

The
HOME
 Monthly
for the holidays
 December 2005

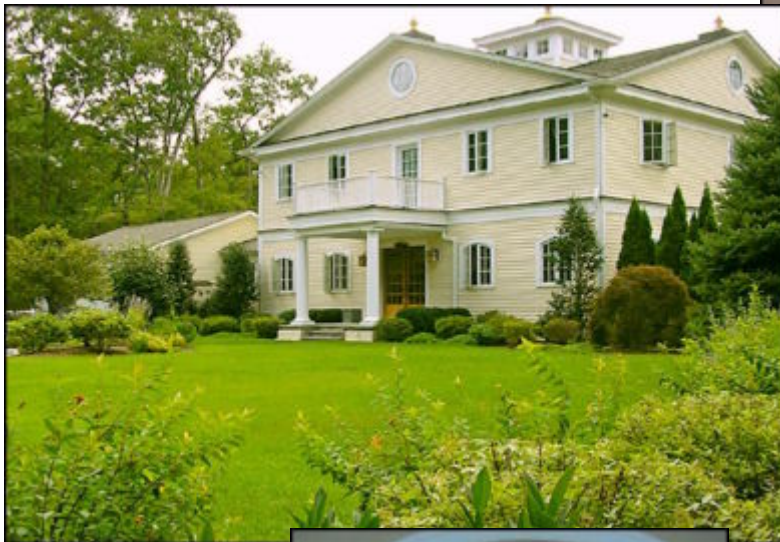
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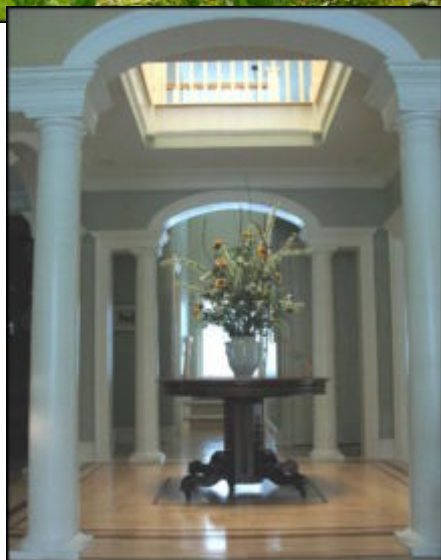
A blueprint for



*health,
 & happiness
 & success*

by Stacy Lytwyn Maxwell

Based on Sanskrit text dating back to 2500 B.C., Vedic architecture, one of 40 branches of Vedic science, stresses building in harmony with natural law. Observers correlate it to the theory of feng shui, operating on the less-is-more axiom. Top right, Bernard and Terry Nevas; bottom right, the brahmastan, the home's "heart" and center of silence.



Stressed? Tense? Ill? Not enough sleep or money? Just plain thwarted by life? Consider packing it up ... literally. Changes are the house you're living in is not conducive to fulfilling your most favorable destiny. Actually, most of the cities worldwide, whether Manhattan, Moscow, Paris or Rome, aren't built right, according to Bernard and Terry Nevas, directors of the Maharishi Enlightenment Center of Mid-Fairfield County, Global Country of World Peace.

However, evoking that standby lyric, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me," the Nevases believe that rebuilding a city begins with one edifice at a time. In order to jump-start

a building trend of the ancient Indian art of Vedic architecture, the couple has been hosting regular tours of their 5,000-square-foot Weston home to introduce the benefits of this holistic building system. They hope that Connecticut residents will join together and get on the Vedic good-fortune gravy train.

From the exterior, the colonial-style home appears tidy, charming, bright, airy. There is no telltale facade divulging that this is the lone example in Fairfield County of Maharishi Vedic architecture, a house constructed in harmony with natural law and thereby the only house in the vicinity (there are two others in the state) built correctly.

