

# INSPIRED

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# HOME

*Omaha*

OMAHA FAMILY CREATES  
**BACKYARD**  
*Oasis*

**GARDEN**  
**BEAUTY**  
IN BELLEVUE

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**ARTISTIC**  
**SWIMMING**  
**POOL DESIGNS**

**RECIPES FOR**  
**OUTDOOR**  
**DINING**





# Vacation Oasis

Pool house doubles as guest quarters; brings waves of enjoyment to Omaha family

BY ELIZABETH ANN WELLS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY BEBEE



An in-pool table and seating area step up to the expanded veranda. The steps create the illusion of moving between outdoor rooms.

**WHO SAID THE** perfect family resort needs to be far away? One Omaha family has created a vacation oasis literally outside its back door.

The idea for their two-story pool house and guest quarters sprang from a visit to builder Brad Brown's resort home at Lake of the Ozarks.

"I loved the house that they built down there," says the homeowner. They worked with Brown, president of Archistructure, to create a smaller version of the resort home on the lot next to their main house.

They also asked designer, Richard F. Klaas, ASID, owner of Omaha Interiors and Design, to capture the same "happy, rustic, cottage-like atmosphere found down at the lake."



↑ The vacation oasis sits within walking distance of the main house. Retreat and recreation are blended into nearly every element including the waterfall and waterslide combination at the pool's edge.

→ Quaint props and ample towels lend a feeling of complete hospitality for everyone who uses the space, including the homeowner.

He started by incorporating cabinetry for the kitchen island in an antiqued color that sprang from the pool's rich aqua walls. Blue dishware and pottery are displayed in glass-front cabinets, on the river rock colored granite, and on the veranda's outdoor furniture. Even the wicker sofa in the living area carries the blue from the pool.

Natural colors from outside are brought in as well with a copper tabletop, a farmhouse hammered copper sink, buff walls, sand-colored upholstery, and stone fireplace.

According to Klaas, comfort lies in the home's entire ambiance. By drawing color through the home from inside to outside and from one side of a room to the other and using repetition, Klaas says the eye relaxes. "It adds a sense of calm to a space because the eye has already processed the material. It becomes familiar... calm...comfortable."

Wallpaper around the soffits in the kitchen is the same as the wallpaper in the fireplace's cutout. The upholstery on the wicker sofa is the same indoor/outdoor stripe that lines the indoor draperies.

Pine kitchen cabinetry and alder floors add a rustic dimension. Above, cedar beams are separated by textured wallboard and painted a shade of the island's blue.





Changes to the original plans, such as the expanded 40-foot pergola, give the outdoor entertaining area more depth and the homeowner more options. The pergola shelters a bar and cooking area, complete with tables and chairs.

→ The living room's wicker sofa was painted to mirror the kitchen island cabinetry and outdoor pool walls. Its upholstery is the same indoor-outdoor fabric found in the indoor lining and arbor's drapery.

↓ The corner holds both indoor and outdoor fireplaces for gatherings in every season. Sliding glass doors span the remaining adjacent walls for easy transitions between entertaining spaces.



*Memories from special vacations are woven into the home and yard*

“The pale blue in the ceiling could represent the sky. It’s also a cool color and raises the ceiling,” says Klaas. “I love the contrast between the rough beams and the light texture of the painted ceiling, too.”

The contrast in textures provides the movement and interest that give the space depth. The textures also play into the home’s rustic feel.

“While the home is very laid back and warm, there is a certain formality to it. It’s kind of contradictory, and we repeated subtle contradictions throughout,” Klaas says.

Memories from past vacations are woven into the home and yard. Cameos of swimmers and breathtaking vistas of favorite

places are among the wall art. A dolphin sculpture from Disney World bridges the space between the pool and tennis court.

Tastefully including a homeowner’s treasures makes the difference between having a house and creating a home.

“My clients have great taste...great things. They just need someone to help them pull it all together,” he says. “Being able to edit is difficult when we are sentimentally attached to something. My job is to edit, refine or relocate things so they show to their best advantage.”

He worked with Archistructure to further customize the plan to better fit the homeowners’ dreams. Two sets of eight-foot sliding



The pool's rich aqua blues and surrounding natural stone tones were the inspiration for the home's interior. The professional appliances are situated between the river stone backsplash and the island's antiqued aqua finish for balance.

glass doors on either side of the fireplace open to a 15-foot covered slate veranda. In the summer the doors are typically left open to encourage flow between the two spaces.

His suggestion to expand the veranda more than seven feet created an outdoor entertainment center, complete with fireplace and flat screen TV, as well as generous space for cooking and visiting.

The addition of steps within the 4,000-square-foot concrete pool deck formed barrier-free rooms. On the west, Klaas draped a 40-foot pergola with the same all-weather stripe fabric found inside.

"We put up draperies because the sun from the west is so strong,"

explains Klaas. "It works well, but the wind can be a challenge — we live in Nebraska after all."

The pool features a waterfall, water slide, and in-pool seating. "It looks and feels very resort-like," says Klaas. "It's a vacation oasis that they can escape to."

Last summer was the first full season that the homeowners were able to enjoy their oasis. "We used it almost every day unless we were out of town," she says. "During the winter, we used it for date nights, guests, and business.

"It is such a happy place. We don't have to go anywhere else for vacation." ✨