

Southern Accents

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A vibrant kitchen with red cabinetry, a stainless steel range hood, and a wooden dining table with lemons. The kitchen features a large island with a wooden table and chairs. The cabinetry is a rich red color, and the range hood is stainless steel. A chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The dining table is made of dark wood and has a bowl of lemons on it. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

Ultimate KITCHENS

72 pages
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gardens

insider's guide
to stylish renovations



Federal-Style Face-lift

Residential designer **William T. Baker** converted this nondescript clapboard house into formal Federal with architectural renovations and period detailing

ATLANTA RESIDENTIAL DESIGNER WILLIAM T. BAKER HAS left his hallmark on English manor houses, brick Georgians, and American Colonials whose craftsmanship, proportions, and attention to historical details belie their status as new construction. He is also known for dramatic “before and after” remodels, converting one-story ranches into commodious Country French dwellings, for example, that bear no resemblance to the originals. However, in the case of this classic white Federal-style home, he stayed true



ABOVE: This plain clapboard house may have been suitable for the country, but when the area evolved into one of Atlanta's prestigious neighborhoods, a makeover was necessary. TOP: The American Federal architectural style of this remodel makes the house seem as if it has existed for centuries.

to the details of Federal style. This remodeling is the result of a number of cosmetic changes to the façade that cumulatively add up to an improvement to the home's exterior.

"We think the house was built around 1910 for the Rich family of Rich's department store," says Baker. "It was originally in the country with only a dirt road." Today, the area is one of Atlanta's leading residential neighborhoods, strewn with architectural landmarks. "As was typical of some country houses, the architecture was relatively simple with vertical wood siding and a very low-hipped roof," observes Baker. "It was a nice house but not architecturally significant. Our goal was to take the bones of the original house, which were very good, and dress them up."

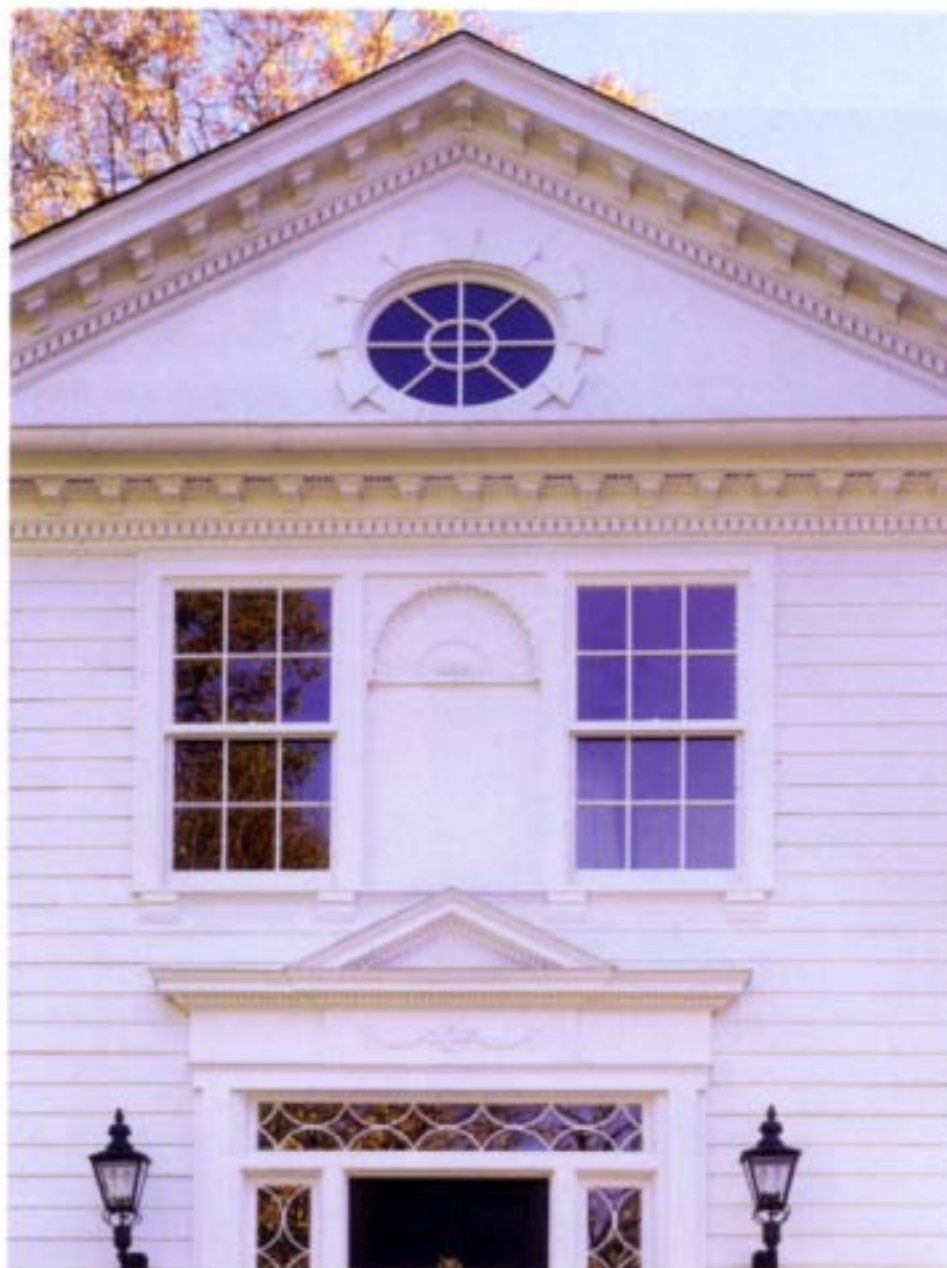
Baker notes that the house, with its low-hipped roof, could have suggested a Mediterranean-style remodel through the addition of stucco and barrel tile. But the current owners have roots in New England and gravitated toward a traditional Federal-style home instead. In order to make the clapboard home more reminiscent of this style, Baker raised the roof, reworked and repartitioned the

