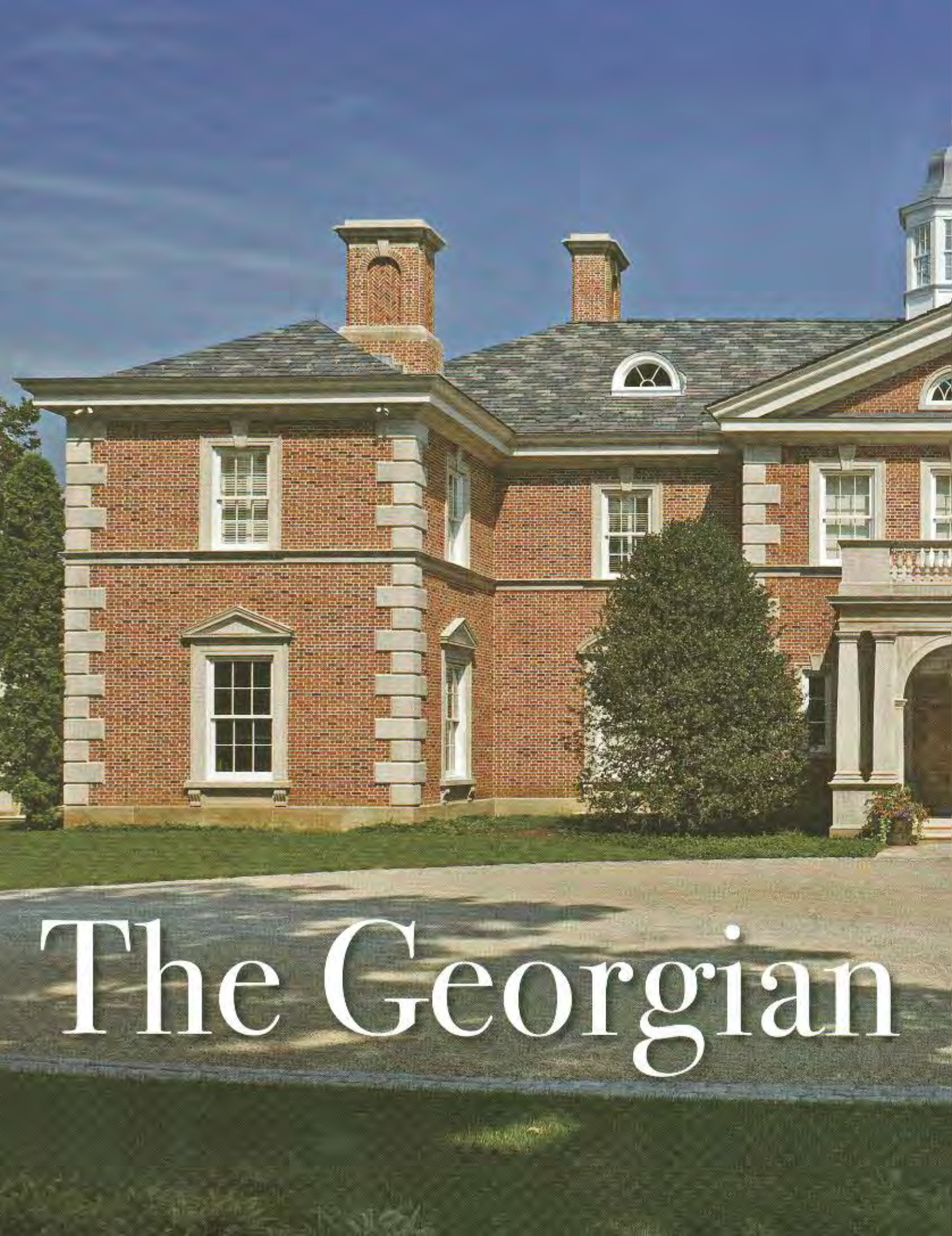


FAIRFIELD COUNTY

HOME





The Georgian



A JEWEL of mid-country Greenwich,
this Georgian Country residence
is grand in its austere symmetry.
Architect Dinyar Wadia is renowned
for such classical creations that blend
smoothly into natural surroundings.

