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U L T I M A T E H O M E E D I T I O N

by Jesse Ziter, Editor in Chief

Posh French Provincial Paradise

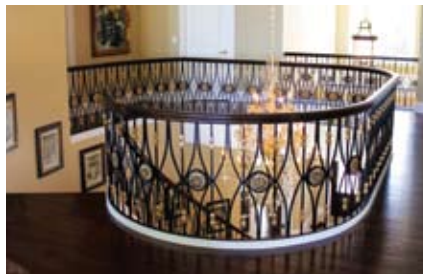
EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE LIVING BY ADG + ASSOCIATES



Did you ever notice that Lakeshore lies at about the same latitude as the South of France?

If you work with the right designer, you can live in a stylish, continentally styled chateau that will make it hard to ever forget.

To celebrate our 2017 Home Edition, *Rafih Style* paid a visit to an Essex County residence that might be more reasonably describable as an estate or manor. With its all-stone exterior and textbook architectural details, this issue's featured home carries the character of something you'd be more likely to find in rural France than the outskirts of Windsor. By any name, it's the seat, surely, of refined lakeside living.



The stately residence owes its splendor to Residential Design Consultant Allan Djordjevic, a widely travelled architectural professional with a sterling portfolio of projects in Canada and abroad. Over the course of a quarter-century in his field, Djordjevic has spearheaded dozens of significant residential design projects, including a couple postal codes worth of executive waterfront estates.

Djordjevic's latest major project belongs to the French Provincial style, a formal approach to home design governed by balance and symmetry in an attempt to evoke the rural manors built by French nobility under Louis XIV. In its native France, this enduringly popular school of architecture dates to the middle of the 17th century. It was imported en masse to North America by soldiers returning from the First World War.

Djordjevic likely first encountered the popular high-end style as a Master of Architecture student at Lawrence Technological University in Southeast Michigan. After graduation, he breathed life into several similarly stately private residences during seven years spent as a designer for Lubin/Tringali Associates, a highly regarded residential architecture firm on the other side of the border.

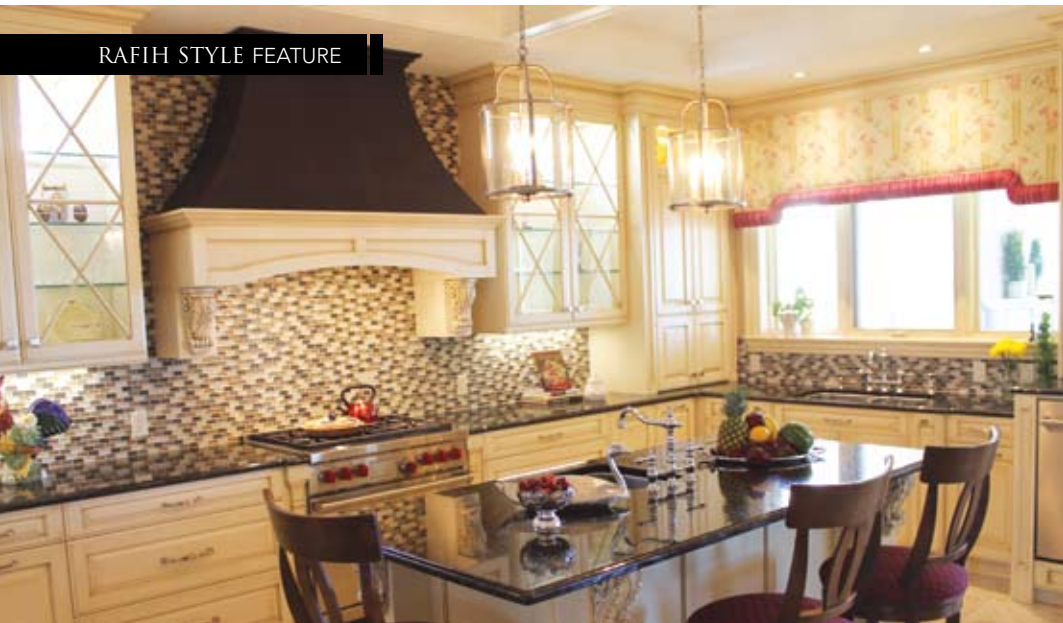
After leaving that company, Djordjevic spent more than a decade with a national firm. During this phase of his career, he often punched tickets for Southern California, where he designed several projects in one of the continent's most competitive and progressive architectural hotbeds. There and elsewhere across North America, he absorbed some of contemporary home design's brightest and most innovative aesthetic and structural ideas, all the while perfecting his own personal style and strengthening his already sizable skillset.

Since the turn of the century, Djordjevic has been practising under the banner of ADG + Associates in Windsor, where he lives with Clorinda, his wife of 17 years, and their two sons: Allan (13) and Stefan (11). A full-service private design and planning firm, ADG specializes in luxurious executive residences with distinctive yet timeless styles. In his private practice, Djordjevic has designed homes as manageable as 3,500 square feet and as palatial as 35,000 while also continuing to consult on high-profile projects in the United States.

Here, ADG works within the French Provincial framework by cladding the home in a clean, full stone exterior that breaks for breathtaking second-storey windows with upper arches. His approach to the style also entails balanced proportions, a central balcony, and prominent, floor-to-ceiling windows encased in stonework.