windows, added a classical gable, and introduced period details, such as pilasters and cornices.

The roofline and windows of the house received the most attention. The new raised roof elevates and improves the proportions of the house. The classical gable endows the house with the gravity of a historic home. In fact, the oval window with rusticated keys was inspired by

a similar one at Mount Vernon. On the second story, Baker reworked the windows, installing slightly larger ones in sets of two instead of three and adding louvered shutters to further define the upper story. In place of the bulging bay windows on the first floor, he inserted two sets of elongated French doors flanking the front entrance. The addition of the doors gives the homeowners access to the terrace from both the living room and study. Last, Baker refaced the outer walls of the brick terrace in gray granite cobblestones whose color and texture are more complementary to a Federal-style house. Although the balustrade was added to meet code requirement, it lends further definition to the terrace.

"I wanted this house to have strong architectural elements, so I added Ionic pilasters to the corners and created a highly articulated cornice with dentils," he explains. Baker hand-drew these details the old-fashioned way. Perhaps the crown jewel of the

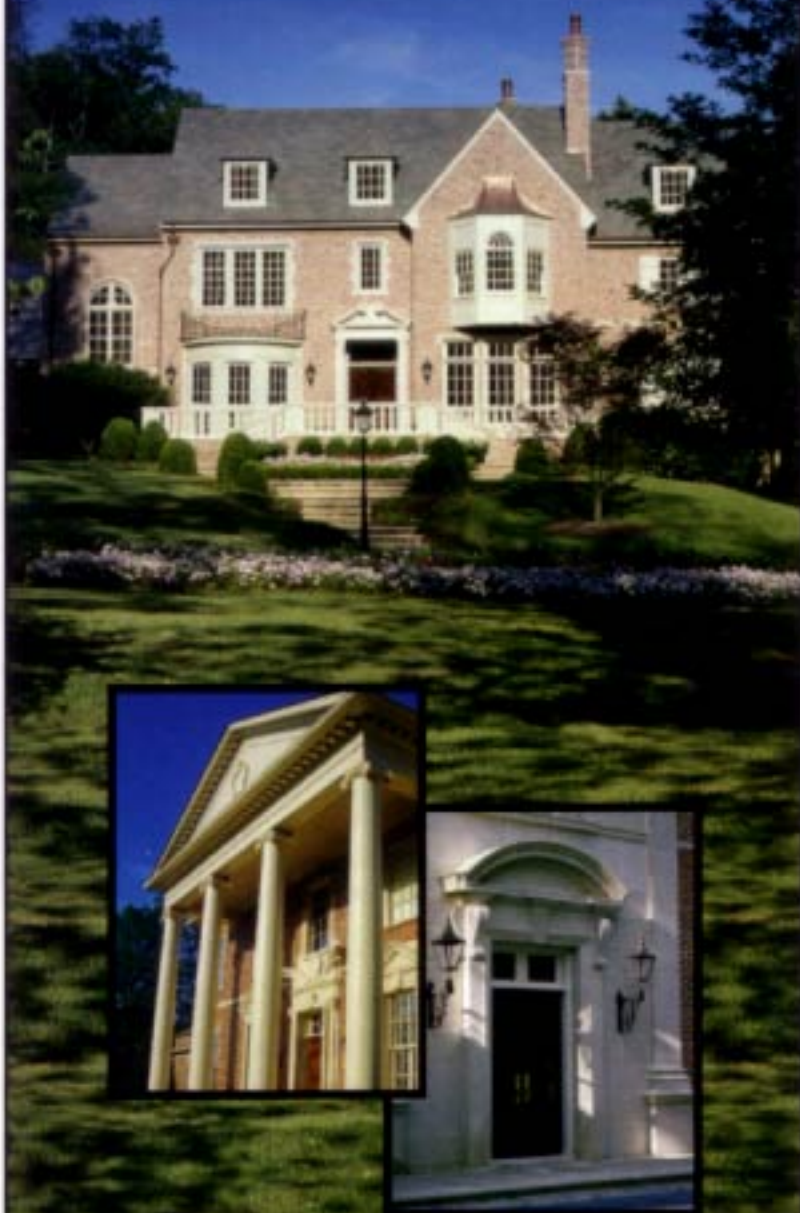


Period details, such as a gable and front door, a shell niche, and an oval window with keys, transform this house from country to country manor.

insights from bill baker

- Work with the architectural elements already in place.
- Consider enhancing the windows and door trim, adding shutters, or installing a handsome pair of gas lanterns.
- Paint architectural elements in a contrasting color to make them more defined.
- In some cases, structural changes, such as raising the roofline or adding a gable or dormers, are necessary to create better proportions.
- The most important element in creating a sympathetic addition is scale. Make sure the addition does not overwhelm the original house and follows the rooflines and architectural style of the existing structure.
- When planning an addition, take your cues from the original house in terms of materials, proportions, and architectural details. For example, new windows should have the same muntin sizes and casings as the originals.

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remodeling

