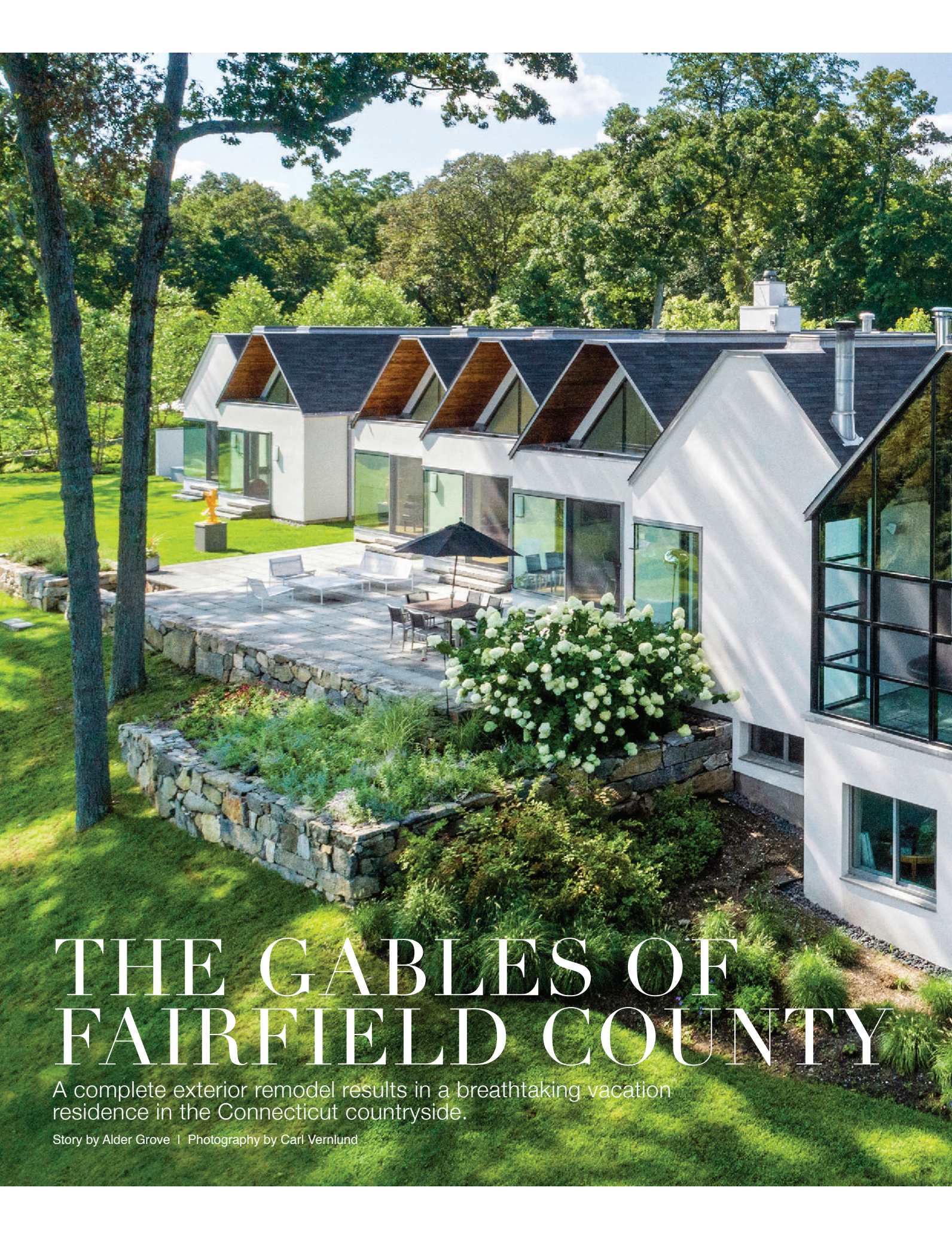


\$7.99 US/\$8.99 CANADA



7 25274 23559 9

DISPLAY UNTIL 07/27/20



THE GABLES OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY

A complete exterior remodel results in a breathtaking vacation residence in the Connecticut countryside.

Story by Alder Grove | Photography by Carl Vernlund



Three transparent walls enclose the corner gable volume in this custom residence built by Hemingway Fine Homes. Hopper windows provide an opportunity for cross ventilation within the porch space. Gable ends repeat themselves down the line, and face squarely south with expansive areas of glass.





Truncated gable forms stand shoulder to shoulder on the private 20-acre site. Corner windows and gable-end glazing allow sunlight to access each room. Where the grade steps down, the glass steps up and comprises three walls of the right-most porch volume.



