

# Home

COSMOPOLITAN

Grand Rapids

## SHINGLE ALL THE WAY

A LAKE MICHIGAN BEAUTY BY MIKE SCHAAP BUILDERS, INC.



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a NEW VIEW publication

# contents

**Grand Rapids Cosmopolitan Home**  
EARLY SPRING 2018

## features

### 16 **Shingle All the Way**

A fresh coastal attitude hits the Lake Michigan shoreline in this beauty by Mike Schaap Builders, Inc.

### 32 **The Get-Away**

A contemporary cottage provides the perfect escape to Northern Michigan's Homestead Resort

## **THE FLIP SIDE**

### **The 2018 Product Source Guide**

Discover the best of the best home professionals for your renovation, new construction and everything in between

## departments

### 11 **#FIELDNOTES** The Cosmopolitan Lifestyle

Dispatches from the world of design from designer Joseph Szymczak

### 14 **MONEY MATTERS** Snowbird or Sunbird?

Being prepared for the lifestyle you want



PICTURED HERE: A Lake Michigan beauty featuring cedar shingles, a resawn cedar shake roof, and Western red cedar trim — all chosen for durability and longevity. See story on page 16.

When you see this inviting home perched on the shore of Lake Michigan, it appears to have landed in the sand effortlessly; like it simply belongs. Unless you've built a custom home, you might be unaware that behind that fresh façade is hours upon hours of imagination, meticulous design, exquisite craftsmanship and carpentry and even more hours of meetings and decisions.

Finding just the right team to build with is even more important when you have a high-pressure, time-intensive job over 150 miles away. Originally from the area, this homeowner had looked at dozens of houses with a local realtor searching for a shingle-style home similar to those she'd seen on her travels to Nantucket and North Carolina. It appeared that a custom build would be the only way to fulfill her expectations.

After a fortuitous introduction to Mike Schaap Builders, the homeowner knew Schaap and his team could interpret her vision and update the design to make it a reality in the Michigan dunes; no other builders were considered.

"Although it's common for clients to have busy schedules, this client was on the edge of the spectrum with crazy time constraints and very limited availability," Schaap explained. "Once we interviewed with the homeowner in person, one of the big wins for her was her confidence that we could execute a turnkey project without her spending lots of time in meetings with several different subcontractors."

This turnkey solution has shaped the growth of Mike Schaap Builders for over 30 years. For Schaap, the secret to creating an amazing project is harnessing the strengths of highly skilled individuals into a cohesive team. Over time, he formed the separate entities Benchmark Wood Studio and Benchmark Design Studio to work separately on special projects or in concert to craft a finished masterpiece with exacting attention to details.



# SHINGLE ALL THE WAY

TEXT BY LYNN BAKEMAN  
PHOTOS BY ASHLEY AVILA







When working on a project of this magnitude it takes a team effort to make sure all the pieces are in place in a timely fashion. Although some interior design work was begun with a Chicago designer, the home came to completion under Schaap's team. "Team, process, details. You can't do one without the other if you want to do it well," he stated.

The site presented significant building challenges because of rigid shoreline protection requirements from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and stringent city approvals. Schaap had to work within an inflexible 7 inches of grade and take into consideration the moving target of wind, water, and blowing sand.

The homeowner attested to this saying, "There were many zoning and environmental regulations that presented challenges along the way. I found Mike and his team to be both knowledgeable and flexible in meeting both design goals and compliance with all requirements."

"Team, process, details. You can't do one without the other if you want to do it well."

Following the trend for all-season lakeshore living, Schaap sought materials and landscaping offering both low maintenance and superior wear for less time on upkeep and more time with toes in the sand. Cedar shingles, a resawn cedar shake roof with copper flashing, wood clad exterior windows, natural stone cladding, and Western red cedar trim were specified for durability and longevity.

Serving as an invisible enclosure to the grand lakeside deck, sleek-cable railing brings 180-degree views of Lake Michigan, one of which includes the landmark lighthouse. Underfoot is the graceful silver hue of IPE decking, an exotic hardwood that stands up to harsh lakeshore elements and has a natural resistance to decay. A copper roof overhang also promises a symphony of sound from rain and waves.

A fresh coastal attitude offers curb appeal, yet there are many unique details in the front entrance alone that serve to demonstrate its singularity. Among those is a custom hickory-stained Benchmark Wood Studio front door that arches gracefully to afford a peek of the lake



The inviting and open kitchen is surrounded with pristine views of Lake Michigan due to the large windows in place of upper cabinetry. An abundance of storage is found in the space's two islands: one topped with hickory and the other gris quartzite from **ADVANCED STONE & TILE**. Louvered armoires house the Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer while an adjacent butler's pantry houses a wine refrigerator — all from **BEKINS** — as well as extensive cabinetry and a second pantry ensuring lack of storage is never a problem. Beautiful hardwood flooring from **RIVERSHORES** flows throughout the home.

from the road. According to Schaap, “We don't start when we have plans. We pursue the smallest details in advance and make sure they are thought through from the beginning; then we design accordingly.”

Step through the front door and into a home that naturally frames its biggest asset. Soaring 13-foot ceilings, tall transoms, and a wall of windows and doors keep its residents visually in touch with the lake. Credit Jodi Medina and the designers at Benchmark Design Studio who found light fixtures so open and airy that you look right through them.

“I wanted to embrace the stunning view right from initial entry into the home,” said the homeowner. “We eliminated upper cabinets in the kitchen which would have occluded the view. This presented design challenges, but adjustments were made elsewhere that turned out to be both functional and beautiful.”

“We pursue the smallest details in advance and make sure they are thought through from the beginning...”

