



A Fine Line

IT'S A PARADOX, BUT THE MOST GRACIOUS WAY TO BUILD ON A suburban lot may be to use an urban plan. That is just what architect Mark Maresca did with a Regency-inspired house in Greenville, South Carolina.

"This is not a central hall plan with rooms to either side, but a one-room-wide plan that runs front to back," says Maresca. "Instead of extending to within 10 feet of the side property lines, we have a 40-foot setback around most of the property, so the house sits surrounded by gardens." But it is not a shotgun layout. The front door on the right side of the house opens onto a spacious foyer and hall that leads past a library, dining room, and stairwell to the full-width main drawing room that overlooks the rear garden. Parallel to the hall on the left side of the house, openings between rooms form an enfilade (see plan).

"From the front door, you look straight through the house to the rear

ABOVE: The ground-floor windows and door are inset with a relieving arch typical of Regency style, while limestone pilasters frame second-story windows. **RIGHT AND ABOVE RIGHT:** In deference to the clients' fine antiques, the architecture in the foyer is understated. Architect Mark Maresca designed the lanterns and lamps for The Urban Electric Co.

BY PHILIP MORRIS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JEFF HERR



With thoughtful placement of cross-axial views, architect **Mark Maresca** creates a rigorously symmetrical South Carolina house with both grand dimensions and delicate restraint





ABOVE: The house widens at the rear to accommodate the kitchen and the adjacent conservatory, which the owners use for casual dining. On the porch off the master bedroom, the latticelike metalwork imitates a Regency signature. A Greek key pattern tops the railing's attenuated ovals.

garden, and as you walk through, there are surprises—vistas into rooms or out to gardens,” Maresca explains. The house is not only rigorously symmetrical, in keeping with Regency inspiration, but also visually engaging throughout.

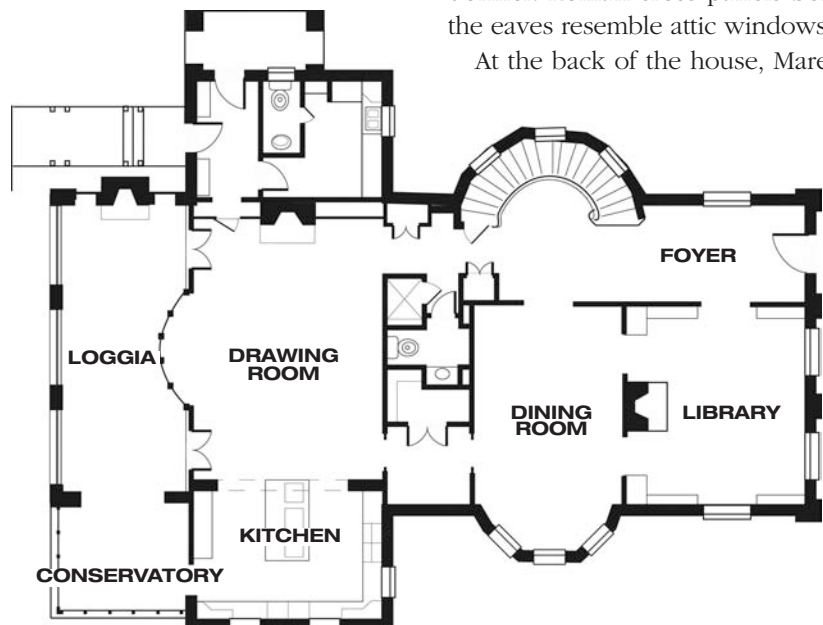
Reflecting the period’s love of shaped rooms, the architect introduced an oval—on one side, a curved stairway, and on the other, the dining room’s curved bay. This cross-axis greatly enhances movement.

At the rear, the plan maintains its central focus but widens. Using what are, in effect, single-story additions,

Maresca flanked the drawing room with needed spaces—a kitchen on one side and a family entrance/utility room on the other. Dual French doors lead to the loggia just beyond. This furnished open-air room repeats the arches found at the front, reestablishing the urban house profile. A small conservatory relaxes the kitchen side and allows garden-view dining.

The façade in handmade Virginia brick highlights other period features: three arched openings on the ground floor, a second floor neatly divided with limestone pilasters, and a copper hipped roof with a single, central dormer. Roman-cross panels below the eaves resemble attic windows.

At the back of the house, Maresca





ABOVE: The marble-floored loggia serves as an open-air extension of the drawing room. A fireplace with scrolled and fluted columns complements the Regency style. RIGHT: Arches frame the pool terrace and garden.

employed decorative metalwork on the porch off the master bedroom. Favorite period themes embellish the railings, columns, and eaves.

“What’s so beautiful about these houses is that they hold back,” he says. “The proportions are right, and there is a delicacy, a sense of reserve that is very luxurious.” This is evident in the foyer and hall, where Maresca made the dimensions grand—12 feet wide and 45 feet long—but avoided excess. The marble floor was honed to remove the sheen, and the stair rail has an almost modern simplicity with its black pickets.

Completing the look are light fixtures that Maresca designed. Outside, over the front door, a copper gas lantern, simple from a distance, rewards a closer view with rich Regency filigree. In the foyer and hall, six-sided glass lanterns with delicately worked and gilded frames



punctuate the entrances to each room. From plan to the finest detail, a masterful hand is evident here, combining symmetry, grace, and luxurious views. ♦

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