Crafting superior construction projects in and around Greenwich, CT, has been the focus of three generations of the Sciarretta family of Hemingway Fine Homes. This stunning residence—a showcase of craftsmanship and design experimentation—is no exception. The scope of this project involved completely remodeling the exterior of the home and developing extensive outdoor living spaces and amenities. Privacy was also essential to the clients, so that no neighboring homes would be visible in any direction from the 20-acre hill-country site.

The overall design intent was to create a vacation-type setting at a personal residence; the architect encapsulated the general plan of the house with the phrase, “Come home to vacation.” Indeed, the features convey a feeling of being on holiday while enjoying all the comforts of home. The living spaces are largely on one level, another critical piece of the client program. The design affords privacy, bucolic surroundings and high-end features worthy of an exclusive retreat. For the clients, whose primary residence is in Manhattan, an hour’s drive away, this Connecticut chalet provides quick access to the wooded sanctuary of a second home.

Principal and CEO of Hemingway Fine Homes Peter Sciarretta is quick to acknowledge the contribution of each team member responsible for the success of this project. “My father, Sal, who has been building for 50 years, my brother-in-law, Doug Horn, for 20 years, and myself for





Entertaining is a joy in the glass-walled corner volume perched over the sloping grade below. Repeating gables recede into the distance behind the large elevated terrace and reflecting pool.



30 years—we all participated, and everyone added value to the process with the implementation of our individual skill sets,” says Peter. “All of us at Hemingway feel very grateful to have been entrusted with this project.”

“There were some inroads with some family members we happened to know, two avenues into the project, which is pretty unique. The stars just aligned, and we went to work.” -Peter Sciarretta, CEO, Hemingway Fine Homes

Peter elaborates on the most inescapable aspect of this job. “The word ‘unique’ isn’t good enough because the project is truly one-of-a-kind,” he says. “Each gable has a flat section three feet wide at the top. You can look up from anywhere and see sky—or snow in the winter. It’s lovely.” Custom skylights run almost the whole length of each truncated gable in the row of seven rooflines. Lynbrook Glass & Architectural Metals fabricated the roof windows per specifications to permit daylighting to all the rooms within the house. Corner windows and under-gable glazing at the rake walls allow transparency to dominate the south-facing façade. The gables run across the hill like a series of crenulations, with two more offset to shelter a four-car garage adjacent to the motor court.

The palette of exterior materials is designed and constructed for durability, aesthetics and performance. The building envelope is composed of luxury composition shingles and membrane roofing systems, depending on roof slope. Lead-coated copper flashing, half-round gutters and internal valley drains guide water to the exterior. Fleetwood custom windows and doors offer the sleekest modern profiles. Produced using green manufacturing techniques, they provide top-notch energy performance. Three coats of WaterMaster lime-based stucco exterior finish cover an astounding 8,900 square feet of the building’s envelope, giving the house a modern adornment that is elegant in its understated simplicity. A classic selection of bluestone is specified for the sills of the exterior doors and windows.

“People who build their own home tend to be very courageous. These people are curious about life. They’re thinking about what it means to live in a house, rather than just buying a commodity and making it work.”-Tom Kundig, American architect

One of the home’s boldest elements is a volume that mimics the same



A joyful sculpture greets the blue sky in front of the koi pond and glass-floored bridge. Modern lines and clean finishes keep the aesthetic simple and elegant.







Bluestone terraces provide a venue for outdoor grilling next to the waterfalls and koi pond.

blunted gable form sported by its adjacent companions, differentiating itself by the inclusion of three one-and-a-half-story, floor-to-ceiling glazed walls. Glittering like a jewel, the mass delicately anchors the corner of the house, resting atop a lower level that is the only area extending to grade below the

main floor. The site slopes away gently, necessitating a foundation to support the transparent volume and outdoor terrace above. The glass-enclosed porch space includes an elongated skylight at the peak of the substantial roof assembly. Operable hopper windows can be tilted to generate a cross breeze on



A koi pond, waterfall and bridge with glass flooring are protected in their homey niche. Absolute black granite veneer with a flamed finish adorns the waterfall wall over the pool.

warmer days. Offering spectacular views and specialty audiovisual equipment, this room is a much sought-after hangout for relaxing and entertaining. A wood-burning appliance floats in midair, offering coziness to anyone who wants to stoke a fire. Peter emphasizes that the outdoor space is second to none,

providing access to several enticing amenities. Flanking the front and rear façades are two rectilinear ponds, where waterfalls tumble down into pools housing schools of large, brightly colored koi. Two bridges with glass floors extend over the koi, enthralling homeowners and visitors with a view into a watery





A private terrace is hidden outside the master bathroom. Hot and cold plunges are ready for bathers in summer or winter. Constructed of local bluestone, outdoor lounging areas are beautiful and durable.

world below. The koi were handled with extreme sensitivity during the extensive remodeling; weatherproof tanks were brought on-site to store the fish in a suitable ecosystem until they could be reintroduced to their upgraded environments.

