

# RESIDENTIAL design+build

JULY/AUGUST 2011

inspiring architects and custom builders

**EXCLUSIVE:**

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**D'ALESSIO INSPIRED  
ARCHITECTURAL  
DESIGNS**  
New Hope, Pa.  
builtbydalessio.com

Project name: The Chateau  
Location: Bucks County, Pa.  
Size: 10,000 sq. ft.

# Custom home more than 7,000 sq. ft.



The client wanted a European-styled stone mansion, made of all sustainable authentic building materials. They also requested ceiling heights to exhibit custom art chandeliers, hardwood/marble floors and marble staircases. The objective was to make it look timeless.

The family's private ground floor rooms — kitchen/great room — were to be separate from public rooms. The public rooms needed to entertain large groups of guests and value comfort and intimacy as much as elegance.

An intimate set of public rooms was requested with 12-ft. first-floor ceilings. To accommodate ceiling heights as well as the 20-24 roof pitch turrets and three European styled chimneys — as

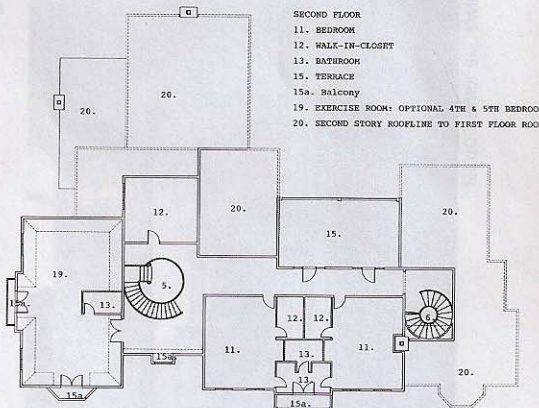
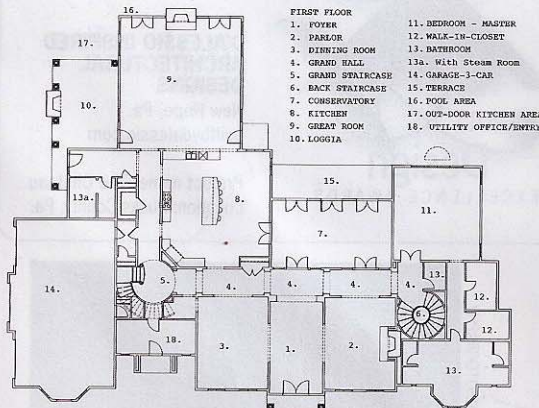
high as 60 ft. — they necessitated drilling 4 ft. into bedrock for a solid foundation.

Finding high-level craftspeople for the project's enormous amount of interior and exterior custom architectural details was challenging. Retrofitting hardware and plumbing for imported, antique and reuse materials was also challenging, especially with an 18-month deadline.

Stone masons, master carpenters and fine-art craftspeople set up shop on-site to hand-chisel stone, hand-hew and custom-mill all interior woodworking, construct marble staircases with hand-forged iron balustrade-brass handrail and hand carved custom casts for limestone surrounds, reliefs, keystones, rosettes, granite and marble floors. Cabinet craftspeople made custom cabinets



PHOTOS: RANDI BYE, RANDI BYE PHOTOGRAPHY



for all rooms, saving time with little rework.

The public rooms' open floor plan design — foyer, parlor, dining room and grand hall — allows entertaining large groups. Each space is defined with a unique ceiling: coffered with applied moulding, double-groin vaulted Venetian polished plaster, tray-clipped corner, barrel vaulted and birdcage cornices. The curved wood arches with Doric-influenced fluted wood columns lead you from room to room without walls. Even the wrought-iron and glass doors open off the grand hall expands the open-floor plan.

The grand hall was designed to transition the public rooms and maintain the family's



private space, kitchen and 25-ft. ceiling great room that opens to a covered loggia with views of the pool and outdoor kitchen. ■