Benchmark Design Studio met those challenges and created an inviting and open kitchen with lots of storage in two islands: one topped with hickory and the other a functional and beautiful elegant gris quartzite. Flanking the islands are quartzite counters with double sinks and Ann Sacks penny-round tile backsplashes. Louvered armoires house the refrigerator and freezer.

Flush TRUFIG outlets were painted by a faux finish artist to match the penny round tiles. This is just one example of the level of detail that Mike Schaap Builders uses to preserve the aesthetics of the overall design vision.

Another example is what can't be seen. Lutron shades have been artfully built into the transom millwork and door bulkhead on lakeside to block the intense setting sun and give validity to Schaap's tagline “The difference is in the details.”

Adjacent to the kitchen is a butler's pantry with a wine refrigerator, extensive cabinetry and another pantry opposite with open shelving; storage problem solved.

Other architectural details used throughout the home to subtly frame the view include white-washed pine ceilings and stained hickory floors. In open concept homes, Schaap artfully uses ceiling details and finishes to differentiate and break up the rooms, and to lead the eye toward beautiful assets like Lake Michigan.









The great room is anchored by a two-sided, full masonry fireplace which also serves to warm a 3-season porch. The custom Benchmark Wood Studio bookcase is backed by reclaimed wood and features a rolling ladder and retractable doors to hide the TV.

Whether you enter from the garage or the front door, you are met with the solid craftsmanship of Benchmark Wood Studio. The mud-room has built-in bench seating flanked by louvered door armoires and a reclaimed barn wood ceiling.

The feeling of water in motion is added ingeniously throughout the home in scalloped wainscoting used in hallways and a main floor den. Outfitted in colors reminiscent of beach glass, the den offers many cozy reading spots including a window seat and a cushion-filled nook lined with bookshelves.

A stairway with custom-designed newel posts and metal balusters leads to an upper level designed to serve as a peaceful retreat from big city life. The lake-facing owner's suite spans across the rear of the home and represents the upper level's design centerpiece. Anchoring the retreat is the owner's bedroom, which is adjoined by a neighboring office and owner bathroom, both complete with their own open-air balconies and unbeatable lake views.

A cathedral ceiling with sloping reclaimed wood beams allow for a charming porthole window detail in the owner's suite. Illuminating



Open to the kitchen, the great room is anchored by a two-sided, full masonry fireplace that also serves to warm a 3-season porch. The custom bookcase by BENCHMARK WOOD STUDIO is backed by reclaimed wood and features a rolling ladder and retractable doors to hide the TV.

The solid craftsmanship extends to the mudroom which features built-in bench seating flanked by louvered-door armoires and a reclaimed barn wood ceiling.



The owner suite includes an office, outside deck, bedroom, and a bathroom with another deck. A cathedral ceiling in the bedroom features reclaimed wood beams and a porthole window detail.

The owner bath is an oasis of calm with an impeccable view. Exterior privacy walls have angled slats keeping only the lake in sight and not the neighbors. A deep and luxurious 6-foot Kohler spa tub supplied by GENZINK PLUMBING with a privacy wall covered in iridescent, shell-stone, oval tiles by Terra Bella Marble reflects the outdoor light beautifully.



off the lake is a custom chandelier and nightstand fixtures, hand-made by the North Carolina-based artist Louise Gaskill. Jodi and her team designed and furnished this soothing retreat complete with coffee bar so the owner may enjoy her first cup of the day without disturbing guests.

The homeowner noted that, "Because interior design is a very individual thing, Benchmark Design Studio went above and beyond to make certain the design was 'just right' for me. They offered suggestions and ideas, but also respected that, in the end, it is my home and did not try and impose their individual tastes or styles, but rather worked to understand mine."

The adjoining bath is an oasis of calm with luxurious Calacatta marble, a glassed-in shower, deep spa tub, and a privacy wall covered in iridescent shell stone oval tiles by Terra Bella Marble to reflect the outdoor light. Exterior privacy walls have angled slats so you can't see the neighbors; just the lake views.

The home was built to accommodate both family and guests with two bedrooms with en suite baths, an upstairs laundry, and a kid-friendly bunk room for sleepovers.





The lower level is filled with thoughtful touches to help the homeowner enjoy a more carefree existence including beach-friendly stained concrete floors with radiant heat. There's a full-service wet bar and a relaxing family room with the wave wall wainscoting used as a unique ceiling element.

An all-season, insulated built-in hot tub with an auto cover and natural stone accents and a pergola covering a detailed grilling kitchen extends outdoor enjoyment.

The homeowner felt that her Nantucket-style home exceeded her expectations. "I found Mike and his team to be excellent to work with. They were knowledgeable, flexible, and very attuned to meeting the needs of the homeowner. In particular, because the project was done remotely by me, they met all of my schedule needs, were willing to go above and beyond to meet construction deadlines and accommodate my own schedule. I couldn't have envisioned a better result." 🌟

#### RESOURCE INDEX

**BUILDER** Mike Schaab Builders, Inc.  
**INTERIOR DESIGN** Benchmark Design Studio

**APPLIANCES** Bekins  
**BUILDING SUPPLIES** Deleeuw Lumber  
**COUNTERTOPS** Advanced Stone & Tile  
**FINISH HARDWARE** Progressive Hardware  
**FLOORING** Rivershores Hardwood Flooring  
**GARAGE FLOOR** Concrete Revival  
**GLASS** Glass Concepts  
**HOME SECURITY** EPS  
**MOULDING & MILLWORK** Elenbaas Millwork  
**PLUMBING & FIXTURES** Genzink Plumbing

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is in  
the  
*details.*



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