

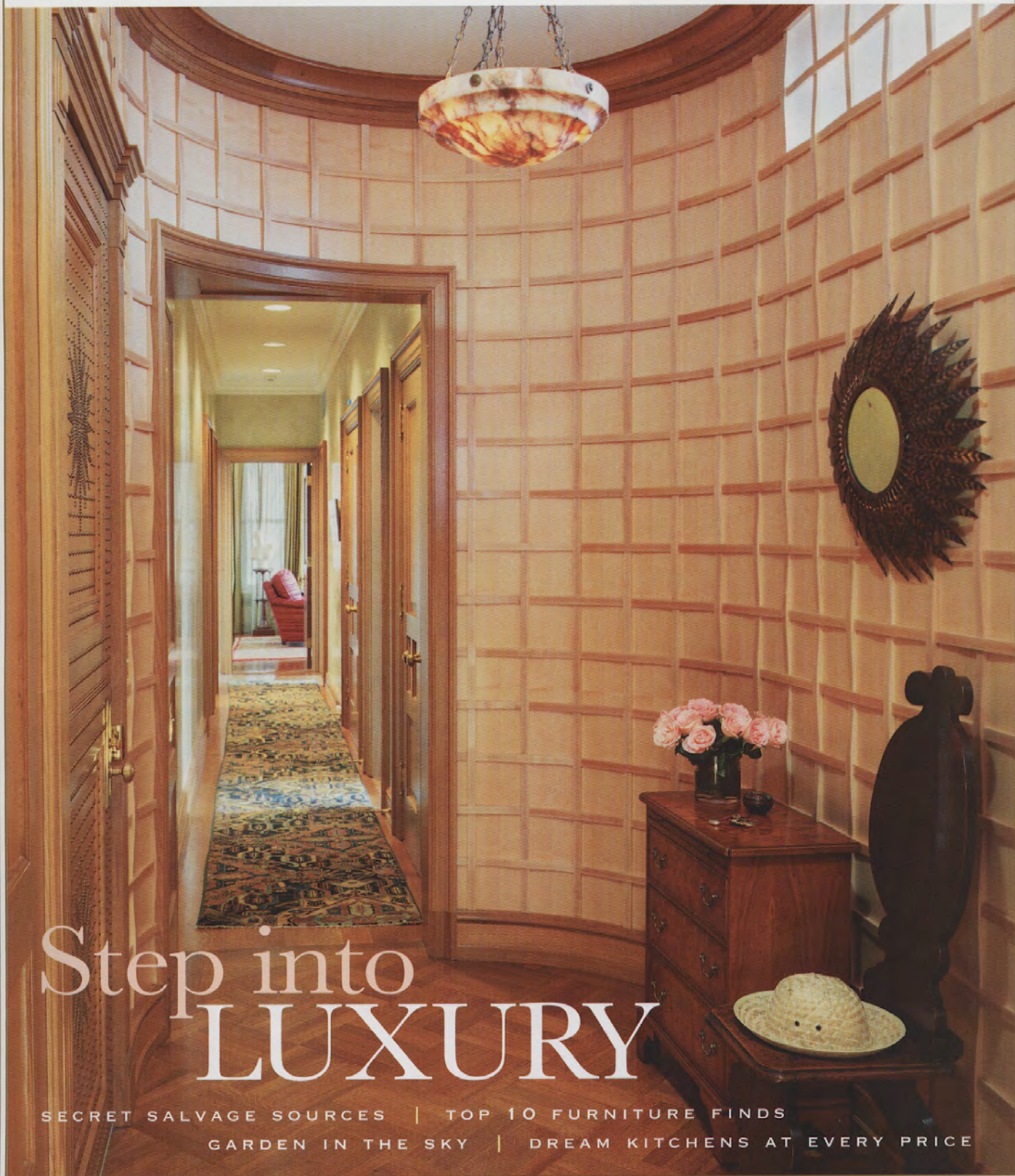
INTERIORS

FURNISHINGS

GARDENS

NEW YORK SPACES

THE HOME DESIGN MAGAZINE OF METROPOLITAN NEW YORK



Step into LUXURY

SECRET SALVAGE SOURCES | TOP 10 FURNITURE FINDS
GARDEN IN THE SKY | DREAM KITCHENS AT EVERY PRICE

at one with nature

A New Jersey couple builds a farmhouse
the eco-friendly way



ARCHITECTURE BY **WILLIAM E. S. KAUFMAN**
INTERIOR DESIGN BY **CHARLES O. SCHWARZ III**
TEXT BY **DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ROBERT KERN**



This Basking Ridge home was designed to complement the four-acre property, with its 4,700 square feet of living space integrated with 850 square feet of porches and patios.

WHEN JIM AND JILL GIBSON OF Basking Ridge, New Jersey, welcomed 220 people recently for the wedding of one of their two daughters, guests knew their home on Cross Pond was charming and inviting. But they may not have realized it's environment-friendly too.

Fervent recyclers, the Gibsons have been green-minded throughout their 37-year marriage. "I've always been into composting," says Jill, 56. "People make fun of the 'stink pot' I keep by the sink." But they didn't plan at first to build the eco-smart home of their dreams.

When the couple found this four-acre site in 1998, Jill explains, "we fell in love with the property and the pond. We thought we could work with the existing house—a 1947 ranch-style home—and add on to it." But after they lived in the home for a year and a half, she says, it still "didn't feel right."

They decided to rebuild, and Jim, 58, owner of a pressure-tube manufacturing company, "had the idea of creating a contemporary farmhouse using eco-friendly materials," recalls Jill.

The process took more than two years and cost \$225 per square foot. The architects, WESKetch, employed a "classic farmhouse style" marked by "the exterior fenestration materials, the wraparound porch, a standing seam copper roof combined with natural cedar shakes and custom copper gutters all around," explains principal William E. S. Kaufman.