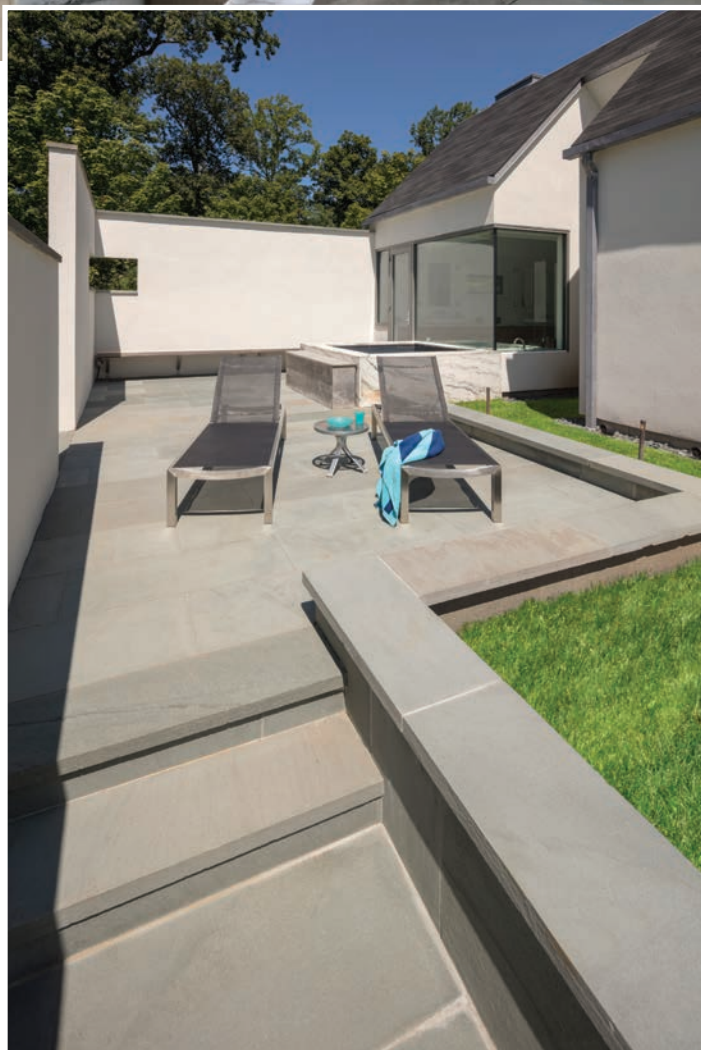
"The architecture and use of glass are unique. You can look down through these glass bridges and see giant koi flowing beneath your feet."

-Peter Sciarretta

Another pair of unparalleled amenities are the hot and cold plunges. Long embraced by our ancestors, the practice of alternating dips between pools of hot water and cold water is said to invigorate the life force. Here, on the private master terrace safely hidden behind a high-reaching screen, a mechanized glass separation wall slides out of the way to allow a bather to slip outside the master tub and step directly into a cold-water plunge on the terrace.

Five terraces provide venues for marathon barbecuing, al fresco dining, and summertime sun worshipping. The screen on the master terrace provides shade for worry-free naps in the chaise lounges. Locally sourced bluestone masonry puts a handsome and sturdy face on the outdoor areas. Blackened steel frames support stainless-steel cable railings outside the glass gable, preventing tumbles from the upper terrace as people flow between the interior and exterior entertaining areas.

Peter is very proud of his company's quality workmanship. "Anything Hemingway builds has got to be superior," he says.





A four-car garage welcomes vehicles at the motor court. Each gable form has a three-foot-wide flattened ridge. The visual pattern is dominated by these repetitive roofs as the footprint recedes toward the background.



"I'm passionate about the work, and I make sure that all the craftsmanship will stand the test of time." Indeed, no expense was spared in creating a wonderful, spa-like experience for the homeowners. The outdoor vignettes sprinkled around the house provide a mosaic of resort-like experiences that come together to create a residential oasis. "The photos of this project tell their own story," says Peter. "It's quite special."

Resources:

Hemingway Construction
Peter Sciarretta
 115 Mason Street
 Greenwich, Connecticut 06830
 203.625.0566
hemingwayconstruction.com

Architect
Leroy Street Studio
 65 Allen Street
 New York, NY 10002
 212.431.6780
leroystreetstudio.com