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A GUIDE FOR BUYERS

MAY 2004

# Chicago

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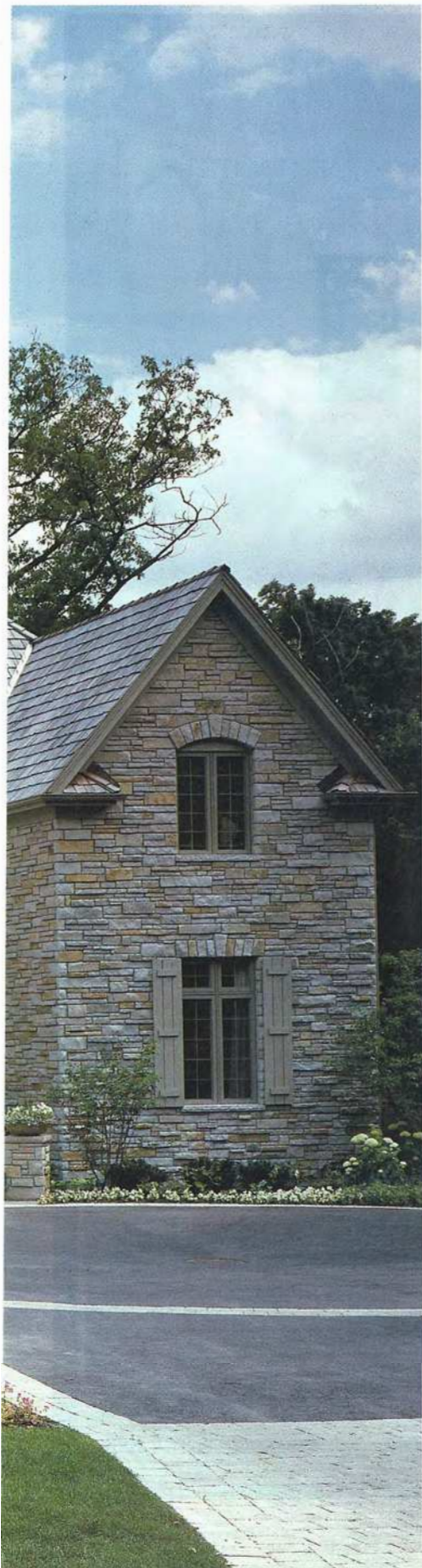
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# the orren pickell luxury home planner







# THE LOOK OF Luxury

INSIDE, OUTSIDE,  
AND ALL AROUND



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Orren Pickell Designers & Builders, the authoritative source on the subject of building luxury homes, presents the second in a series of articles created to help you make your dream home a reality. The first article appeared in the March 2004 issue of *Chicago* magazine and can now be read at [pickellbuilders.com](http://pickellbuilders.com). This month, we tackle the "look of luxury" and guide you through the process of mapping out your dream by focusing on architectural style, interior decoration, and landscape design.

## RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

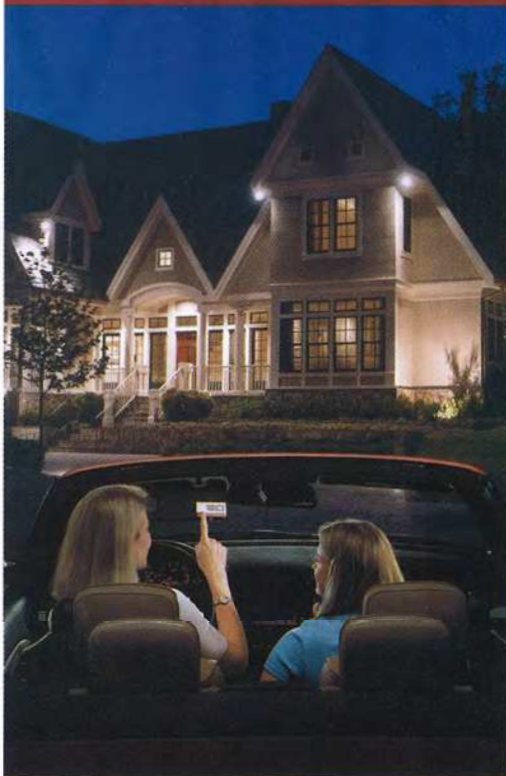
French Country? Coastal Cottage? English Manor? Contemporary? You are given the freedom of choice when you create your own custom home.



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You decide everything from the exterior style to the interior traffic flow. You create the living space of your dreams.

But with the entire world of styles to choose from, where do you start? It is best to start with your architect. Your architect's job is to sort through your visions, separate your needs from your wants, incorporate your desires, and design a home that stays within your budget.