WESKetch hired The Regensis Group, environmental consultants from New Mexico, to keep the house sensitive to its environs in terms of access to the sun, air patterns, water, plants and wildlife. For example, certain south-facing slopes weren't used for building since they were the best places to grow tomatoes and roses.

The home is designed as a cross, with a center clerestory letting light filter through the main hall and into the northern spaces. Structural trusses made



The farmhouse, designed as a cross, has a classic style updated to meet today's eco-smart sensibility.



Natural materials and environment-friendly paint used throughout the home, including the living room, kitchen and sitting area, pair with yellows and greens to create a cohesive interior design. Botanical prints are carried into all the spaces.

of detailed custom wooden beams were given a gentle convex bow to make the clerestory open and light.

Custom homebuilders Alto Enterprises chose certified wood framing, cedar roofing, siding made from recycled concrete and an expandable spray-foam insulation that is formaldehyde-free. A high-efficiency geothermal heating and cooling system uses the earth as a heat sink to transfer energy to and from the home. Appliances are energy-conserving, and lighting fixtures use energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs.

The 4,700-square-foot home features a natural stone fireplace, the focal point for the interior décor by designer Charles O. Schwarz III. "The colors were chosen to be soft and gentle and to flow from one

space to the other," says Schwarz. "Soft yellows and greens are the theme, with botanicals for the printed fabrics."

Furnishing the interior, Schwarz used the Gibsons' furniture where he could. He also bought antiques and had pieces custom-made from hardwoods or farmed woods such as teak. Fabrics and carpets are all natural fibers. Says the designer: "We even used environment-friendly paint."

The interior décor blends seamlessly into the Gibsons' roughly 850 square feet of porches and patios. And though the home is big enough for wedding-scale entertaining, it abounds in "cozy, intimate spaces," says Jill. "It's a welcoming home where we can relax and enjoy our two grandchildren—soon to be three." □