Country Jewel

A landmark grows in Greenwich

BY ERIKA ALEXIA TSOUKANELIS

| PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN WALLEN



FROM THE living room, one may gaze through the stair hall into the dining room. Arched doorways and a soothing color scheme create comfort in these formal areas. The blue-and-white lamp was a vase from Mallett Antiques in London, transformed with a custom shade by interior designer Linda Ruderman-Rosier.



WOOD-PANELED vestibule offers a contained introduction to the home. Loggia and motor court are glimpsed through the open door.

Dinvar Wadia was born in Bombay, India, where he grew up with an appreciation for classical architecture. His mother was a builder, as was her father before. A woman ahead of her time, she raised Wadia in what has been known as the Jewel of the British Crown. The city is famous for its blend of Hindu and British aesthetics, and its many English-built structures and plazas shine with traditional elegance. Wadia was awed by the texture and warmth of the varied constructions around him, built as they were to last for eons. Much like London and somewhat like Paris, Bombay's architecture served as his first inspiration.

Wadia took his passion to Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in India, and studied there for five years. Delving

into fine arts and landscape design as well as general design, he emerged as an architect fascinated by the modern. Yet without a master's degree, work was hard to come by. He and his wife Gool ventured to the alluring streets of New York City and the hallowed halls of Columbia University. Accepted into the university's prestigious graduate architecture program in 1968, Wadia was enthralled by the experience.

"People ask me if I was traumatized by New York City. I tell them that it was the other way around. I traumatized the city," Wadia laughs. "We lived in the mouth of Harlem, but I found beautiful old buildings all around me. I had seen these images growing up, and I had always wanted to be a part of them."

After graduation, he came to New Canaan, Connecticut,



THE LIBRARY'S burled oak paneling is covered with classical motifs.

lured by a job with the firm of Victor Christ-Janer. There he was taught the hands-on process of designing and building from start to finish. He established his own firm in 1975, schooling himself in classical design. Thirty years of experience ensures that every project he undertakes now flows effortlessly. From inception to completion, architectural developments by Wadia Associates are emboldened with classical melodies and flavored with modern-day sensibility, proceeding smartly forward with accuracy and success.

The seed of this efficiency lies first in Wadia's clarity. He presents a sketch to a client. If it is met with approval, he continues to detail plans without looping backwards. He is familiar with a variety of traditional design styles—from American shingle to Victorian, from French Normandy to Colonial Revival—and he knows what the creation of each form will require. Decisions are made and actions taken without hesitation. Once all preliminaries are attended to, he readies himself to gather materials. "I know exactly where to purchase brick, slate, doors, driveway surfaces. Knowing zoning and regulation well also speeds things along," he says.

Collaborating with clients in such planning is a central task. Wa-



DECORATIVE MOTIFS in the formal dining room are based on the work of the 18th century neoclassical architect Robert Adams. The walls are upholstered in a custom-colored damask.





dia Associates do not design in any one particular style. Clients' wishes are examined with great respect and houses are built or renovated to reflect what clients want most. As Wadia says, "We do not want to leave our imprint but the owners imprint on the house." Building a relationship with the client thus comes prior to building with any brick, stone, timber or slate.

In the case of a Georgian Country Residence in Greenwich, Connecticut, Wadia cites his interactions with the client as having been the most rewarding and pleasant part of the work. With a busy family of four sons, the client sought a livable space where she might also host large-scale fundraising events. Meticulous and focused, she was also willing and open to listen to suggestions and deeply appreciative of the work

THE FAMILY ROOM retains the spirit of general elegance. A second-floor landing—leading to the bedrooms—features an antique stone fireplace from England.



CREAMS AND GOLDS create a warm, neutral palette in the master bedroom suite's sitting room. Here, adults may enjoy time to themselves and an abundance of natural light.







