

A Home



She'll Want To Come To

Winter/Spring 2008

PREMIERE  
ISSUE

# Men's Health

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ARCHITECT TONINO VICARI DESIGNED A HOST OF GREEN TECHNOLOGIES INTO THIS SUBURBAN COMPOUND, YET THE HOME STILL BLENDS INTO TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS. FLIP THE PAGE TO SEE THE REST OF HIS DESIGN.

# THE MEN'S HEALTH LIVING PERFECT HOME CHALLENGE

IT'S NEVER BEEN EASIER  
TO BUILD THE AMERICAN DREAM

VISIT A HOME BUILDER TODAY, IN FACT, AND YOU'LL RECEIVE A CHOICE OF TWO:

→ DREAM No. 1  
This lovely, 4-bedroom, 2½-bath colonial with a faux facade features a dining room near the kitchen.

→ DREAM No. 2  
This lovely, 4-bedroom, 2½-bath colonial with a faux facade features a dining room near the foyer.

=====*(yawn)*=====

WE CHARGED THREE ARCHITECTS WITH CREATING INNOVATIVE, INEXPENSIVE, AND **EXCITING** NEW HOME DESIGNS

THE ULTIMATE GOAL: *Rebuild the*  
**AMERICAN DREAM**

## The era of the homogenized home began 100 years ago.

That's when Sears, Roebuck & Co. introduced the first catalog home, and not much has changed since. Today's McMansions may be spacious, solid, and financially sound, but they're an outdated concept, given our diverse lifestyles and advances in technology.

**YOU DESERVE BETTER.** A home should be an extension of who you are, not just a roof over your head. That's why we charged a handful of architects with this mandate: Help us create smart spaces that are generous in size but free of frills; homes as kind to the environment as they are to our bank accounts; and homes that find the middle ground between modern and pedestrian.

**WE SELECTED THREE FIRMS,** assigning each a different U.S. region based on strengths, previous work, and a submitted proposal. We insisted that construction costs be capped near the average new-home price in each region; that the home be as green as possible, given the budget, materials, and microclimate; and that each be flexible enough to make both newlyweds and a family of six feel at home.

**THE DESIGNS HERE PROVE THAT** thoughtful, intelligent architecture is not a pipe dream for the average American. The best part: Each firm would be thrilled to turn its vision into your reality. **ANDREW YANG**



### THE MEN'S HEALTH LIVING CHALLENGE

## The Midwest Retreat

//By Tectonic Design, MONROE, MI

Designed for rolling flatlands, this smart suburban complex includes luxury touches—a pool, an all-glass balcony—and smart, energy-saving features.

#### THE BRIEF

Midwestern homes tend to hew to the cookie-cutter format more than most; that's why this design presented unique challenges. Construction costs are lower and land is easier to come by, but integrating the design into the context of an otherwise drab neighborhood was a key goal.

#### THE STATS

3,000 square feet	3 bedrooms 4 baths 2-car garage Pool Optional guesthouse	Estimated cost: \$200,000 to \$400,000 depending on configuration
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**E**VERY ARCHITECT REMEMBERS his first client. Tonino Vicari's was the director of recycling in Ann Arbor, Michigan. "We couldn't just pay lip service to the green movement," he recalls. "Our design had to include real energy-saving features." Vicari positioned the home to reduce the heat load in the summer from direct sunlight, used salvaged wood from a nearby barn for the garage, and installed radiant-heat floors to reduce winter energy costs by two-thirds. Since then, Vicari's firm has gained a reputation for smart, eco-conscious structures. Now, he says, sustainability is "business as usual."

Building in a landscape as diverse as the Midwest has its challenges, so Vicari created his *Men's Health Living* home to fit any setting, from suburbs to rolling prairies. "I envision owners who like to entertain, who like to be healthy and in shape," he says. "So I designed the house to reflect that lifestyle."

#### LEAVE WOOD WHERE IT BELONGS

Bamboo millwork is the only "wood" used in the home Vicari designed. The reed-like plant grows at a rate of 20 feet per year, making it the most renewable of fibers. The rest of the structure, from framing to floors, is made of concrete, stone, steel, and glass—all durable, recyclable construction materials that sidestep the lumber drain of the average home. (More than 40 percent of the millions of trees harvested in the United States and Canada go to the housing industry, according to RISI, a forest economics research organization.) The sturdy construction also boosts longevity. "This house will last at least three times longer than a wood-frame building," says Vicari.

#### GIVE GUESTS A HOME, TOO

The semidetached garage features flexible living space above it—the perfect location for a quiet, quasi-remote office or a private guest suite.

#### REUSE RAINWATER

The folded roof on Tonino's home funnels rainwater into a central collection system, where it's filtered and stored for use flushing toilets, washing dishes and clothes, filling the swimming pool, and irrigating the plants. Tonino says the system could save from 10,000 to 80,000 gallons of water each year, depending on the home's location. "In most midwestern regions, the water you collect is cleaner than the well water and usually much cleaner than tap water," says Vicari.



"HOMES THESE DAYS RELY ON CONVENTION, NOT INNOVATION."

#### PUT THE SUN TO WORK

The home's northern facade features fewer windows, to reduce the amount of heat the house collects during the summer, when the sun is high in the sky. The south-facing facade selectively allows light and heat through its solar-absorbing windows—more during the winter, when the sun stays low on the horizon—to offset the cost of heating the home. The south-facing windows from Carvist ([carvist.net/photoglass.php](http://carvist.net/photoglass.php)) also capture energy by way of photovoltaic cells to further defray electricity costs. On the third floor, Vicari used a new type of electric privacy glass. Because the glass is tinted, Vicari was able to open the bedrooms to the outside without exposing residents to the world. All the windows in the house are triple-pane, which insulate better in both cold and hot weather than standard double-pane glass used in most new construction today.

#### BOOST YOUR HOME'S IQ

Bill Gates dropped millions of dollars building a brain into his Redmond, Washington, home, where custom computer systems monitor everything from energy usage to lighting. "Today, you can do all that with a simple PC," says Vicari. In this design, Vicari has connected

the appliances, lighting, and electronics to a central monitoring system that lets the homeowner know where and how much energy is being used, and suggests ways to cut back. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the average American house wastes half of its total electrical consumption annually.

#### ADD EXTERIOR TOUCHES

Outdoor accent lighting can dramatically improve the look of a home and help deter burglars. But incandescent lighting jacks up energy costs. Vicari chose LED fixtures from IOLighting ([iolighting.com](http://iolighting.com)). LEDs use 90 percent less energy and last 50 times longer than incandescent bulbs. They're even 20 percent more efficient than compact fluorescent bulbs.

#### EMPHASIZE OPEN SPACES

Vicari uses lighting, furniture, and ambience to separate rooms from one another—instead of adding walls that would break up the expansive feel of the home. The open floor plan makes the space seem larger than it really is.

#### TAILOR THE LAYOUT TO THE LIFESTYLE

Smart design anticipates how residents will use a home. For example, the second-floor entertainment and living room has fewer windows than other areas. Less light increases privacy and improves the viewing experience for residents using the entertainment center.

























