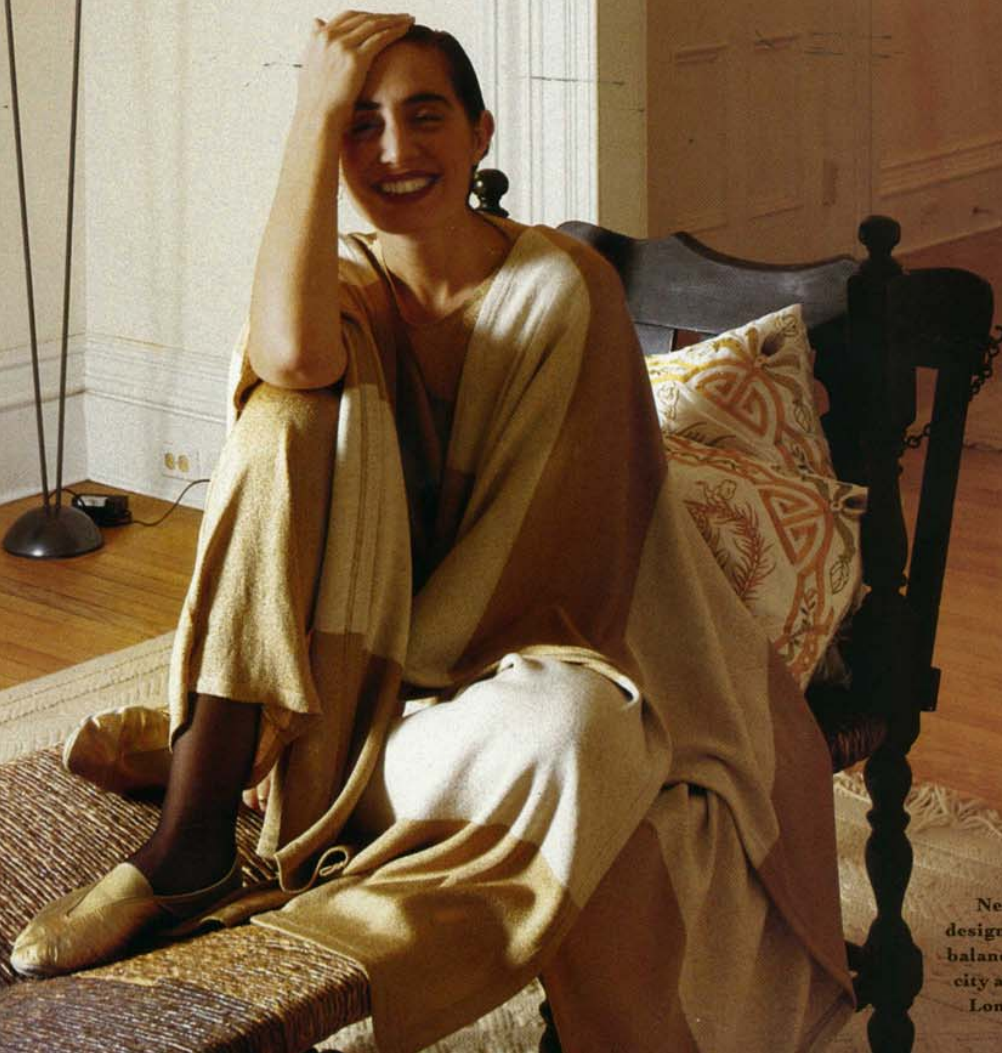


METROPOLITAN HOME.

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Living for the Weekend

Great Getaway Homes • New Outdoor Rooms



New York fashion
designer Rebecca Moses
balances work and play,
city and country in her
Long Island retreat





In his villa, Rick Gibbons has a blast with the past

AN AWARD-WINNING architect with a passion for Palladio, Rick Gibbons spends his weeknights in a “sleek, functional” Chicago apartment. So he was determined to design a *weekend* house that “would transport me to another time and place.” With a limited budget but a lot of Sheetrock, Gibbons concocted an artful, setlike, fantasy manor as appropriate to the Tuscan hills as to a Hollywood soundstage. Is it Gibbons’ folly? More like an audacious architectural gamble that paid off. Squint your eyes, and his six-room home becomes a grand Italian villa. “A ranch house,” he says, “just wouldn’t have cut it.”

Produced by Steven Wagner, Victoria Lautman; Written by Victoria Lautman; Architect: Rick Gibbons; Photos: Antoine Bootz

THE CAPRICE is right: Rising miragelike from a Michigan field, the house can be whatever your imagination makes it. “I was blessed with a site that gives no hint of scale or context,” says architect Rick Gibbons.

On a Whim and a Prairie





TO EVOKE THE ELEGANCE of its Palladian precursors, Gibbons gave his house extra ceiling height (16 feet in the living room, above) and hand-sponged the walls aging-fresco yellow.

Archways funnel in light and frame the view, "so the site sweeps through the house from front to back," explains Gibbons, a partner at Madel/Gibbons Associates. After spending the week "constantly on the go" in Chicago, Gibbons and housemate Bob Ollis wanted a place that would be "geared toward staying still." So they filled the rooms with cushy furniture and intriguing antiques, bridging, as Gibbons says, "the contradiction of comfort and grandeur."

With a wink at convention, a Chicago architect proves that warmth and whimsy can be perfect weekend companions

THE LIVING ROOM fireplace (right)—with chips, scratches and a Sheet-rock backboard painted to look like bronze—isn't authentic anything. Just a whimsical Gibbons concoction. To save money, the architect made the billowy curtains himself from inexpensive polyester fabric. See Resources





A PORCH framed by lattice-work walls (top) extends the house's jewel-like geometry into the landscape. By floating it five feet above ground, Gibbons made his "backyard"—which boasts a hot tub and shower—"defensible and protected."

Bargain classicism meets Hollywood hedonism. In this house, weekends are made for Michelangelo—and hot tubs

OPULENTLY TURNED out, the dining room (far right) seems serious at first, but "It's really just an opera-inspired, tongue-in-cheek stage set," says Gibbons. Plastic tiebacks, a junk-store light fixture and gold-framed paintings complete the illusion, while a new plaster bust encourages classical musings. *See Resources*

