

Big and Cozy



She wanted a house that was warm, cozy, and close in. He wanted a big house that would justify its high-priced location in Bethesda, Md., a suburb abutting Northwest Washington, D.C. It took a lot of work, but custom builder Phil Leibovitz and his wife, Niki Mock, each got what they wanted, a spacious house that feels comfortable and sheltering. ■ Leibovitz, who is a partner in Sandy Spring Builders, hired architect Anne Decker to help the couple find common design ground. They settled on a Shingle-style house that would let them develop a low profile while accommodating 6,300 square feet of living space. That choice ended up being both a good business decision and good design decision. ■ Decker shaped the footprint into a crescent that prevents the house from looking too long.

It also carves out an intimate entry courtyard for the house. "The two arms of the house seem to greet you," she says. ■ With a lot that sloped up from the street, there was a danger that the house would seem too tall as it was approached. As is typical of Shingle-style designs, the second floor is built into the roof. This made construction somewhat more challenging, but the low sloping roofs



(Opposite) From the street, this appealing Shingle-style house provides a warm, welcoming presence. (This page) Inside, the house combines open spaces with rich details.

give the house the scale of a single-story structure. "You don't see second-floor walls," Decker explains. "They grow out of the lower roof." Double gables, flared overhangs, and cottage windows further break down the roof mass. The deep overhangs shelter porches that form a band around the first floor, lightening the structure. ■ The house is as cozy inside as you'd expect it to be from the



The house abounds in built-ins and cozy places for one or two that add comfort and intimacy to the plan.



outside. In spite of the 10-foot ceilings and a big, open kitchen/family room, there are lots of nooks and crannies to tuck into. Built-in cabinetry, boxed ceiling beams, and copious trim break down the scale of the rooms. And there are reading nooks and small "get away" spaces that give the house intimacy.

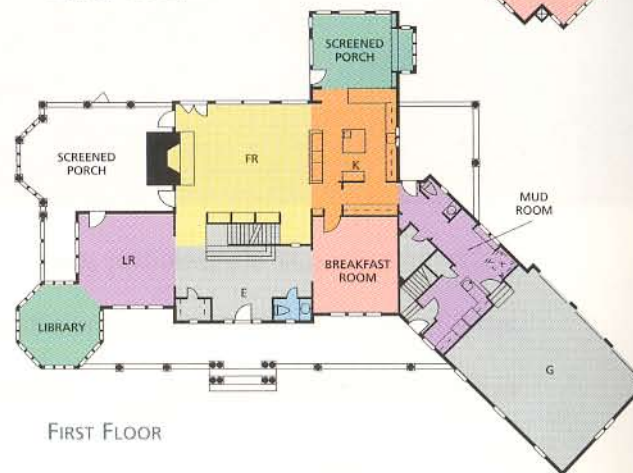
■ When the Leibovitzes embarked on this

project five years ago, Shingle-style houses were scarce in the Georgian and Colonial suburbs of Washington, D.C. But this house proved there was a market for other styles. "I've sold a lot of houses from this one, at least a half dozen," says Leibovitz, who gives prospective clients tours of the house. The appeal, he believes, lies in the fact that Shingle-style houses look established; they don't have that cookie cutter subdivision look. And then there's the warm and cozy image they convey. It seems that Niki was on to something.—L.E.

Project Credits: Builder: Sandy Spring Builders, Bethesda, Md.; Architect: Rill and Decker, Bethesda; Interior designer: DeFord Sharp. Living space: 6,300 square feet; Site size: 1.5 acres; Construction cost: \$225 a square foot; Photographer: © Eric Taylor. ■ Resources: Cabinets: Masters Cabinets, Circle 560 and Watkins Cabinets, Circle 561; Dishwasher: Bosch, Circle 562; Doors/windows: Vetter, Circle 563; Exterior siding: Cedar Valley, Circle 564; Hardware: Baldwin, Circle 565; Lighting fixtures: Rejuvenation, Circle 566; Oven: Viking, Circle 567; Plumbing fittings/fixtures: Grohe, Circle 568 and Kohler, Circle 569; Range: Thermador, Circle 570.



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