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In the Grand Manor



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PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDA OYAMA BRYAN

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THE
Scottish Manor

Located in pastoral Bannockburn, IL, the hidden jewel of the North Shore, The Scottish Manor, built by Orren Pickell Designers & Builders, is rich in design and offers more than 9,000 square feet among its two master bedrooms, expansive kitchen, cherry-wood library, and more.

Rarely does a luxury custom home builder have an opportunity to create a unique, estate oriented community from the ground up. For Orren Pickell, Tarns of the Moor, a 33-acre enclave in north suburban Bannockburn, represents this kind of opportunity. Ten homes on multi-acre sites are planned, all custom designed and built by Orren Pickell Designers & Builders and exclusively listed by Baird & Warner.

Tarns of the Moor, a name inspired by the natural beauty of the setting, occupies one of the larger parcels of wooded land recently made available in the Chicago area. The small lake already on the property has been joined by a series of picturesque ponds reminiscent of the tiny mountain lakes, or tarns found in the craggy reaches

of the Highlands. And while moors are sometimes lonely and brooding, references to them conjure romantic images of the pristine Scottish countryside, an altogether fitting allusion in a village named for a Scottish town and an environment created by a builder whose mother was born in Glasgow.

The Scottish Manor offers an intimacy rarely found in homes of this size, along with a floor plan flexible enough to accommodate the cyclical changes that occur in the normal course of family life. Like Tarns of the Moor itself, the home pays tribute to the shared heritage of the builder and village. At the same time, the expansive 9,000-square foot residence is strictly cutting-edge in terms of materials and technology.



■ Preceding page: Complete with a circular staircase, custom wainscoting, arched doorways, a Travertine stone floor by Materials Marketing, and elegant millwork from CabinetWerks, the spacious foyer introduces many of the home's signature design themes. This page: To emphasize the room's unusual shape, the wood floor in the oval dining room is bordered with the same stone used in the foyer. Hurd windows provided by Estate Windows, Ltd. frame a beautiful view of the wooded property and the contrived English basement created by James Martin Associates, Inc.





"We wanted to design a space equipped with all the amenities and capabilities of a state-of-the-art kitchen, without compromising the old-world aesthetic of the room," says Orren Pickell.

Built with a mix of natural stone and stucco, materials similar to those used for centuries in the Scottish Highlands, the house has arch-top and mullioned windows, sweeping roof lines, zinc gutters and flashing, and a three-car garage. French doors in the family room provide access to a southeast-facing screened porch with an unobstructed and very private view of the property.

Of the home's six bedrooms, two are master suites, one on the first floor and one on the second. Both have expansive walk-in closets, wood burning fireplaces, and luxurious bathrooms with spa-style tubs

and oversized showers. There are three powder rooms, two on the first floor and one on the lower level near the leisure room and exercise area. Two of the four family bedrooms on the second floor have private baths and two share a connecting bath. Laundry facilities are located on both the first and second floors.

Consistent with the very human scale of the house, Pickell's design team opted for a single front door and a foyer ceiling similar in height to the ceilings in the rest of the house, thus bypassing the massive entryways that have become something of an architectural cliché in the last decade.

In another departure from the contemporary norm, the circular, custom designed staircase, complete with pewter spindles, is located on the right side of the foyer, rather than in the center. As a result, everyone who enters the house through the front door looks across the oval dining room to the large windows framing a breathtaking view of the wooded setting.

The foyer provides access to both the gallery leading to the casual, family-oriented spaces and the arched passageway, to the more formal and private areas. Many of the home's signature design features are introduced here, beginning with the



Antiqued Ocean Blue Travertine stone floor supplied by Materials Marketing, three panel, custom wainscoting, the arched doorways, and paneled barrel-vault ceilings in the adjacent hallways. Small benches set at right angles to the leaded glass window near the front door replicate the cozy charm of an inglenook fireplace. The warmth is heightened by the built-in bookcases used here and elsewhere in the house.

In designing the house, Pickell's architectural team was guided, in part, by a concept positioning the kitchen as a small cottage that grew by bits and pieces into a gracious manor house. Family life still revolves around the kitchen, and opening it to the family and breakfast room, as is found in *The Scottish Manor*, enhances its importance as a gathering spot.

Tumbled stone similar to the native stone traditionally used to build Scottish homes delineates the more casual areas of the house. The walls of the passageway from the kitchen to the family room are stone, as are the walls in the adjacent stairway leading to the master bedroom on the second floor and the leisure room on the lower level. In the family room itself, the fireplace, one of seven in the house, is done in the same stone, as is the fireplace on the lower level. Because the hearth, in both cases, is sufficiently recessed, there's no need for a screen, a detail that

enhances their castle-like appearance.

No room in the house requires more detailed planning than the kitchen. Beauty and utility have to strike a balance, especially in a house where vintage charm plays as significant a role as it does in this one. By skillfully hiding or camouflaging the technology, Pickell's designers were able to maintain the illusion of age. "We wanted to design a space equipped with all the amenities and capabilities of a state-of-the-art kitchen, without compromising the old-world aesthetic of the room," says Orren Pickell.

■ Opposite: The professional-quality Wolf range from The Westye Group-Midwest is flanked by granite counter tops, custom cabinets from Wood-Mode, and a slate backsplash from Materials Marketing.

■ Above: Designed to be the center of family life, the kitchen has a tumbled stone doorway, re-claimed barn beams, and a stucco ceiling created by American Classic Co.