

AT HOME QUARTERLY



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Digging Downtown

Pennsylvania transplants love their new view



Fifth Third Bank executive Gary Reiter and wife, Ann

In love with urban living

No commute, vibrant neighborhood add up to perfect home for transplants

By **Della Pacheco**
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Photos by **Robin Jerstad**

When Fifth Third Bank approached Gary Reiter about moving to Indianapolis to head up its brokerage arm, he initially said no thanks.

Reiter, who worked for Lancaster, Pa.-based Fulton Bank, and his wife, Ann, loved their downtown Lancaster home with its historic 1850s exterior and contemporary interior. And it was two blocks from Gary's office.

The Reiters, who were born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, had also lived in downtown Cleveland prior to their move to Lancaster. They loved the pedestrian-friendly environment that downtown living afforded them.

Fifth Third management suggested the pair check out Indy's downtown renaissance.

"They talked about their commitment to downtown and that they were building a banking center at Ohio and East streets," Gary said. "They really used downtown as a recruiting method to get my wife and I to come here."

After visiting multiple downtown locations—and venturing as "far" away as the Meridian-Kessler area—the Reiters built their dream home in a new development called "The Waldorf."

The million-dollar-plus homes—some of the last single-family dwellings being built so close to the heart of downtown—are being developed by Broad Ripple-based Carreau Design and built by Carmel-based William Gordon Group.

Gary accepted the position and the two moved to a rental home at The Villages of West Clay in Carmel while their downtown home was being completed. During that time, they had an opportunity to compare suburban and urban living.

Gary says that moving to Indianapolis from out of state meant the two "came here without any biases."

"We're seeing things that other people don't see," he said. "There are a lot of people in Carmel who still say they would never live downtown."

According to Indianapolis Downtown



The Reiter home's exterior features a blend of concrete block, brick, slate-like fiberglass squares and stainless steel accents.

Inc., the city has seen record demand and occupancy levels, driving the surge in residential development downtown. This has led to more than 1,294 new residential units in the pipeline totaling more than \$381 million.

The Reiters aren't surprised.

"There's absolutely everything that we need here," Gary said. "A grocery store, hardware, dry cleaners, restaurants, theaters—we rarely leave the downtown area. If we visit friends outside downtown, we have to use MapQuest."

They moved into their contemporary town home about four months ago and quickly settled in.

Contemporary, yet warm

The exterior of their 2,200 square-foot Walnut Street home would fit well in the pages of modern design magazine *Dwell* with its blend of concrete block, brick and fiberglass squares made to replicate the look of slate. Brushed stainless steel accents are found on exterior lighting, balcony rails and an overhang above the front door.

But when you step inside the modern front door, contemporary design meets traditional in an eclectic mix of modern lighting, traditional furnishings, Asian-influenced accessories, and assortment of art mixed with whimsy.

Most of the furnishings came from the Reiters' Lancaster home.

"We didn't want a stark look," Ann said. Most of the couple's furnishings, like the bedroom furniture they bought when they were first married, have clean, simple lines that fit well in the contemporary home.

One new addition since moving in is the window covering in the couple's living room—a purchase Gary made from the Hilbert estate auction. Ann took the colorful silk panels to a local drapery company and had them reworked into window valances, which match their side chairs.

William Gordon Group built the Reiters' home and several others at The Waldorf. Bill Brosius, president and owner of the Carmel-based firm, and his team consisting of architect Bill Bernard and interior designer Kate Sta-

ley helped with every detail of the project. The process, from concept to move-in, took about 10 months.

"We paid a lot of attention to achieving a contemporary look with a warm interior feel," Brosius said. "They wanted to bring the contemporary look of the outside in, yet create a nice, homey environment."

The Reiters left the exterior design to the architect. "We didn't make one change or suggestion," he said. They concentrated instead on the home's interior.

Working with Gordon's interior designer, the couple incorporated many elements from their Lancaster home, including the warm red-oak stain on the first-level hardwood floors and a cozy seating area in the kitchen that's flooded with light from second-story clerestory windows that align with windows in their daughter's bedroom.