Your architect will show you pictures of various homes and then draw rough sketches for you. The sketches will help you make an informed decision. Some more casual styles include French Country, Arts & Crafts, Shingle, Coastal Cottage, English Cottage, and hybrids with traditional American flair. If a more formal home fits your taste, there are French Provincial, English, Italian, and German varieties. Perhaps a sleek, contemporary home is what you have always dreamed of owning. Maybe your style leans more towards a modern glass and steel home. With so many looks to choose from, designing your own home can initially seem overwhelming, but your architect will help navigate you through this maze





Courtesy of Orren Pickell Designers & Builders;  
photo: Linda Oyama Bryan

and give you confidence in your decision. Choose an architect you respect and believe in and be certain you have visions that match. A compatible architect will make creating your custom home much easier and more fun.

Once you have decided upon the style you want, you can watch your dreams materialize right before your eyes. Your architect will ensure that your home

**Your architect's job is to sort through your visions, separate your needs from your wants, incorporate your desires, and design a home that stays within your budget.**

flows from room to room and that every space caters to your exact specifications. Architects lead you step by step through each room and each hallway. You can stop them and



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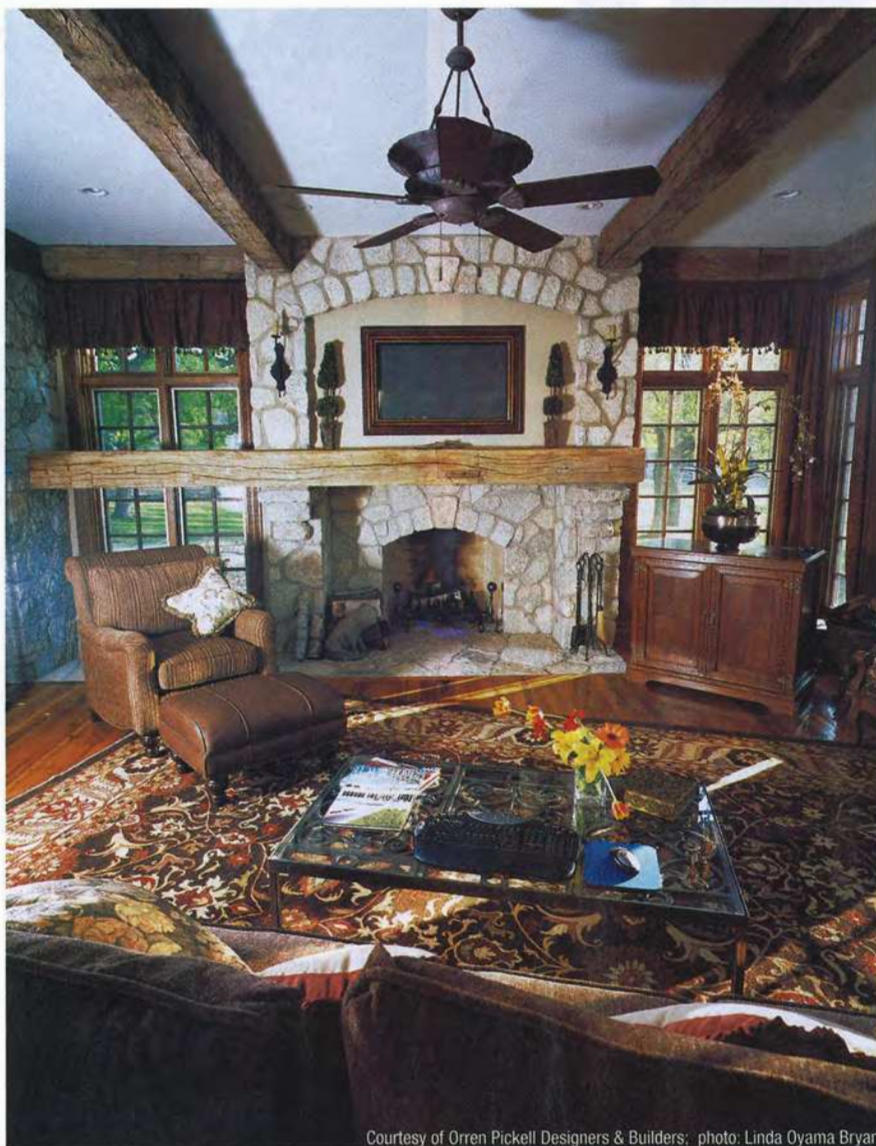


make changes as they create the plan for your home. However, you should ask yourself some key questions as well. How many bedrooms

**Seamless  
communication  
between architect,  
builder, and the rest  
of the planning team  
prevents dozens of  
possible mistakes.**

do you want? Do you have special needs such as accommodating elderly parents? Do you want your kitchen open to surrounding rooms? Will the





Courtesy of Orren Pickell Designers &amp; Builders; photo: Linda Oyama Bryan

master suite be on the first or second floor? Will you need an elevator? What do you want to see when you open the front door: a large, open foyer, your living room, your library, or windows with a spectacular view of the property? All of these questions, and dozens more, need to be addressed and carefully incorporated into your home to ensure that all the rooms flow together.

