

REMODELER:

LAKE COUNTRY
BUILDERS, LTD.

A. Sadowski Designs

Alyssa Lee Photography

Below Deck

A finished lower level in a home off Christmas Lake offers fun and function for a family of four.

by Taylor Hugo

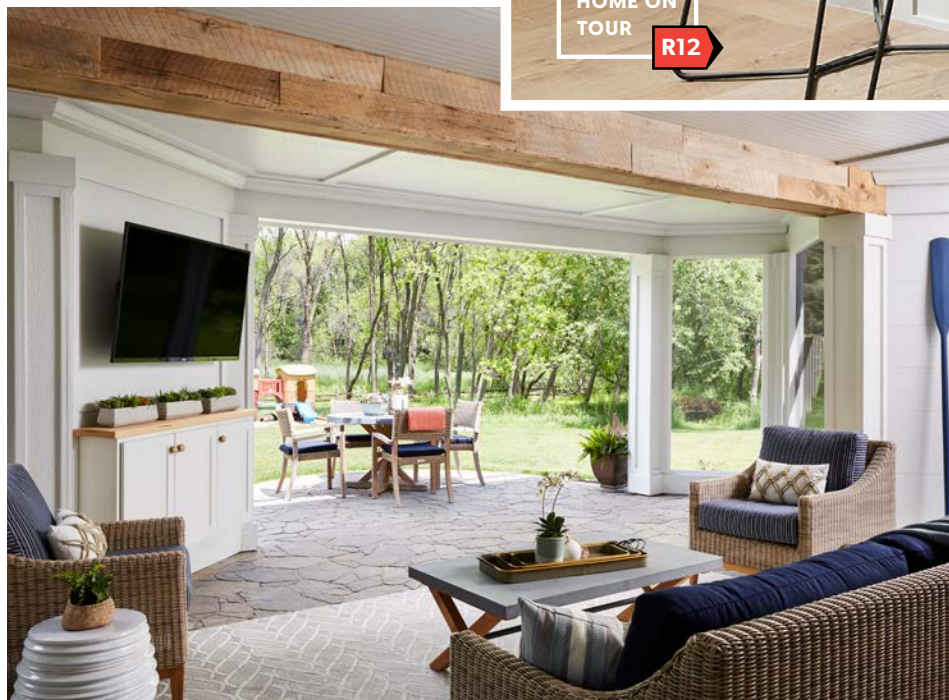
When Ryan and Kelly Lampe built their house on a lot in Shorewood in 2013, the couple opted to leave the lower level walkout unfinished until they could decide what to do with the space.

Four years and two kids later, in 2017, “we were a lot more knowledgeable about what we were needing in the basement,” says Kelly, pointing to a wish list that would satisfy the family’s desire for both fun and function. The only requirement for the space? The professionals hired to execute the project, Lake Country Builders and A. Sadowski Designs, had to stay within the existing framework.

“The focus of this project was, number one, to create a newly finished space downstairs, one in which they could entertain as well as have additional room for their kids to play,” says Patrick Jacobson, executive vice president for Lake Country Builders. “Aside from that, the design focus was really creating an indoor-outdoor connected space.”

The homeowners’ goal →
was to have an open
floor plan with easy
access to the outdoors.

A blank slate provided ample flexibility to achieve those goals. An open layout allows for an uninterrupted flow from the family-movie-night-ready living area to the bar, which the Lampes can easily restock by simply walking across the room to pull a fresh bottle from the glass-enclosed, walk-in wine cooler. Sliding glass doors lead to a screened-in patio underneath the deck for the homeowners to soak up Minnesota summers, sans bugs. There’s also a private guest suite to accommodate overnight visitors.



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➤ A wood bartop and quatrefoil tile backsplash speak to the homeowners' "rustic transitional" aesthetic.



"Being able to really fine-tune exactly what this basement was going to look like and make it work the way that it does was one of the things I loved about working with Lake Country. I wanted to be part of the process," says Kelly, whose favorite part of the remodel is underneath the staircase. Rather than dedicate the square footage to even more storage space, the builders carved out an area for a kids' playroom—complete with a miniature address plaque, Dutch door, sconce light, and mailbox. "I love coming down the stairs and hearing [my kids] having a tea party," she says. "They just love it under there."



“ At the end of the day, this is a newly finished space, but it feels like it was always there.”

Taking inspiration from nearby Christmas Lake, the lower level and patio feature nautical touches. Anchored by woodwork like shiplap and beadboard, blue and creamy white fabrics pop against timeless pieces of furniture, while décor—think hanging oars, a sailboat picture—nod to lakeside living. Other statement-making finishes include wooden beams, floating shelves, industrial-style lights, and, at the bar, a butcher-block countertop and quatrefoil tile backsplash that speak

to the homeowners’ “rustic transitional” aesthetic.

This vintage-meets-modern mix is a carryover from upstairs to ensure a seamless transition between the home’s levels. “In any project, we’re focusing on the design to make sure that the details implemented communicate and flow with the rest of the house,” says Jacobson, stressing the importance of hiring a professional team for a remodel. “At the end of the day, this is a newly finished space, but it feels like it was always there.”