The kitchen features a bistro bar set complete with a "Table for Two" sign—a souvenir from a charity event the couple attended.

See next page



Gary and Ann Reiter (above) used an eclectic mix of contemporary and traditional in decorating their 2,200-square-foot downtown Waldorf home, which was designed and built by Carmel-based William Gordon Group.



Continued from previous page

Staley selected all of the home's interior lighting. Ann says that the choices Staley made "were beautiful and very close to budget—something I know we wouldn't have done."

The home's two finished bedrooms are on the second level. Each is furnished with items from the Reiters' former homes. Daughter Cara, a junior at Ball State University, has a cozy retreat awaiting her when she visits home.

The couple's master bedroom features a crocheted bed cover crafted by Gary's mother and grandmother over a period of more than 25 years.

A third bedroom suite—accessible by a stainless steel bridge—is built over the garage and still awaits finishing. The Reiters had a guesthouse at their Lancaster home, and they envision this space serving as a comfortable retreat for family and friends.

Details stand out

Because their home has a narrow footprint, the Reiters made sure to include additional spaces that could accommodate large groups for entertaining while also affording the couple stunning views of downtown.

On the ground level, they created a small, intimate, yet functional courtyard area between the home and garage. On the second level, balconies—both large and small—not

only allow light to spill into the living areas but give outdoor retreats for enjoying coffee and a newspaper or alfresco dining.

A third-floor rooftop deck is breathtaking—in more ways than one. Accessible by a spiral stainless steel staircase—acrophobiacs beware—the spacious deck is a work-in-progress. It's plumbed for an outdoor spa and stainless railings are still on order.

The couple spends a lot of time in their third floor family room, which features a wall of uncovered windows

showcasing Indy's skyline. This room reflects a more masculine "safari" theme—something Ann acquiesced to after Gary lived with her doll collections for years.

"When we first got married, Ann had a doll collection and the eyes met me everywhere," Gary laughed. So when we moved here, I said, 'no dolls.'"

See next page





The Reiters' third-floor rooftop deck can be reached via a visually striking spiral staircase made of brushed stainless steel.

Continued from previous page

"When the guys visit, they all say this is a great room," Ann said. "The only thing that's missing is the African mask that we're still looking for."

While they've created a jungle

theme in their home, is it a real jungle out there living in an urban environment?

"When we lived in Lancaster, we were about two blocks from drug dealers and crime," Gary said. "We don't see that here."

"I feel so safe here," Ann said. "That's part of the reason why it's my favorite city because it's lively and truly a neighborhood complete with neighborhood committees—the old fashioned neighborhood that seems to be disappearing. They don't have to

recreate it here—it exists."

A developer's dream

That's exactly the reaction Leif Hinterberger was hoping for when he developed The Waldorf. The owner of Broad Ripple-based Carreau Design, Hinterberger started in the construction business at the early age of 14 working summers building brownstones in New York. The Waldorf reflects his vision for bringing Chicago/New York-style brownstones to downtown Indianapolis.

His goal was to bring market-rate products to the area and improve the city's economic base. "The reason I started this project was to help with economic development, to give executives from throughout the country an option of a place to live in an urban community [so] they don't have to live out on Geist or Morse," Hinterberger said. "We have lost a large portion of executive-style people who don't want to live in Indianapolis because we don't have an urban community. I

See next page

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A breathtaking view (above) of the Indianapolis skyline is available from the Reiters' third-floor patio.



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looked at this as one of the only prime locations that would give that to them."

He also sees it as an opportunity to help turn around "one of the coolest districts"—the Mass Ave District.

The project hasn't been without criticism, but Hinterberger sees positives when he explains what could have happened on this valuable piece of real estate.

"The area was actually zoned CBD2, which is central business district," he said. "We could have put in a big commercial tower [on the site] but we worked with the neighborhood and the historic preservation group and down-zoned the site for urban executive-style townhouses—something our downtown has little or none of."•



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