exterior makeover is the elaborate shell niche Baker introduced over the original door. It serves as the focal point of the façade and makes creative use of a window opening that already existed. The antique leaded side-lights and transoms are original, but Baker enhanced them and painted the lead. As a result, the intricate diamond pattern stands out in greater relief against the façade. The designer repeated the diamond pattern in the transoms above the new French doors so that the motif now weaves across the entire front of the house.

Crowning a sweeping 150-foot lawn, the house is suited to its site and its owner's classic tastes. "People think the new façade is original, and that was our goal," says Baker. "It is the right statement for the street, without being too showy, and it is a wonderful addition to this architecturally significant neighborhood." ♦

making it authentic

A number of building suppliers have existed for as long as a century and are still producing the same authentic period architectural details and fittings. Here are a few of Bill's favorite sources:

Decorators Supply has been in operation since 1883. "It can produce the same mantels, moldings, and trim found in the grand mansions of Newport." (773/847-6300, www.decoratorssupply.com)

W.F. Norman "offers original 19th-century fittings, such as pressed-tin ceilings, 1920s copper collection boxes found on grand Tudor homes, gutter leaders, dolphin-headed downspouts, and metal roof tiles perfect for a Victorian remodel." (800/641-4038, www.wfnorman.com)

Hartmann-Sanders "The pilasters from the Federal house makeover came from this company." Hartmann-Sanders dates back to 1897 and specializes in columns, capitals, and balustrades. (800/241-4303, www.hartmann-sanders.com)

Fischer & Jirouch "Since 1902, this supplier of plaster cornices and moldings has produced Gothic arches, cornices with grape leaves, and twisted columns perfect for Mediterranean-style homes." (216/361-3840, www.fischerandjirouch.com)

P.E. Guerin "This company has offered period door hardware since 1857." (212/243-5270, www.peguerin.com)

Felber Ornamental Plaster "The great-grandchild of the Voigt Company, in operation since the early 1900s, Felber has archives of over 2,000 antique molds in addition to its stock plaster moldings." (800/392-6896, www.felber.net)

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