Base on Sanskrit text dating back to 2500 B.C., Vedic (meaning "pure knowledge") architecture is one of 40 branches of Vedic science. This architectural form is part of Maharishi Sthapatya (meaning "to establish oneself") Veda design. Another one of the principles, Vedic astrology, an Eastern form of divination calculated by the movement of celestial bodies, can be incorporated into Vedic construction, which, when scrutinized, is the epitome of a good novel: everything down to the last comma has a deeper meaning.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the Indian guru who launched the Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement in the 1960's, introduced Vedic architecture in 1997, when he established the Maharishi Global Construction, which built a prototypical development, Maharishi Vedic City, Near Fairfield, Iowa.

Having bypassed Vedic astrological principles when they built their home five years ago, the Nevases did, however, adhere to "auspicious" dates for groundbreaking, laying a cornerstone and the actual move-in date, which are determined by the homeowners' birthdays.

The sun's influence is of prime importance in Vedic architecture. For this reason, the couple

moved into their new home at sunrise, 5 a.m. The home was built on family-owned land, perfectly flat to encompass the sun's full cycle.

"The direction that your home faces actually has a very profound influence," Terry says. "What we are saying is if you have a door to the east, you are going to have influence of abundance and affluence, if you have a door to the south, you're going to have influence of loss and destruction coming into your house. It's not sudden, it's gradual."

Not restricted to a particular religious belief or affiliation, the Nevases anticipate that Vedic architecture will parallel the influence of the Yoga movement in the Western world.

"We really started bringing this out more after 9/11, when we started to feel that people needed something more to feel (at) peace. They should at least feel it in their own homes."

The couple's tours commence outside the vastu (meaning "where we dwell") fence, which, like everything else, is mathematically proportioned.

"If I go stand outside the vastu fence and stand quiet for a moment ... and then I walk inside the fence and I'm quiet for a moment ... I experience ... a very subtle difference," Bernard explains.

Observers correlate Vedic architecture to the theory of feng shui, operating on the less-is-more axiom. Indeed, inside the Nevases' home, simple wood floors and a clutter-free environment prevail. On the tabletops are framed photographs of their grown son and daughter. Whereas feng shui emphasized environmental decor, Vedic architecture, which many believe predates feng shui, focuses on the building and its position, proportions and measurements.

Each room in the Nevases' house, including a meditation room that faces east, was constructed with about 80% environmentally friendly

materials. Colors depend mainly on personal choice; the Nevases' preference for earthy and subtle tones is apparent. The most important part of any Vedic-style structure is a "heart" in the center. Called a brahmastan, this central area can vary in design, but it is off-limits to foot traffic, protected by such things as a fountain, sculpture, or in the Nevases' case, a table with a beautiful floral arrangement.

"We have a center of silence, and the home also has a center of silence; this just brings the individual self in line with the cosmic self, that's really the purpose of the Vedic architecture," Bernard explains.

Although skeptics may balk at the idea of gauging the cosmic auspiciousness of a building, preliminary research measuring the positive effects of Vedic architecture has been impressive, according to Bernard. Burglary statistics, for instance, have been recorded to be lower in homes facing east or north. Since the inception of the thriving community of Maharishi Vedic City, many Vedic-designed homes, businesses and health-care-related institutions are appearing.

In order to construct an authentic Vedic-style building, whether a humble cottage or a commercial enterprise of contemporary or traditional design, builders, developers and financiers pay a fee (about 20% of the project's cost) and

sign confidentiality forms in exchange for proper instruction from the experts at Global Reconstruction ("re" precedes the word "construction" because the company's mission is to rebuild the world).

The Nevases' long-range goal is to construct Peace Colonies (housing developments), Peace Palaces and a variety of other buildings in

Connecticut. Since living in the house, the couple has noticed that life is better.

"I love this house. I love being here. I don't want to go anywhere anymore," Terry exclaims. Fortunately, the couple works at home teaching TM (they have been teaching for 34 years, initially meeting at a TM

course), and their home currently serves as the main headquarters for the organization.

"Eventually," Bernard predicts, "the psychology will hit and you won't be able to rent your non-Vedic office building (or any other non-Vedic dwelling). People are going to change. Get into a perfect Vedic building now ..." he adds, with a peaceful grin.

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