SECOND-FLOOR bay window opens to the back of the property. A mahogany staircase leads to a third-floor exercise room.

LEFT The main staircase is fashioned of custom-made mahogany balusters. Doric-column designs lend a stately, masculine feel. This staircase is utterly unique, as Wadia Associates prefer to provide all their homes with individualized designs.

Georgian Country architecture, with its symmetrical grandeur, gained popularity in England during the latter half of the 18th century

done. Wadia maintains, "There were no challenges in this job. This was a cream-puff job filled with a cream-puff client. An appreciative client always encourages a better product."

There is much to admire about this stately home. The original structure was built by a member of the Rockefeller family in the 1930s and owned by the Queen of Iran before the client bought the property. When she contacted Wadia Associates, she was interested in renovation. Upon closer inspection, the first house was found to be troubled by practical flaws and degradation. Closet spaces were small, windows were rotted, natural light was lacking, ceilings were

low, the staircase treads were narrow and steep, and the kitchen severely outdated. After reviewing Wadia's initial sketches, the client decided that it was more appropriate to build a new home. Losing the history saddened Wadia, but he saw the wisdom in starting again. It was resolved that the classical Georgian Country style, good taste and integrity of the original house would be preserved in new plans and construction. The result left everyone happy.

The exterior of the new home is refined and understated. It is fashioned with brick and limestone, and reflects the symmetrical grandeur typical of Georgian Country architecture. This style gained

popularity in England in the latter half of the 18th century, and is marked by strong Greco-Roman influence. Wadia's mid-country Greenwich creation features terraces and columns reminiscent of those ancient times. Decorative limestone elements on the front façade include quoins, window surrounds and an entrance portico. The back of the home is more ornate. A rear portico is set between bay windows topped by limestone balustrades, and accented by limestone columns and pilasters that stretch to the second floor. The portico is further emphasized by a massive limestone entablature made from a single slab of the durable, heavy material. A back terrace

FROM the side of the property, one takes in this Indiana limestone porch, with its staircase leading up to a covered seating area. Doric columns lend magnificent grandeur.

Doric columns lend magnificent grandeur.

RIGHT Viewed from the back of the property, the side porch is on ground level due to ingenious landscaping that included the infusion of earth to flatten the existing pitch in the land.



overlooks a formal garden and a dramatic, sweeping lawn.

The magnificence of the landscaping in the back of the house was realized with the addition of a retaining wall and the infusion of dirt between the house and the wall, as the back of the property had been pitched. Rather than walking out the back and feeling the land fall away as before, one is now struck by a vista that echoes that of a country home in Essex or Surrey of England. To further work within the natural setting, the entrance of the Greenwich estate was raised six feet from its original site. "You felt like you were stepping down when you entered the old house," Wadia says. "We wanted the home to neither sink into the ground nor stick out like a sore thumb. If it doesn't feel natural, I haven't done my job."

As the exterior works naturally within the contours of the property, so too does the design of the interior blend

with the façade's restrained elegance. Symmetry is found in the positioning of the living and dining rooms, which flank the stair hall. A custom-made staircase features individually carved mahogany balusters. A cupola above the staircase allows for ample sunlight to brighten the space. Plasterwork in the Adam style lends interest and delicacy to the formal dining area, while antique stone fireplaces from England offer a dignified presence to many rooms throughout the house. The interior architectural design by Wadia is complemented by scrupulous decoration from Linda Ruderman Interiors. Linda Ruderman-Rosier has been in business for 25 years. She focuses on creating classic and timeless interiors for modern-day living, with an emphasis on attention to detail. Traveling extensively throughout the English countryside, Ruderman-Rosier pulled together countless English sources and attended



