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Arched windows and transoms in doorways add airiness and height to the rooms throughout this home. The lamps in the foreground are made from old urns (from Junk Market in Long Lake).

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& GRACE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG PAGE TEXT BY CAROLYN CROOKE

Bob and Wendy Beutler's new home, built just this year on Lake Minnetonka, is infused with breezy charm and old-world grace. "I wanted a cottage feel to this house," explains Wendy Beutler. "Our last house was somewhat boxy so I wanted this one to have curves." In fact, curves run throughout the house. Curved glass doors in the front entryway look clear through to the arched windows in the living room with their panoramic lake view. "Some people might have a privacy issue with the glass front doors, but I love them," Wendy says. "I love seeing the lake and getting light; I have as few window treatments as possible."

Wendy notes that "people comment on the wood floors right when they walk through the doors. I prefer the look of older homes, so I'm glad our house has that kind of character. A lot of that is because of the wide plank flooring. We used it in our last house, and even before we drew up the plans for this one, we knew we'd use it again. It's a way to get old-home warmth into new construction. I love the knots and the imperfections. I've got quite a bit of white enamel woodwork in here and the flooring really warms that up. It sets the tone for the home and puts people at ease."

The wide plank flooring is actually antique lumber, once used to frame factories, warehouses and bridges in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Manomin Resawn Timbers, a lumber and woodworking company in Forest Lake, recycled and remilled the antique lumber found in the home. "We buy timber from demolition contractors all over the country," explains Manomin owner Jim Rice. "Reclaimed historic lumber comes from old growth forests, so it's exceptionally strong and stable."

While Manomin specializes in milling and installing wide plank flooring, they also provide resawn lum-

ber for paneling, fireplace mantels and other projects. "People like it because it's unique," Rice comments. "Reminders of the wood's previous service in a factory, bridge or other construction often remain after it's been resawn. These reminders-nail or bolt holes, for example-add charm and character without compromising the wood's strength." Manomin deals with wide boards-from six to twelve inches wide. As an added bonus, reclaimed lumber also helps ease the strain on existing old growth forests, and saves historic lumber from being needlessly destroyed.

Bob and Wendy Beutler were heavily involved in every aspect of their home's creation: the couple designed it themselves, Wendy did the interior deco-

rating, and Bob, a Real Estate Agent with Re/Max, discovered the lot. "We saw the potential in the lot immediately," Bob comments; "it's difficult to find a larger lot like this on the water. This one is closer to the city and it's on a beautiful bay with a great view."

While many prospective buyers would have been turned off by the house on the lot, the Beutlers saw past it to the house that could be there. "Many buyers think more in terms of remodeling than building. I think that's because the idea of starting from scratch scares people away," Bob notes. "But it can cost the same or less to tear down a house as it can to gut it, and when you remove the house completely, you get everything brand new."

Thanks to his background in zoning and city planning, Beutler has an extensive familiarity with the zoning ordinances around the lake; he knew they could achieve everything they wanted to without wasting valuable time navigating city bureaucracy. The couple purchased the lot the day it went on the market.



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The couple paid homage to Wendy's East Coast roots by using quite a bit of bead-board throughout the kitchen, the bathrooms, above the kitchen fireplace and elsewhere. Instead of a screened-in porch or large outer deck, the couple opted to "kick out" the kitchen, creating a wrap of windows on one wall. "We love to sit in that area; it's like a sunroom, but it's

not separated by walls. In the summer, we open all the windows and it feels like a porch." Transom windows above doors accentuate the ten-foot ceilings and allow light to flow from one room to another.

The table in the kitchen, a cherry table from euro pine Imports, carries through the country French motif. The see-

through fireplace with its fieldstone mantle is often on as Wendy cooks; she's pictured scooping ice cream with baby daughter, Georgia and son, Brooks. Beutler bought the vintage stained glass piece (above the pantry) on a trip to Napa Valley. "It's great to be able to put something old in new construction," she observes.



the wide plank flooring is actually antique lumber, once used to frame factories, warehouses and bridges a century ago.

Wide plank flooring made from reclaimed historic lumber (provided by Manomin Resawn Timbers) adds warmth and character. Manomin face nails the planks with traditional square head nail for a colonial look.

A mixture of the rustic and the elegant give the dining room a distinctly European or “country French” feel. “The chandelier and the sconces are dressier a lot of people might shy away from mixing these more refined things with the wide plank flooring, but I feel it gives the room a relaxed elegance—it’s a very user-friendly space. The chairs are comfortable, and the furniture and architecture is full of inviting curves.” Beutler displays dishes from her Grandmother in the cherrywood

hutch. “The dark wood warms up the white and makes it feel cozier. I’ve gone with a lot of dark leather furniture, dark area rugs, and dark woods in this house.”

The Beutlers admit that people thought they “were crazy” because this is the second house they built in three years. Bob notes that the key has been to work together as partners. “We both have our strengths. I know the real estate market, Wendy knows style and we both see the potential in a property. Building a house can be a lot of work, but it can also be fun and creative, a project where each person can use their strengths.”

Manomin Resawn Timbers: 651-408-2303



Heirloom dishes are displayed in the Beutlers' dark-wood secretary. The chair is also handy when extra seating is needed in the living room.

Bob and Wendy Beutler with daughter Georgia and son Brooks.

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Planchers en Bois

PLANK FLOORING

When considering all of the elements that it takes to complete your personal version of a globally inspired home, don't leave out what goes under foot. There's nothing like the depth and character of flooring resawn out of timbers that are centuries old. One company that deserves attention is Manomin Resawn Timbers. The floors they install bring an old world charm to any style home. We thought we should take another look at their work featured in the last issue of Furnishings Magazine.

Manomin Resawn Timbers, which reclaims and remills lumber from the century-old warehouses and bridges currently being torn down. Such wood is full of character; often you can see old nails and bolt holes. Manomin Resawn Timbers provides custom-cut timbers and trim and flooring in a variety of woods; 651-464.1771

