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AN URBAN LOFT LIFESTYLE



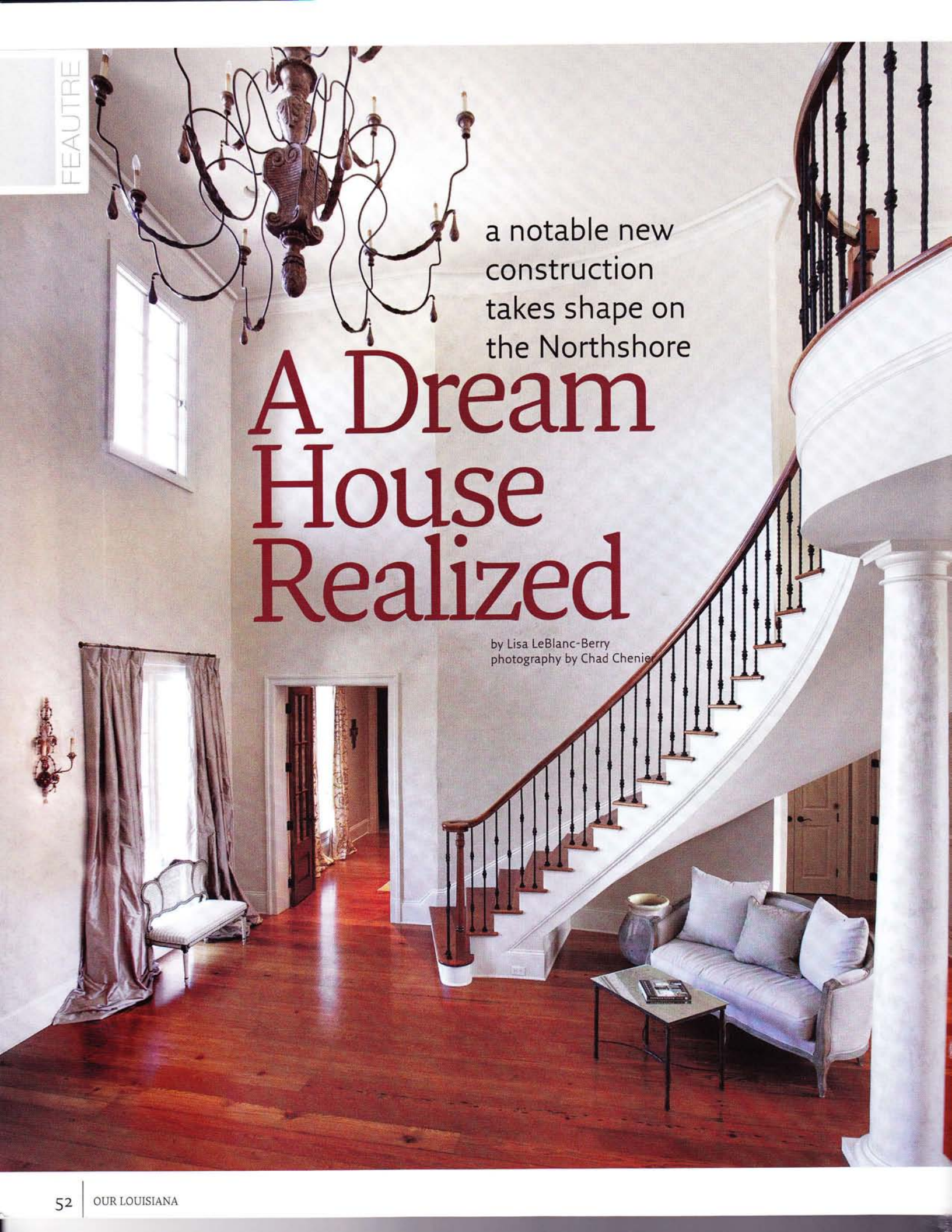