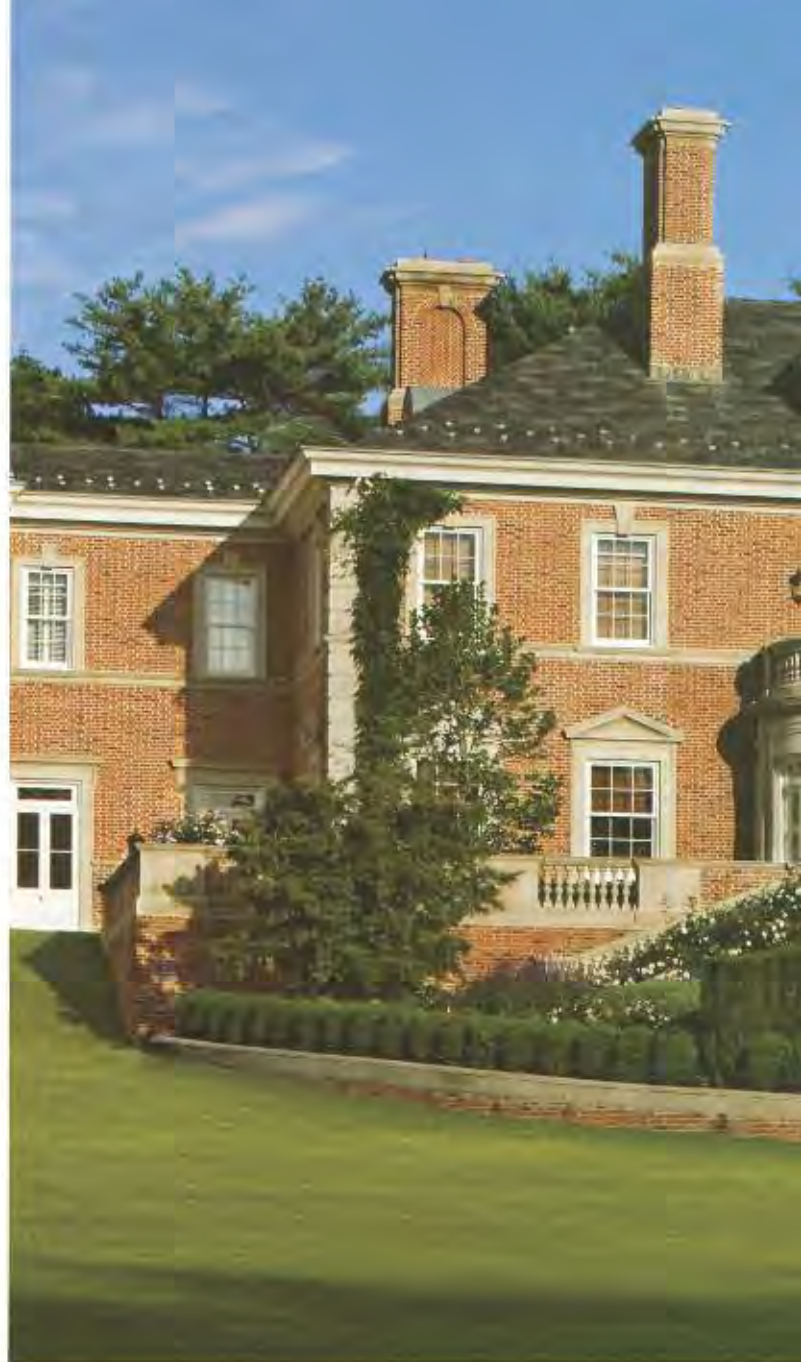
Rather than leaving his mark on the work he does, Wadia wants his clients' homes to glimmer with their individual personalities

numerous auctions to find the perfect pieces for these grand rooms. What she could not find, she designed herself.

As Ruderman-Rosier is interested in modern-day comfort, so too is Wadia. To this end, the Georgian Country Residence has efficient heating and cooling systems, an elaborate home theater and a wine cellar. As the kitchen is a fundamental location for the family, it opens to a breakfast nook where they share casual meals and a study area where the four brothers may do their homework. The boys are blessed with an indoor batting cage, and their mother enjoys a restful and spacious master bedroom suite that includes a sitting area and generous closets. A sunken tennis court in the front of the home is not visible from ground level. The only sign of this luxury is a small garden wall.

