



PLACE SETTINGS The dining area's focal point is the handmade walnut table, which has a rich patina that warms the open space. Crackle-glazed pots and chairs upholstered in raw silk also add texture.



weekends in the city

HOMEBUILDERS PAM SESSIONS
AND DON DONNELLY
ENJOY INTOWN LIVING IN THEIR
BUCKHEAD PIED-À-TERRE

Architecture by **Lew Oliver**
Interior Design by **Janie Hirsch**
Landscape Design by **Scapes**
Photography by **Jeff Herr**
Styling by **Annette Joseph**
Text by **Fran Worrall**



ASK ATLANTANS TO NAME THEIR IDEAL WEEKEND GETAWAYS, and you'll hear a variety of responses, from the beaches of St. Simons to the mountains of North Georgia. But for the homebuilders Pam Sessions (left) and Don Donnelly, the husband-and-wife team behind award-winning Hedgewood Properties, their favorite retreat is just a short drive down Georgia 400 — *inside* the Perimeter.

The couple, whose primary residence is in Cumming, owns a second home in Longleaf, a Buckhead neighborhood of 49 luxury homes within walking distance of Phipps Plaza. The Italian-inspired residence is, literally, the couple's own creation. Longleaf is a Hedgewood Properties neighborhood.

The architecture, by Lew Oliver, was driven by the site, which is located at a busy

intersection. The bedrooms are on the first level, and the living areas are on top. "We call it an upside-down house," Pam says. The logic is simple: The lower level is shielded from traffic noise and city lights by a walled garden, while the upper level commands sweeping views of Buckhead.

Inside, designer Janie Hirsch combined Don's traditional taste with Pam's fondness for blending traditional and contemporary. Bead board walls downstairs and plaster walls in most of the upstairs living areas add Old World charm, while furnishings, lighting, and kitchen cabinets are more cutting edge. The couple's appreciation of fine design and their love of art are evident in every room.

The home's central location makes it ideal for the occasional business meeting. Yet Pam, Don, and their two teenage children enjoy it most as a weekend retreat. "There's so much to do in Atlanta," Pam says. "We love going to gallery openings and the theater, so we get out a lot when we're here."

Best of all, no lengthy planning is needed for this kind of vacation. "We can be completely spontaneous," Pam says. Not to mention relaxed. No packing, airports, or rental cars required. See Resources.



WORK SPACE "I often stop at the house between meetings and just work at my laptop here," Pam says of the oval desk in the study. "I love the view." The sisal rug, identical to those in the living and dining areas, ties the spaces together, but in this room, cherry paneling replaces plaster for a more formal feel.

RELAXING RETREAT

"I wanted the bedroom to [feel like] a high-end luxury hotel," Pam says. She and designer Janie Hirsch chose creamy and gold tones to create an elegant, restful ambience. Accessories like the Murano crystal bauble lamps add personality.