Like a symphony conductor, you can try to orchestrate this complicated process yourself. But unless you are trained for it, we recommend you choose a design/build firm help to you (please see our first article at [pickellbuilders.com](http://pickellbuilders.com) for more information). For example, at Orren Pickell, we have professionals in every department already in place and working together on your behalf. We are both the architect and the builder, and

part of our service is to coordinate all your team members for you. Seamless communication between architect, builder, and the rest of the planning team prevents dozens of possible mistakes, avoids hundreds of problems, saves you money, and assures you the best possible quality.

### CHOOSING AN INTERIOR DESIGNER

At Orren Pickell, we always tell clients that quality interior designers do not cost them money, they save them money (not to mention time and anguish). At our company, interior designers help clients choose the colors of various materials, including bricks, stonework, woodworking, shingles, tiles, and slate. The designers then



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confirm that all the colors blend together to make an aesthetically pleasing overall picture. If you don't have the degree of help that our architects provide, good interior designers can also help you plan the interior

**Interior designers can keep you on the cutting edge of style while creating a timeless look.**

space of your home. They can advise you on everything from the style and color of the hinges on your doors, to furniture, art, and accessories. Interior designers can keep you on the cutting edge of style while creating a timeless look. With their eyes on your budget, they can also direct you toward cost saving materials that won't compromise the look you want. They ensure your furniture and wall coverings are in the right scale and balance for your home. They can also take existing furniture that you love, add some new items, and create an all-





Courtesy of Orren Pickett Designers & Builders;  
photo: Linda Oyama Bryan

new room. Just as important, they can guide you away from mistakes.

When you work with an interior designer, you will end up with the style you want. Our firm will work with your designer, or we will recommend several that we regularly partner with. No matter what you choose, an interior designer needs to understand your style. When you choose one, verify that he or she is licensed, trained, and well-versed in residential design. Check their qualifications and call their reference list. Ask about their support staff and find out how many people will be devoted to your project. Your relationship with your interior designer can last as long as the one you have with your architect and builder. Often, homeowners decorate in phases, so it may take years to complete the job according to your budget and taste. It's like a long-term marriage, so be certain the chemistry between you and your designer feels right.

Your interior designer also works hand-in-hand with your architect and builder. Be sure they all get along! Communication is essential for your house to become the home of your dreams. Our firm recommends interi-

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or designers who have a good grasp of custom building and understand our specific processes.

## CHOOSING YOUR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Equally important to the design build team is your landscape architect. How the home's exterior looks and feels depends to a large extent upon its surroundings. Remember, you are not just creating a home, you are building an entire property. Landscaping is often done in phases that can extend over several years. Thus, choosing your landscape architect is also an important decision.

Your landscape architect works directly with your architect and builder, as well as the tree forester, and civil and soil engineers. Together, this team will position your house on your property. This is basic to the orientation and flow of your home. Later, the landscape architect will work with your architect to help recommend




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grading, placements of walkways, driveways and patios. They will also suggest seeding and sodding plans, plantings for the property, outdoor lighting, sprinkler systems, etc.

Again, Orren Pickell Designers & Builders has its own list of preferred landscape architects. Like interior designers, these professionals communicate daily with our architects and superintendents, so we need to be able to work with them as closely as we work with you. We can recommend one who matches your style, personality, and budget. Before you make your choice, call their referrals and research their reputation. See some current and previous work. And, of course, feel good about working with them.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Your dream is becoming reality. You've purchased land, hired your design/build firm, chosen your interior designer, and selected a landscape architect. You've torn pictures out of

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magazines and seen a database of photos from the architect and builder, interior designer, and landscape architect. You've written out your wish list. You've seen the rendering of the exterior of your home, front, rear, and sides. You've also approved drawings of floor plans.

Now you will need to select materials and decide how your family is going to live for years to come. You will have to create those all-important, intensely personal rooms, such as your kitchen, a key gathering place for family and friends, and your master bathroom. Look for suggestions and ideas on that phase of your project in the July issue of *Chicago* magazine.

## UPCOMING ARTICLES WILL HIGHLIGHT:

- Dream Kitchens
- The Ultimate Bathroom
- Seeing the Light:  
Lighting, Low Voltage,  
and Technology
- An Open and Shut Case:  
Incorporating Windows  
and Doors
- Finishing Touches:  
Unique Architectural  
Details
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