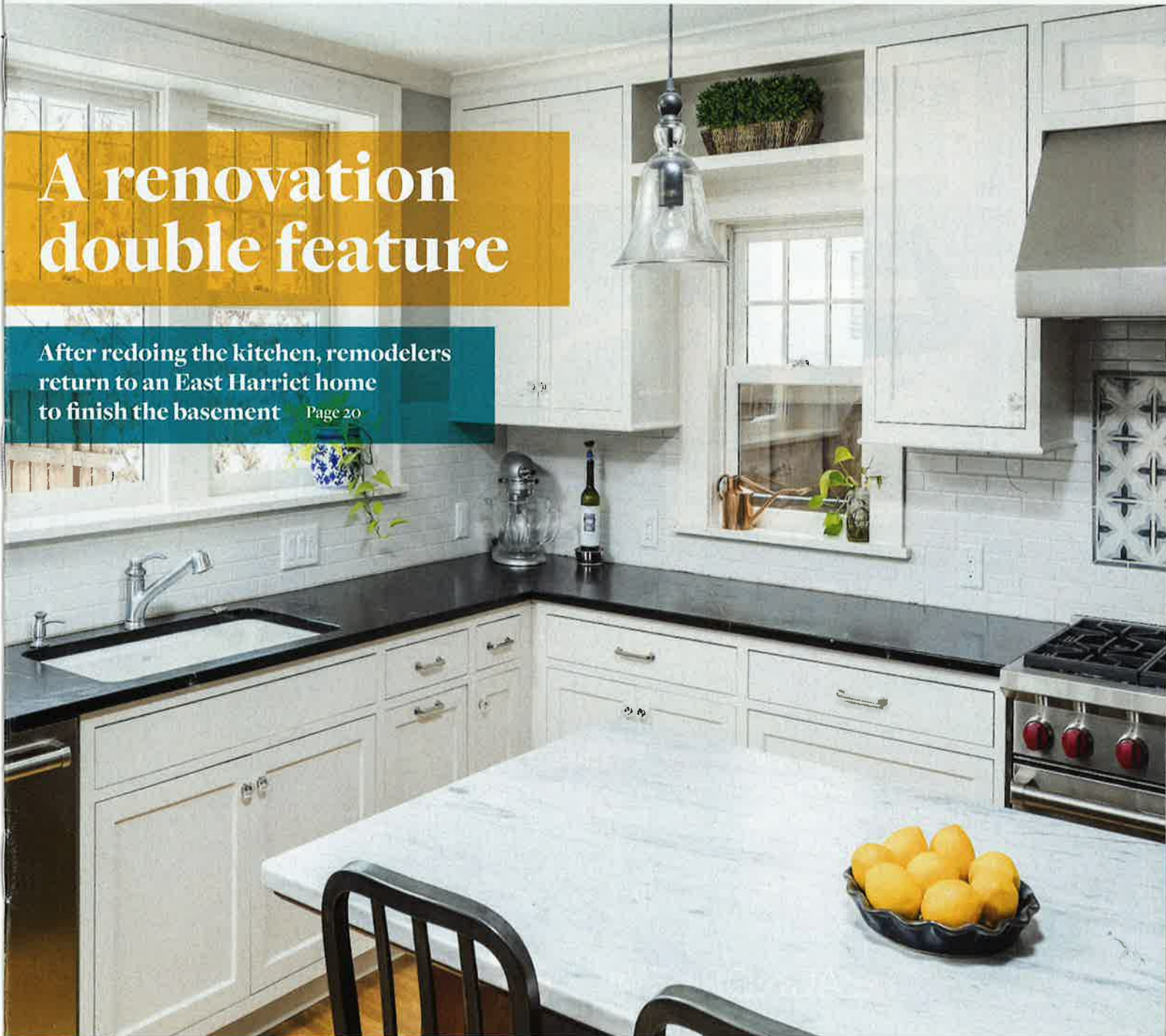


# HOME GUIDE

## A renovation double feature

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## HONORING A LANDMARK

Adapting an historic home  
for a modern family

by Jahna Peloquin

**A** Southwest Minneapolis couple had admired a 1920s Mediterranean villa in the Lynnhurst neighborhood near Lake Harriet for years. So when they found out the house was going on the market, they immediately asked for an appointment to see it.