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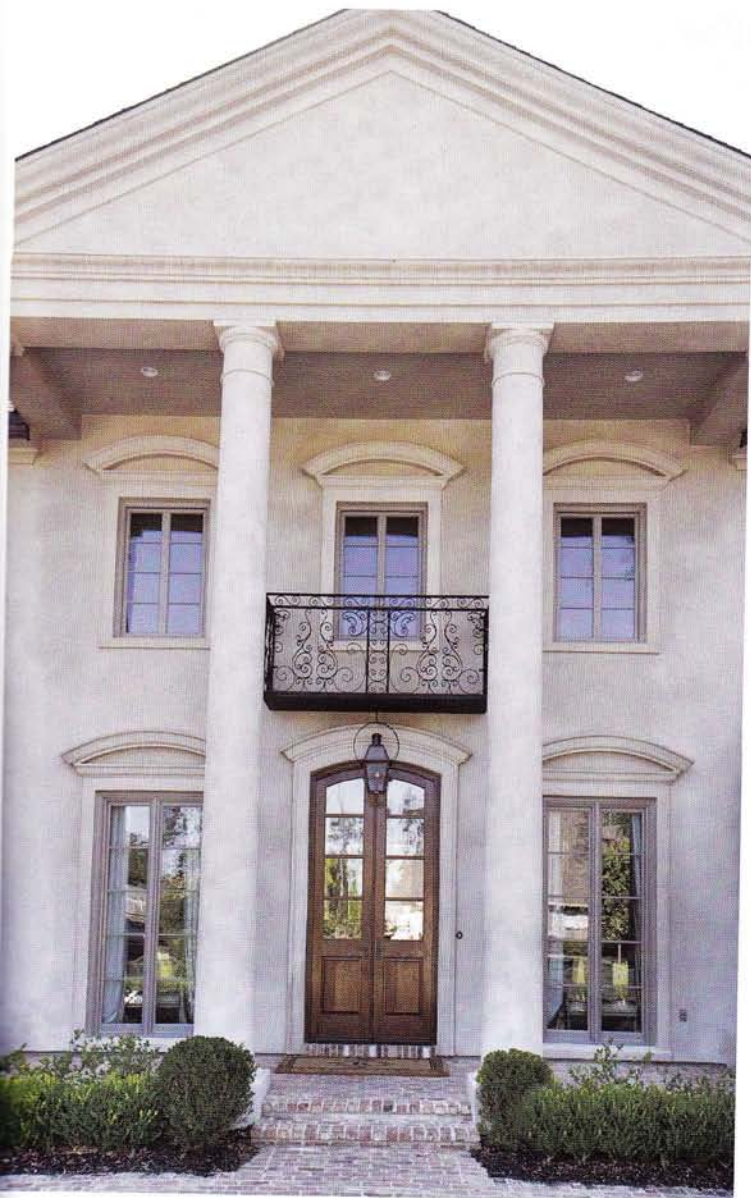
a notable new construction takes shape on the Northshore