From the street, the new-build home's steeply pitched, hipped slate roof is immediately striking. In keeping with the home's European influences, a prominent, decorative front door protected by a grand stone arch invites guests inside from several paces away.

The overall result is a richly formal, symmetrical façade that lends the home a stately sense of balance. It's disrupted only by the expansive three-car garage that extends outward on the west end of the home.



The traditionally appointed interior, designed in a classical style, ably complements the outside majesty of the home. Right away, the front door opens wide into a double-height foyer, from which point you immediately notice that the well-appointed home is awash in what feels like acres of natural light. Much of it dances pleasingly on the central foyer's high-gloss tile floors, but today there's more than enough sun to afford a clear view through the open-concept main floor into the lakefront patio.

Despite its considerable stature, the stately four-bedroom residence feels eminently livable – impressive, to be sure, but rarely imposing. In fact, there are several slightly surprising nods to practicality: A spacious mud room with locker-room-style storage behind a wall-spanning bench, for example, or a second refrigerator conveniently hidden just outside the kitchen.

Despite its immediately apparent openness, and intuitively functional floorplan, the home carries a certain Old World European charm. Throughout, a number of deliberate design decisions evoke the continent: broadly Corinthian pillars stand proudly in high-traffic areas, ornate damask wallpaper lends warmth to the powder room, and a fabric window valance above the sink elevates the kitchen to a similar temperature. The entire residence is tastefully decorated with original artwork framed in warm wood tones and gold accents. In general, gold-leaf and soft natural colours abound.

As you stand in the entryway, to your right is a charming, deceptively functional study, encased in dark wood paneling and appointed studiously with timeless touches: an intricate oriental rug, a formidable solid wood desk, and a functional sliding ladder to help you navigate the ceiling-height bookshelves. Surprisingly, the versatile library functions equally well as an oversized office or a comfortable weekend guest suite: a moulded wood panel integrated into that bookshelf folds down gently to reveal a plush queen-sized murphy bed.



Allan Djordjevic
Residential Design Consultant
ADG + ASSOCIATES

Across the foyer, on the other side of the entrance, is an open-concept dining room, the gravitational centre of which is a generously sized formal dining table that picks up warm tones from the home's luxury-grade deep brown hardwood flooring.

At the extreme end of the room, a double-sided glass cabinet shows off dozens of bottles from the homeowners' extensive wine collection while connecting the formal dining area visually and functionally with the kitchen.

Back in the open centre of the main floor, you encounter a curving, crescent-shaped staircase that traces part of the orbit of a supersized crystal chandelier. Surrounded in sympathetically arched moulding, the jaw-dropping central feature is lined with gold-leaf balusters, which join up with a finely crafted natural wood handrail. Decorative gold-flecked cast iron finials perch atop the newel posts, lending the entire feature an additional layer of majesty.

Before you climb the comfortably carpeted natural wood treads, though, the home's primary living space and its country-sized hearth beckons. Encased in wall-to-wall glass, the home's central gathering room opens to a peerless view of Lake St. Clair. The comfortable space glides seamlessly into the home's media room, creating a double-sized space for entertaining sizable guest lists.

Additionally, you'll find the residence's wide-open second floor sitting room at the top of the aforementioned staircase. An obvious centre of attention, it provides the homeowners with the welcome opportunity to look out at Lake St. Clair from an additional angle through a set of grand arched windows that stretch to the edges of your vision. As Djordjevic explains, high-end homeowners are increasingly turning away from two-storey great rooms, which can appear cavernous and carry sound farther than is ideal.

Back downstairs, the manor's impressive kitchen is divided from its central artery by multiple arched entryways, each with delicate mouldings. As befits a home of this stature, the kitchen is fully outfitted in top-of-the-line appliances, including a high-performance

Wolf range and a colossal stainless steel Sub-Zero fridge. The large-footprint space features an eat-in breakfast nook and additional wet bar. Dark and handsome granite countertops and a high coffered ceiling are both impressive.

Notably, the kitchen opens out onto an inviting outdoor living space, which is shielded from the elements from above by the protruding second-floor balcony. The eat-in covered patio area features an integrated stainless steel barbecue set in a dark stone bar top and flanked by custom storage cabinets with louvered doors. The grilling area looks across the rustically tiled floor at a sturdy cast aluminum patio set and a separate stone fireplace unit. Above, an attractive wood-slat ceiling helps to form connective tissue with the outdoors, while a ceiling fan ensures the space retains enough interior comforts.

"Today's homeowners desire more than just a slab of concrete for their outdoor living space," notes Djordjevic. "Thoughtfully designing these spaces is key to ensuring their viability as functional and valuable additions to a home."

Beyond this elegant outdoor extension, the home's professionally landscaped grounds back gently onto Lake St. Clair. The well-manicured backyard is all clean lines and sharp right angles, starting with an in-ground pool that seems to stretch straight into the lake when viewed from the perfect vantage point. The ruggedly attractive aggregate pool deck, neatly kept hedges, and paving stones all emphasize the pool's clean rectangular shape.

Everything, it seems, is in exactly its right place.