The subtlety of this sunken tennis court speaks to Wadia's overall style. Charming, polite and articulate, his desire to engage with and understand his clients comes from his heart. He does not want his mark on the work that he does; he wants his clients' homes to glimmer with their individual personalities. This has not stopped others from recognizing his work on upscale gardens, houses and interiors. Wadia Associates—with its staff of eight architectural designers, four construction managers, an interior decorator and several support staff—has been featured in a myriad of publications, including *The Classicist*, published by the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America. Wadia has also been elected to the INT-BAU Council of Traditional Practitioners (ICTP), a worldwide organization that champions traditional and classical design. HRH The Prince of Wales is a patron of the ICTP and has personally acclaimed Wadia's work.

Dinyar Wadia—son of a Bombay builder, lover of old and new—has realized his childhood dreams and given to his second homeland 30 years of beautiful building. When asked what he wishes for his recent contribution of the Georgian Country Residence, he does not hesitate: "I hope that it will become a home for the family for many years and a landmark of Greenwich." ■



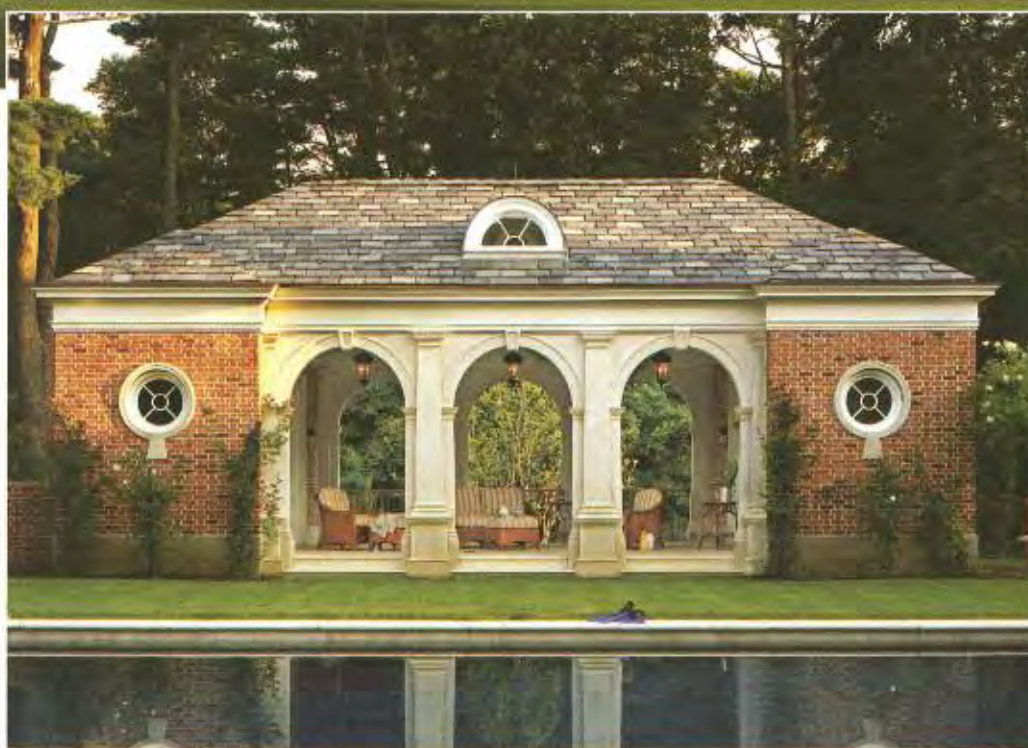
RESOURCES

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GEORGIAN architecture is similar to many other English styles in that the back of the home is more elaborate than the front. The entablature of the rear portico is made of a single slab of limestone, and the gardens are both manicured and lavish.

THE POOL HOUSE reflects the style of the home. This feature is an example of how Dinyar Wadia blends traditional design with modern-day sensibility.