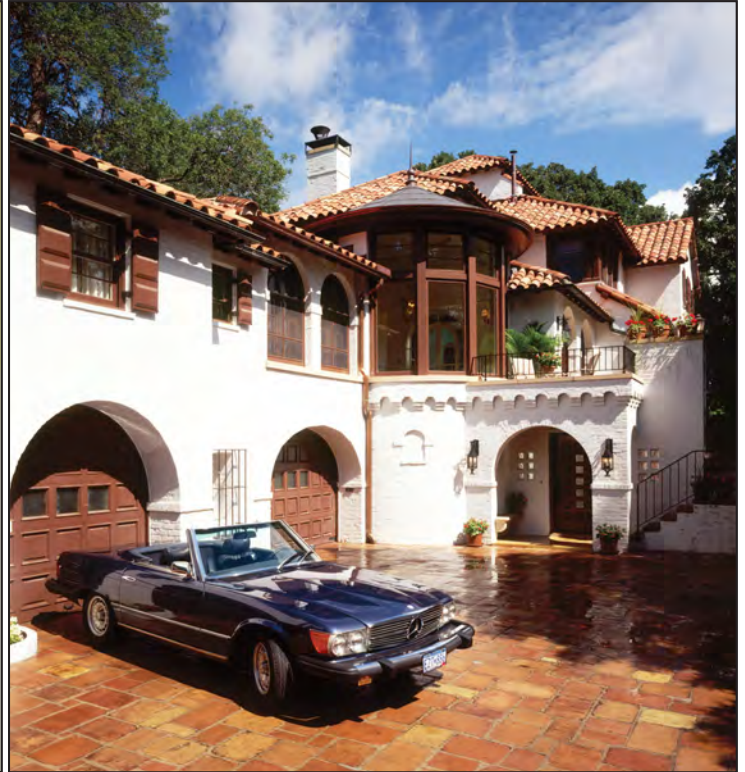
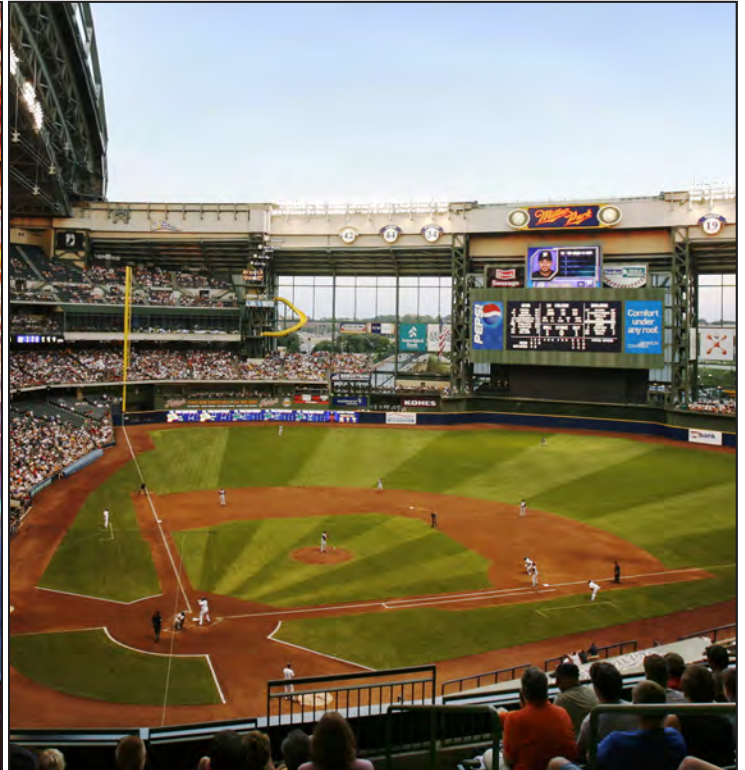


# AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

THE MAGAZINE CELEBRATING LIFE IN AMERICA



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art deco  
**REVIVAL**  
 IN MINNEAPOLIS

Article by Doug Mack of David Heide Design Studio  
 Photography by Alex Steinberg



Our task was to completely **RENOVATE** the kitchen and the historic servants' quarters, as well as to design an addition to **LINK** these disconnected areas of the residence, creating a seemingly **unaltered layout** that effortlessly blended the old and the new."



Houses must evolve. This is one of our firm's guiding principles: even as we restore original elements in historic homes, we must also allow the building to change with the times.

One of our recent projects, a residence in the lakes area of Minneapolis, turned out to be a particularly good case study for putting this principle into action. The home's pedigree was impeccable—built in 1928, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as an exceptional example of Mediterranean Villa Style architecture—but the interior spaces simply were not well-suited for modern family life.

In particular, the design and function of the residence still reflected the long-gone days when servants prepared all the meals and lived on-site. Their quarters remained separate from the main house and accessible only through the garage, while the kitchen still reflected its past days of pure utilitarianism—uninviting, confined, and cut off from the rest of the house.