A Dream House Realized

by Lisa LeBlanc-Berry
photography by Chad Chenier



A New Orleans couple finally decided to build their dream home on the Northshore, which is known for its peaceful neighborhoods, good schools, and prime real estate situated near golf courses, boating, and water sports along Lake Pontchartrain and the Tchefuncte River. The owners envisioned a grand residence with a pool where their children could play and the family could entertain in style.



A Curry and Company Mansion Chandelier, cathedral-height ceilings, Venetian plaster walls, and two grand staircases create an elegant entrance to the home.

The construction of the stunning 5,000-square-foot Northshore residence was completed in 2010.

The attractions of the Northshore among New Orleans residents can be traced to the early 19th century, when Madisonville flourished as a resort for wealthy residents of New Orleans. They fled the heat of the city for the cool lake breezes, and were transported from Port Pontchartrain to the lake's north shore by steam ferry. In the 1990s, people began moving in large numbers from the south shore to Madisonville, Covington, and Mandeville. The out-migration from Orleans and Jefferson parishes accelerated after hurricane Katrina, when *St. Tammany* experienced a population boom.

"My clients have adapted very well to their new Northshore community. They are really loving it over here," says interior designer Tracy Womack. She helped crystallize the homeowners' visions for their dream house, from the custom interior elements such as the flooring to the color themes and furnishings.

The stunning new two-story French Provincial-style house was built and furnished within two years of its inception. The 5,000-square-foot residence with four bedrooms, a formal study for the parents on the first floor, and an upstairs media room for the children was completed in October 2010.

One architectural element that is a departure from the overall style of the home is the entrance foyer, which is located in the center of the structure and is reminiscent of antebellum homes. A pair of dramatic, curving staircases are supported by stately stone columns, behind which is a catwalk overlooking the living room. The result is a very spacious, grand foyer with Venetian plaster walls that add luster to the elegant entrance. According to Womack, the objective for this new construction was an Old World feel with all the modern amenities.

Enhancing the property is a lavishly landscaped backyard with a pool and a beautifully appointed living area that Womack orchestrated.

"When I was brought on the project during its construction, the homeowners explained that they wanted something elegant, yet very comfortable," she says. "They do a lot of entertaining, but they are very casual. For example, they are currently in the process of converting their formal dining room into a temperature-controlled wine cellar."

There is a bar off the kitchen in the keeping room that lends a casual touch near the main family dining table that seats 10. Womack designed the marble-top recessed bookcases in the keeping room. The sitting area provides a nice view of the covered outdoor living space that includes a full kitchen, an outdoor dining "room," and seating areas near the pool.

The kitchen was designed with entertaining in mind. It is appointed with a hammered copper sink and a hood with a custom Italian plaster finish, and beautifully faux-finished cream walls. An antique door leads to the pantry while antique lanterns that were wired for electricity hang over the island, adding character to the main space where the family gathers after school and work. Womack refinished the chairs in front of the island to blend with the creamy custom finish on the cabinetry. ●

An Italian plaster finish was added to the kitchen hood. Antique lanterns above the peninsula and an antique pantry door lend an Old World feel to this newly constructed kitchen.





Adjoining the kitchen is a keeping room, which provides a splendid view of the outdoor living area with a full kitchen and pool. A bar was incorporated into the keeping room, where the family gathers for most of their meals.

"I helped the clients select the paint schedule, hard surfaces, flooring, and lighting," says Womack. "We selected monochromatic colors for the rooms."

Tumbled travertine flooring can be found throughout the home, adding a rich, distinctive character to the kitchen, keeping room, and baths. The remainder of the rooms are appointed with heart pine flooring. "I helped them stain it with undertones of gold and red to make it resemble mahogany," Womack recalls.

The living room, located just off the entrance foyer, has soaring cathedral height ceilings. It is centered by a cast stone mantel and hearth that was custom made for the home. Womack reupholstered a pair of wingback chairs in a dusky gold appliqué fabric to complement the kid-friendly brown leather sofa and sturdy antique wood coffee table.

The master bedroom, which overlooks the pool, has a European-style wood and upholstered headboard with nail head trim. "I wanted the master bedroom to be very soft and monochromatic with a little bit of romance, so I utilized cream, beige, gold, and French gray to create a serene environment," Womack notes. A delicate chandelier adorned with crystal petals lends a sensual, elegant nuance to the bedroom. Custom rods, silk panels, and blackout silk Roman shades were added for privacy and light control. ➤



The master bath has his-and-her closets, travertine flooring, plantation shutters in the windows near the tub, and a steam shower with marble walls and a mosaic tile floor. Antique wood light fixtures and an antique linen closet continue the theme of the Old World meets the new.

"My clients knew what they wanted, and it was a pleasure to work with them, even during the stressful times of construction," says Womack. "They are such a great couple, and are very down to earth." During the project, Womack says that friendships were formed and she remains close to the homeowners. "They are really enjoying living on the Northshore in their beautiful new home." ♦

