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Perfect 10

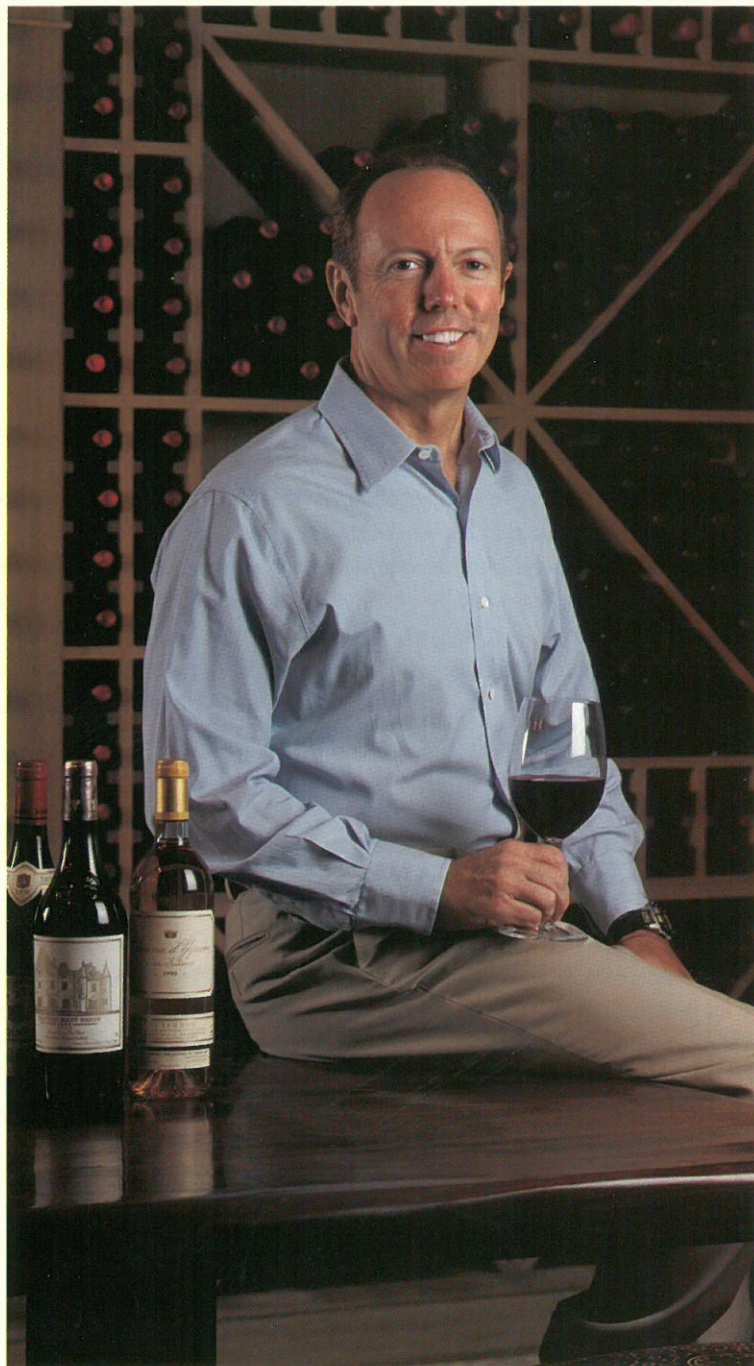
Fashionable Men

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Breaking New Ground

By Daphne Nikolopoulos
Photography by Jerry Rabinowitz



When David Lambert was looking for real estate in Palm Beach, he scrutinized every option carefully in order to find exactly what he wanted. Then he walked onto a lot near the lake, in Palm Beach's north end, and knew he'd found a home.

Not only is the lot situated on a quiet street on one of Palm Beach's highest points, but it is steps from Lake Worth (the Intracoastal Waterway) and, more importantly, the Lake Trail.