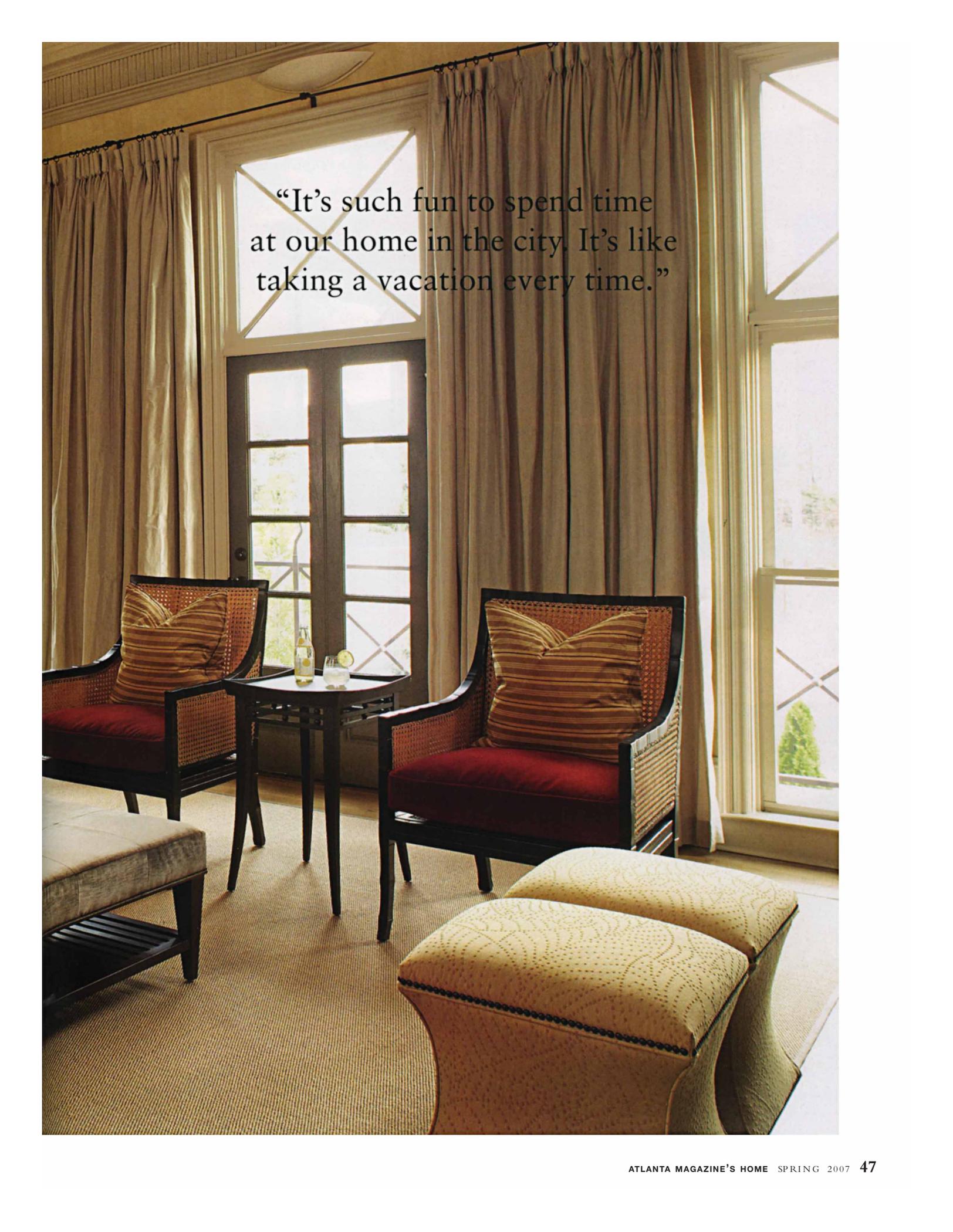


ATTENTION TO DETAIL "It's important to focus on the areas you pass through most often, like hallways and foyers," Pam says. Driftwood-stained white oak floors and painted bead board walls add depth and character throughout the home's entire lower level. The wool and silk rug neither traditional nor contemporary, reflecting the owners' desire to blend the old and new. The Italian handmade settee provides a welcoming touch.



MADE FOR ENTERTAINING The expansive living area, with its dramatic 14-foot ceilings and intricate crown molding, is perfect for entertaining. Floor-to-ceiling windows span an entire wall, offering spectacular views of the city. Sofa and chairs are formal without being stuffy. Throughout the living room, designer Janie Hirsch used a monochromatic palette of creamy gold and dove gray, accented with punches of red, to create a soothing space. Sisal rugs and silk window treatments provide organic elements and add texture throughout the room.



A photograph of a living room. In the center, two dark wood cane chairs with red cushions and striped pillows are arranged around a small round side table. The table holds a bottle and a glass. In the foreground, two large, tufted ottomans with a light-colored patterned fabric are visible. The room features a large window with light-colored curtains and a transom window above a glass door. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the window.

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GATHERING SPOT The kitchen, which opens to the dining and living areas, has the feel of an old Italian cucina, despite its clean lines and thoroughly modern lighting. It's a favorite gathering place for family and friends. Custom cabinets, painted gray and finished with frosted glass, have contemporary style. The mixture of cool and warm — in both colors and textures — adds interest. Countertops and an entire wall are gray-and-white marble. "I like using traditional materials in nontraditional ways," Pam says. "Sometimes it's a fine line, but you really can pull it off."





ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT The home's exterior — with its iron railings, roof of reclaimed clay tiles, and mix of brick and stone — makes a strong statement. Inside, the living areas are on the second level, while bedrooms are on the first. That way, the owners can enjoy breathtaking views from upstairs, while preserving privacy in the sleeping quarters. The house provides a stimulating retreat for the entire family. "It's such fun to spend time at our home in the city," Pam says. "It's like taking a vacation every time we go there."



A PENCHANT FOR ART "My husband and I were both intrigued by this piece," says Pam of "The Watcher," by James McLaughlin Way. "We've always had a soft spot for art. When we were first married, we were saving for a sofa but bought a painting instead." Pam, a fine arts major in college, studied photography under Ansel Adams, which no doubt contributed to her keen eye for detail. She and Don enjoy spending time at local galleries, such as Mason Murer Fine Art, where they purchased this piece. **H**