



classic style

*A country estate in Greenspring Valley mixes
modern comfort with Old World elegance*

BUILD

Greenspring Valley, Maryland, is a national historic district in Baltimore County characterized by vintage buildings and park-like swathes of land. No wonder a couple building a house in these bucolic environs wanted an Old World look for their custom home. They tapped architect Vincent Greene, who collaborated with Pyramid Builders to create the sprawling, gabled structure they were looking for.

Measuring 13,000 square feet, the residence features public and private wings flanked by volumes containing his-and-her garages. The layout creates a courtyard centered around a commanding front entry made of precast limestone blocks in a brick pattern.

“They wanted a stone house,” recounts Pyramid vice president Mark Sanders, “but with a more formal front entry. Most of the house is rustic, irregular stone with an over-grouted look like an old English cottage. We did probably a dozen mock-ups to get the grout mixture right.”

Timber trusses above the entry are made of dark-stained, salvaged oak, as are columns supporting the copper-roofed entry portico. Classic elements include a turret to the right of the entrance, eyebrow dormers and a steeply pitched, Tudor-style roofline. The roof is made of slate.

Pyramid used a Hope’s steel window system for the glass front door and wide sidelites, then worked with Loewen to replicate the thin profile of steel in a more affordable, complementary metal-clad version.

Shingles mingle with stone on the rear façade “to make the house feel softer and more approachable for the family spending time outdoors,” Sanders explains. “It’s a nice interplay of materials.”

Architecture: Vincent Greene, AIA, Vincent Greene Architects, Baltimore, Maryland. Builder: Mark Sanders; Jay Miller and Mike Zittinger, project superintendents, Pyramid Builders, Annapolis, Maryland. Landscape Design: Bob Jackson Landscapes, Inc., Owings Mills, Maryland. Photography: David Burroughs.



A long drive culminates in a forecourt with his-and-her garages to either side of a stately entry (above). A turret (opposite, bottom) houses a dining room with a conical ceiling. The shingle-and-stone rear façade (left) incorporates square and round bays topped with copper roofing. The central bay supports a balcony with an iron railing; the pool was installed on an axis with the centrally located great room, contained within that bay.



ask mark

WHAT WAS THIS PROJECT'S BIGGEST HURDLE?

Meeting timeline and budget while integrating contemporary interior detailing with traditional architecture.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE ON MATERIALS?

We look for longevity and durability for a building shell that will last generations without requiring excessive maintenance.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE MOST DIFFICULT TO WORK WITH?

Installing stonework is truly an art form. We have in-house masons and resources for this purpose.

MOST CHALLENGING ARCHITECTURAL VERNACULAR?

Modern architecture requires the most precision. Unlike traditional architecture, there is very little trimwork, which provides a higher level of tolerance.



Lothorian Pools designed and installed the pool (top), with its limestone surround and a water feature made of the same over-grouted stone that clads the house. The limestone patio (above) features an outdoor kitchen and bar area for casual meals.