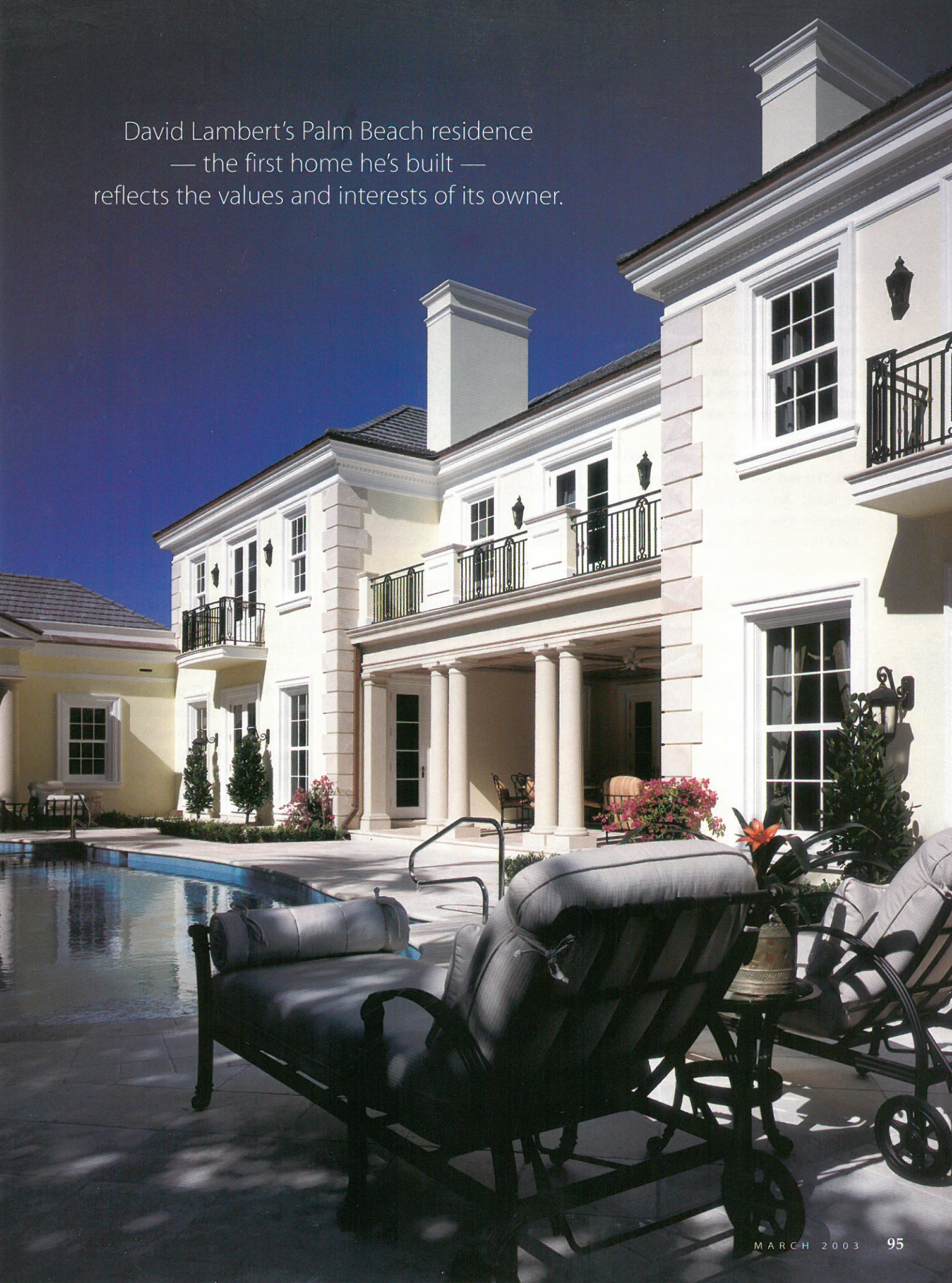
For Lambert, an avid fitness enthusiast, the proximity to the trail was a prime selling point. "I enjoy being fit and being outdoors," he says. "This lot presented a great opportunity for that kind of lifestyle."

What Lambert, a New York investment banker who recently retired from Goldman Sachs, didn't know at the time was that the lot would present a host of other opportunities.

"David contacted me to evaluate the lot before buying it, and when I saw it, I was very enthusiastic about it," says Tom Kirchhoff, the Jupiter architect who would eventually build Lambert's home. "The lot is secluded and, though it is shallow in depth, it is very wide.

Though designed as an evolution of the Georgian style, the home of David Lambert (this page) clearly is in touch with its Palm Beach surroundings.

David Lambert's Palm Beach residence
— the first home he's built —
reflects the values and interests of its owner.



That allowed for privacy. The elevation also was a tremendous benefit; it allowed us to add some uncommon elements.”

Since this was the first home Lambert had built, not only in Palm Beach, but anywhere, he wanted to “do it right.” His basic directive was to build a home that was elegant, yet allowed for casual living. Recently single, he wanted his young children, Nataly and Sterling, frequent visitors from New York, to feel at home anywhere in the house. He also wanted to entertain close friends in a house that was warm, inviting and reflective of his personality.

