

# Artful Living

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# Creating History

A new University Grove home brings contemporary style to a neighborhood full of architectural icons.

BY ELIZABETH FOY LARSEN

**T**ucked into a wooded corner near the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus, the University Grove neighborhood looks like an open-air museum of the best of 20th century residential architecture. Amid perfectly preserved Tudors and Prairie-style homes, colonial revivals by Edwin Lundie stand next to modern rectangles by Ralph Rapson, and Elizabeth and Winston Close. "The neighborhood is a who's who of noted Minnesota architects," says David Heide, owner and chief architect of Minneapolis-based David Heide Design Studio.

It's little wonder then that Heide and his associates jumped at the chance to design the first new home built in the neighborhood in 20 years. Known for its historic restoration work as well as sophisticated architectural chops, the studio has designed homes in a range of styles in locations as far-flung as Palm Springs, Calif., and Niagara on the Lake, Canada. The company's first local project, however,





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presented a worthwhile challenge: designing a comfortable home that makes a statement but also fits into a neighborhood packed with architectural history.

The solution is a sleek, two-story minimalist structure that is completely of-the-moment, from the artfully concealed cedar garage door to a "green" garage roof that's visible from the upstairs and soon will be planted with groundcover. "We wanted to design a house that not only suits our clients' needs but also claims its place in the timeline of contemporary styles on the street," says Heide. "We hope someone will look at it in 20 years and say, 'That's a 2012 house.'"

The three-bedroom, four-bathroom home is basically two interlocking cubes that provide access to the lot's abundant green spaces while maintaining privacy for the homeowners. The forecourt is shielded from the street by a stone wall just tall enough to thwart prying eyes. Inside, a wall of the same Minnesota limestone rises from the basement up to the second floor, creating the vertical core of the house while anchoring the home's open-tread stairways.

Skylights illuminate the upper stairway, and the home's sunny cheer is enhanced not only by the open floor plan but also its generous use of floor-to-ceiling windows and doors that swing out to patios and decks. In the living room, a perfectly square window centers on a wall, like a piece of art that changes depending on the season and time of day. It's a clever but subtle statement in a home whose defining principle is refinement. From the stained-walnut floors to the teak kitchen cabinets and woodwork, the overall design whispers a Zen-like calm.

Upstairs, glass exterior walls make the bedrooms feel like they could be part of a treehouse, albeit one that has roots in international style. "Our clients wanted a house that was warm and inviting, not cold and austere," says Heide. This new piece of history in University Grove does that and more. **AL**

*Elizabeth Foy Larsen is co-author of Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun.*



**om and zen** (OPPOSITE) David Heide balanced architectural tradition with the homeowners' request for a minimalist structure.

**solid roots** (ABOVE) A wall of Minnesota limestone anchors the staircase and continues the stone aesthetic of the home's exterior.