Our task was to completely renovate the kitchen and the historic servants' quarters, as well as to design an addition to link these disconnected areas of the residence, creating a seemingly unaltered layout that effortlessly blended the old and the new. The massing, scale, and materials would fit the original structure's Villa exterior and grand Art Deco interior, but would do so without simply imitating the historic elements—the key was to create subtle distinctions and transitions between the various spaces so that the trained eye could understand the evolution. The new designs were also required to meet the strict guidelines of the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.



In the area that was once an open terrace, is a

**NEW FAMILY ROOM**

that is both elegant and intimate, with

**ART DECO-INSPIRED**

wenge and mahogany woodwork and cabinetry."

furnishings fit the setting, and the light, neutral shades of the leather and fabric upholstery offer a compelling contrast to the rich wood tones. Similarly, the Jerusalem stone flooring furthers the Art Deco aesthetic without stealing the spotlight from the other elements of the room.

A wide arched entry leads from the family room to the kosher kitchen, with separate cabinets, preparation areas, and dishwashers for meat and dairy. An elliptical island and matching light well help create a sense of intimacy by breaking up the large space; they also echo the shape of the original breakfast room, which was removed to make way for the addition. All the expected modern appliances are here, too, including wine storage, a warming drawer, and a built-in mixer. The curly maple veneered plywood cabinets with a stainless steel inlay recall the plain birch plywood cabinets of the original kitchen and lend a vibrant glow to the space, which is balanced by the deep blue of the granite countertops.

The overall effect of the upgraded materials and improved layout is that the kitchen is now the true center of the house, ready to serve a key role in entertaining

As often happens in design, these restrictions spurred our creativity and we realized that the key to the project was to give the addition a subtle flair all its own, to make it more than just a banal-but-historically-accurate extension of the original house. Instead of merely linking the existing spaces, we designed a new entrance tower, which serves as the hidden seam between old and new while improving access to the house from the garage area. MacDonald & Mack Architects, another Minneapolis-based firm, collaborated with us on the architectural design.

The exterior of the tower fits the Villa aesthetic while remaining subordinate to the original structure. The copper tower roof stands in contrast to the complicated tile roof of the main structure, yet is a material found elsewhere on the building. The

new window sashes were custom-made to precisely match the existing ones, and the company that made the original window hardware is still in business, so we were able to perfectly match these elements, too. Within the tower, a new curved staircase echoes the shape of a staircase in the original house and adds a level of grandeur, sweeping guests up to the main living areas.

In keeping with the Jazz Age spirit evoked by the streamlined interior design, each room is an elegant, unexpected riff on the guiding theme of luxury without stuffiness.

In the area that was once an open terrace, is a new family room that is both elegant and intimate, with Art Deco-inspired wenge and mahogany woodwork and cabinetry. The clean, strong forms of the Baker and McGuire





“THE CURLY MAPLE VENEERED PLYWOOD CABINETS WITH A STAINLESS STEEL INLAY RECALL THE PLAIN BIRCH PLYWOOD CABINETS OF THE ORIGINAL KITCHEN AND LEND A VIBRANT GLOW TO THE SPACE, WHICH IS BALANCED BY THE DEEP BLUE OF THE GRANITE COUNTERTOPS.”

“Within the tower, a new **CURVED** staircase echoes the **SHAPE** of a staircase in the original house and adds a level of grandeur, sweeping guests up to the main living areas.”

guests. This was one of our major goals for the remodeling of this space, and we were thrilled when our clients told us that the kitchen had evolved into a central gathering area—it is now not only a place to work but a place to linger.

Back on the other side of the addition, the former servants’ quarters were converted to a home office that also doubles as a guest bedroom. Here, as in the family room, there is a subtle interplay between the graphic qualities of the woodwork and the furnishings, a conversation that slyly pushes the Art Deco theme in multiple directions, both contemporary and traditional. Once again, the richness of the wood comes to the forefront; the stars here are the built-in desk and cabinetry, which feature ebony inlays.

In the new bathroom adjacent to the office, we saw an opportunity for a somewhat more whimsical, eye-catching variation on the Art Deco aesthetic. We sought out tile that would be a bold, but not jarring, counterpoint to the rich woodwork of the surrounding



spaces, and chose an iridized glass mosaic whose metallic tones echo those of the kitchen countertop. A sleek, nickel-plated sink completes the design.

Throughout the project, we continually stepped back to examine our work and to make certain that we were finding the right balance between historic and modern, as well as restraint and exuberance.

We kept asking ourselves, “Are we respecting the historic character? Are we making the changes necessary to serve the clients’ needs and ensure the long-term survival of the residence?”

It is our hope that the house will stand for generations to come, serving as a link to the past that also remains relevant to modern life. [AL]

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