The architecture was equally important. “He had sent us tear sheets of what he liked,” Kirchhoff says. “Most were Georgian-style homes. The most influential in creating the design of this house



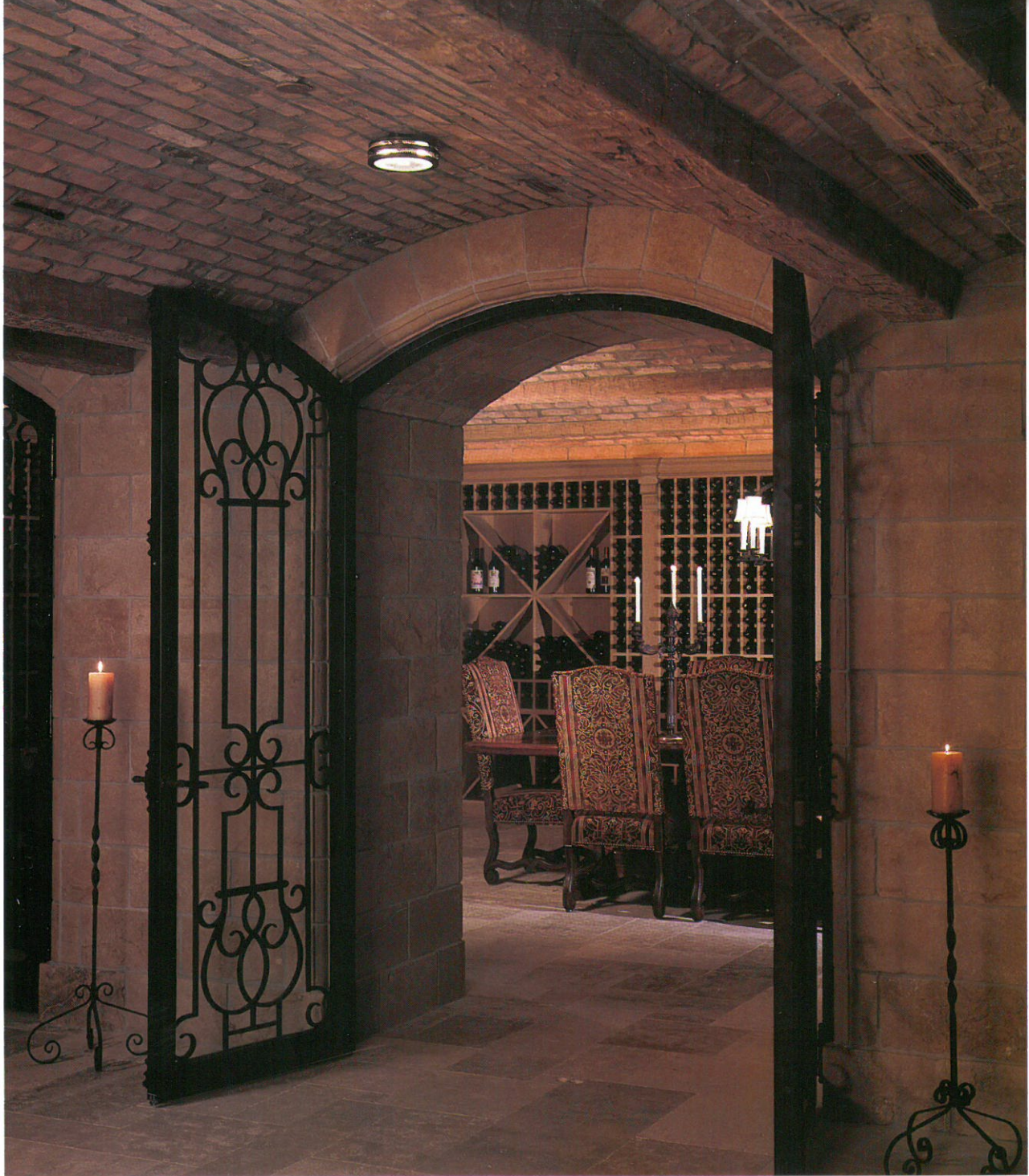
were Winfield House [the American ambassador’s residence in London] and a J. Neel Reid house in Atlanta.”