The couple, who asked not to be identified in this story, bought the house in 1988 from the estate of the original owners after the 91-year-old matriarch of the family passed

away. The house was built in 1928 when the family's original home on the property didn't accommodate the needs of a daughter with cerebral palsy.

To this day, the home still has a Kasota stone wheelchair ramp leading to an outdoor terrace, a working elevator and wide doors for easy access to the main floor rooms.

After living in the home for a dozen years, the homeowners realized that, with three growing kids, it was not meeting the needs of a modern family. So they approached historic preservation firm MacDonald & Mack Architects, which in turn recommended David Heide Design.

### A synthesis

With its offices in downtown's Grain Exchange building, the full-service architecture, interior design and home restoration firm is known for its new home designs and historic remodels that blend timeless residential architecture with modern amenities.

It was a big and complicated process, said David Heide, architect, interior designer and principal of David Heide Design. He said the house was "built like a bunker with masonry construction" — a highly durable form of construction using brick and building stones such as marble and granite.

At the time, it was the largest project his firm had completed. But the project was right in line with what his design firm is all about.

"We believe that the synthesis between architecture and interior design is very important," he said.

In planning the extensive renovation, Heide's design team had to meet the needs of the homeowners while taking great care to respect the historic integrity of the house — especially since it had been designated a local architectural landmark in 1987. Heide worked with project architect Mark Nelson, interior designer Michael Crull and project consultant MacDonald & Mack to help achieve this delicate balance.



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## HONORING A LANDMARK



▲ The kitchen now opens to living space. Submitted photos courtesy Alex Steinberg

◀ The house was designated a local landmark in 1988.

### Form and function

As with any many grand old homes, the villa was built for both family and household staff, and the carriage house above the garage contained quarters for employees. To access those rooms, one had to travel into the basement and up a staircase.

Heide and his team added a large tower featuring a circular limestone stairwell that incorporated the same art deco features as the original stairway in the main part of the home. While helping to connect the carriage house to the rest of the home, the addition also exemplified the balance between form and function the homeowners had desired with the remodel.

Like other houses built during its era, the villa had been designed with formal rooms, such as a dining room and a living room, but lacked an informal gathering space for the family. One of the homeowners' main objectives with the remodel was to create a great

room combining the roles of several more traditional rooms, including the kitchen, into one open space.

Heide and his team decided to annex an underused outdoor terrace that separated the house from the garage to create a new informal living space, and as a result also linked the two structures to make the entire residence accessible to the family.

### True to character

The kitchen itself presented another major challenge in the remodel. Small, dark and inhospitable, it lacked modern workspaces and readily accessible storage. To reflect the family's Jewish faith, it also needed to become kosher. Within traditional Jewish culture, the mixing of meat and dairy is forbidden, which necessitates two separate sets of kitchen and dining equipment — everything from pots and pans to dishes, drinkware and cutlery.

In the end, Heide and his team created a functional and serviceable kitchen that satisfies the needs of a kosher kitchen without being so large that it's unusable.

When it came to the exterior of the house, David Heide Design was thoughtful not only about blending the additions seamlessly into the home but also about ensuring the structure stayed true to the character of the neighborhood.



▲ A circular limestone staircase incorporates art deco features.

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*HONORING A LANDMARK*



◀ The home has formal and informal spaces.

Heide's team also paid close attention to proportion and scale.

"We want to honor the original house by making subtle changes," he said. "The use of the same materials as the original house and the use of the same design vocabulary help keep it aligned."

### Building a relationship

Since the renovation was completed in 2002, the home has functioned well for the family. The large kitchen-breakfast-family room offers an informal gathering space in what is otherwise a very formal home, and the renovation allows the family to both entertain on an intimate level and host larger functions for as many as 125 people.

For Heide, the highlight of the project was the working relationship between his firm and the homeowners.

"It was great to work with a client who was willing and able to listen, hire the people they thought were right for the job and trust us to do the job," he said. ■



▲ With a circular staircase at its center, a new tower helps to connect a carriage house to the rest of the home.

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