Given these parameters, the Lambert home was designed as an evolution of the Georgian style, which in turn is an 18th-century evolution of the Palladian style from Northern Italy. It has the traditional stone façade and symmetry of Georgians, with a three-part design — two wings, and a main core characterized by a central gable — and its simple roof line is supported by impressive two-story pilasters. Lines and shapes are kept simple and straightforward, yet every element is highly detailed — all very typical of Georgian architecture, which is graceful but ornament-free.

For all its nods to Georgian tradition, the house is firmly rooted in its Palm Beach surroundings. With its

This page: It was important for Lambert that daughter Nataly and son Sterling feel at home anywhere in the house. Opposite page: Lambert was involved in the selection of materials, including the Jerusalem-tile floor in the family room and kitchen.





This page: The basement has an atmosphere all its own, highlighted by an impressive, medieval-like wine cellar. Opposite page: Lambert and his children plan to make good use of the oversized pool.

enormous windows and French doors, the house is utterly transparent, facilitating the interaction between indoors and outdoors. Glass is extensively used in the rear (south side) of the house to invite light and brighten

spaces. The east and west ends of the house culminate in French doors that open up to tropical gardens.

In that regard, it is a true Florida house. Its highly detailed spaces, however, are very traditional, very European. Many of the exterior's architectural elements have been repeated in indoor spaces. The staircase, for example, has an English Regency-styled ornamental ironwork banister that is an interpretation of the ironwork on the balconies. The heavy,

five-step crown moldings in formal spaces have dentil detailing, which, according to Kirchhoff, "is also expressed on the outside of the house."

"Maintaining continuity between indoor and outdoor [spaces] speaks to the extent of detail that defines the house," the architect notes. Lambert himself had a hand in the detailing and style of the house.

Aspen-based interior designer Amy

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Breaking New Ground

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Pagano explains: "He wanted an Italian-villa look, without the dark, heavy fabrics. He wanted everything to be bright and young-looking."

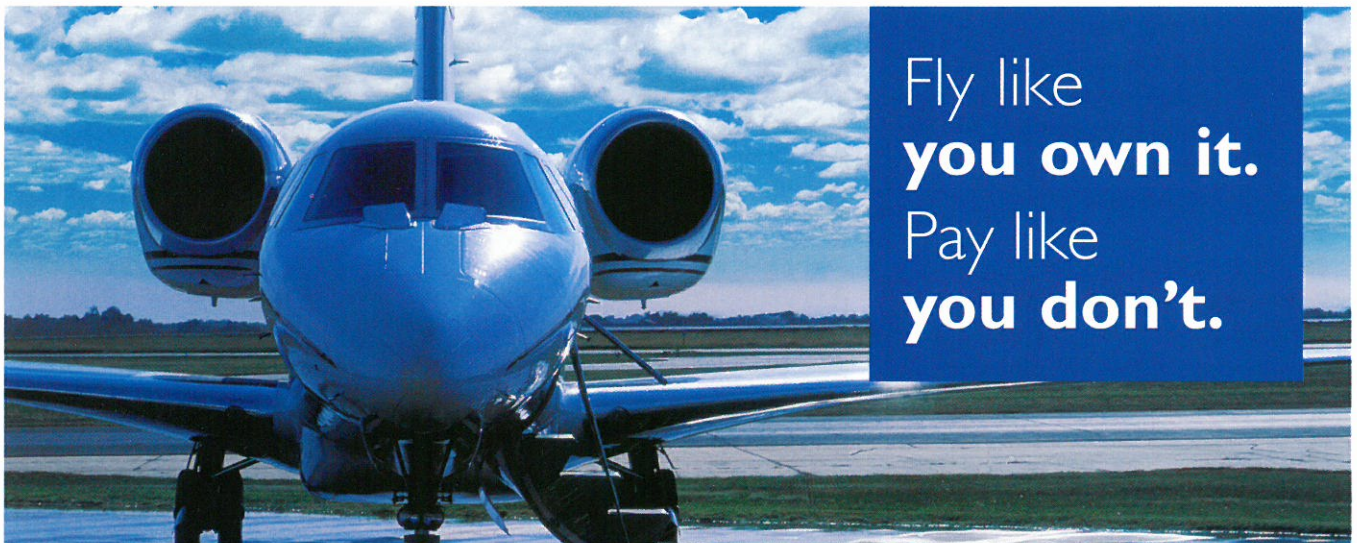
Pagano interpreted Lambert's vision by selecting a creamy, neutral palette — ivory and gold in the living room, muted yellow with tropical prints in the family room, soft pastels in the bedrooms and baths — and furnishing spaces with imported pieces styled after European antiques.

The bathrooms, Pagano says, were very important in dictating the color schemes of the guest bedrooms. "He wanted one bathroom to be pale green, one to be powder blue," she explains. "We carried that palette over to the fabrics of the bedrooms so they look more like guest suites."

Lambert also helped choose materials. For instance, he chose the Jerusalem tile, imported from Haifa, Israel, that is used in informal areas like the family room, kitchen and loggia. "I fell in love with it in someone else's home and had to have it," he says.

He also chose the dramatic antique Cortone stone from Nuit Saint-George in Burgundy, France, that lines the staircase leading to the basement. The stone was a key

Warm, yet elegant, touches in rooms such as the formal dining area reflect Lambert's desire to create ambiance that is both inviting and eye-catching.



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element in creating the atmosphere of a medieval French château in the basement, which includes a wine cellar with dining area, a billiards room, a gallerylike bar and a home theater.

It was important to Lambert, however, that the atmosphere didn't detract from the basement's role as an entertainment area. "It was always my dream to build something like that," he says. "It was absolute luck that we found the site that would enable us to do it."

Because the site was at an elevation, it was possible to build the basement, one of the "uncommon elements" Kirchhoff referred to earlier. The room, however, posed a challenge: It was not possible to have windows. While a dark, enveloping quality was important to create the mystique of a cellar, it also was critical to impart a feeling of space and, well, light.

The problem was solved by Kirchhoff and Pagano. "The ceiling consists of a series of barrel vaults lined with old-Chicago brick to counteract the closed-in feeling," Pagano says.

To open the space further, the team created a series of three arched, glass doors, detailed with wrought-iron ornamentation, leading to the wine cellar. The cellar houses Lambert's collection of wines — all of which "are to be drunk, not to be saved," he says — and a banquet-style table made of reclaimed African railroad ties.

"The idea came from a similar space in Monterey [Calif.], where I had dinner with friends," Lambert explains.

Beyond the cellar is an informal bar area, which consists of some seating and a custom cabinet that serves as a wet bar, where friends can pour glasses of wine and mingle before going into the cellar for dinner.

After dinner, they might head to the home theater for a movie. The theater has family-style (rather than theater-style) seating, because Lambert wanted his friends and his kids to be as comfortable as they would on the family room sofa.

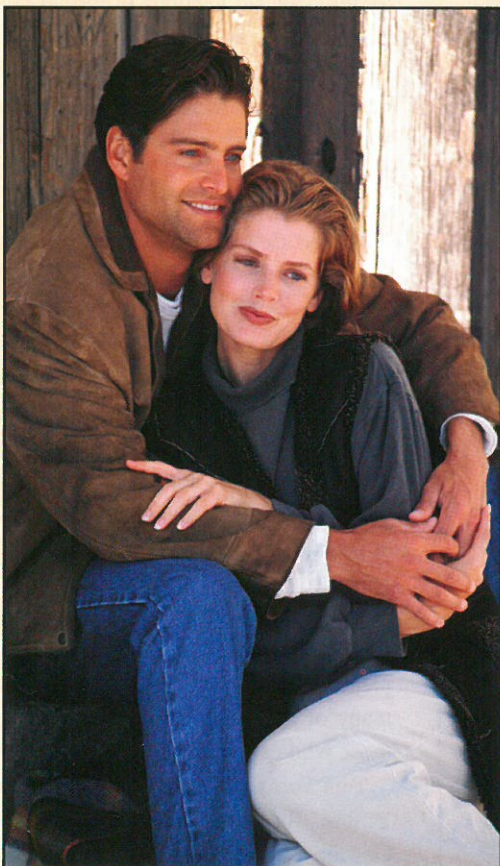
"It was an added dimension that the kids and I could enjoy," he says. "It has sophisticated audio/visual equipment, but it looks like a living room. I wanted casual comfort — that's my style."

Working out is also Lambert's style. To add to his routine of cycling and jogging on the Lake Trail, he has fashioned a home gym with more equipment than most hotels' fitness facilities. The oversized pool is large enough to allow for swimming laps.

"Fitness is a big part of my life," he says, "as is boating and the beach. This house affords me the opportunity to be outside 12 months of the year."

The house also allows him to interact with his children in a variety of ways — and to Lambert, that is more important than anything.

"I wanted my kids to feel at home here, as I do," he says. "There is so much we can do together here. That, to me, is what home is all about." ❧



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