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# SIMPLE SYNERGY

DESIGNING A SCOTTSDALE RETREAT THAT'S BOTH REFINED AND RUSTIC IS ALL IN A DAY'S WORK FOR A TALENTED TEAM WHOSE COLLABORATIVE ABILITIES ENSURED A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME.

WRITTEN BY MINDY PANTIEL / PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER SEGARRA



INTERIOR DESIGN / DAVID MICHAEL MILLER, DAVID MICHAEL MILLER ASSOCIATES  
ARCHITECTURE / ERIK PETERSON AND SCOTT CARSON, PHX ARCHITECTURE  
HOME BUILDER / ANTHONY SALCITO, SALCITO CUSTOM HOMES, LTD.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / JEFF BERGHOFF, BERGHOFF DESIGN GROUP



**Left:** In the living area, a Gregorius Pineo wingback chair in Dessin Fournir fabric from Town rests next to a fireplace with a surround by Exquisite Surfaces in Beverly Hills. The hand-knotted rug is from Stark in Chicago, and the leather benches are by Formations. Karl Blossfeldt's botanical photogravures were procured from the Lisa Sette Gallery.

**Opposite:** In the open great room, the living area's A. Rudin sofa and its Classic Cloth upholstery are both from Town, the Formations wood-and-iron coffee table is from Dean-Warren and the chandelier is by Rose Tarlow Melrose House. A reverse-painted glass artwork from Jean de Merry in Chicago hangs in the dining area. Lighting throughout was designed by Walter Spitz of Creative Designs in Lighting.

Anyone who has ever watched a relay race knows the smooth passing of the baton is emblematic of well-orchestrated teamwork. A bad handoff can often spell disaster, but when done correctly the transition is so seamless it can be difficult to discern where one runner stops and the next begins. For one lucky pair of empty nesters, the design team they assembled to work on their home in the Silverleaf subdivision of Scottsdale achieved a similar level of synergy that allowed them to move from planning phase to building completion in what seemed like one unified motion.

Seeking respite from the harsh Midwestern winters of their primary residence in Illinois, the couple in question had decided to venture southwest due to a desire for a more casual setting from which to pursue outdoor activities. "They wanted their Arizona home to be more relaxed and have an

element of rusticity they don't have in their prewar Chicago apartment," says designer David Michael Miller, who took on the job with builder Anthony Salcito and project manager Jenn Scopacasa. Architect Erik Peterson, along with colleague and fellow architect Scott Carson, joined landscape designer Jeff Berghoff to round out the team.

From the start, Salcito learned the clients deeply admired the architecture of Italy and southern France, an important design element. "They had definite opinions on size and scale and knew they wanted something quintessentially European," he says. Using this essential input, Peterson formulated a first-round concept for the unusual V-shaped property. "We started with the views and determined which rooms were best suited to various locales on the lot," the architect says, explaining the homeowners wanted the master bedroom to focus on the city lights, with the kitchen enjoying the morning light and



A stone wall and a salvaged wood ceiling give a rustic character to the kitchen, where flamed and brushed granite from Exquisite Surfaces makes up the countertops as well as the backsplash behind the range. The pendant lighting is from The Urban Electric Co. in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Mattaliano barstools are from John Brooks Incorporated.



Floors of random-width French white oak tie the kitchen to the hearth room, which was designed as a cozy retreat for the owners. The cream-colored walls serve as a background for the wire-brushed-and-bleached-white-oak cabinetry by Arizona Custom Cabinets. An A. Rudin sofa wearing Kerry Joyce fabric from Design Alliance LA in Los Angeles is positioned around a pair of Gregorius Pineo tables.

Outside, a loggia houses a sofa and an armchair by Reed Bros. from Inside/Out; the chair wears DeLany & Long fabric from Town, and the sofa is covered in Rose Tarlow Melrose House upholstery from John Brooks Incorporated. Designer David Michael Miller conceived the concrete-topped dining table, while the Gregorius Pineo chairs were sourced from Kneeder-Fauchère. Hanging lanterns by Steven Handelman Studios in Santa Barbara suspend from above.



views of the McDowell Mountain Range. “Rather than a predisposed floor plan, we let things happen organically.”

In keeping with what emerged as a rural Mediterranean theme, Peterson imagined the property as a homestead that had been added to over time, and he placed what might have been these “additions” at a variety of angles to jibe with the quirky property. For optimal privacy, the house was pushed as far back as possible from the street, which kept the garages out of view from the living spaces. “It also allowed us to introduce a long meandering driveway, in keeping with the European-style architecture,” Salcito says. The team then selected materials like clay tile for the roof and stucco to establish an air of authenticity.

Inside, Miller introduced elements that worked in tandem with the architecture. “Erik was great at embracing the clients’ desire for texture and informality,” says the designer, who continued that same concept with antique French

limestone fireplace surrounds and wire-brush-painted millwork. “We needed touchstones with real age, and things like the reclaimed ceiling beams and the outside stone pushing through into the kitchen are iconic reflections of rural Mediterranean architecture.”

The clients also requested rooms that felt natural and serene, and the team responded with a neutral monochromatic color scheme along with subtle interjections of texture and pattern. “We used a lot of linen, as there is a natural connection between linens and rural domestic settings,” Miller explains. “The restrained use of pattern in the living room was confined to the textiles on the pillows and the hand-knotted rug.” As a result of the muted scheme, a painted-glass mural and botanical photogravures that bookend the living and dining rooms take center stage. “The clients found the Art Deco-inspired mural, and initially I was concerned it might be

The team constructed the outdoor living area as a family gathering place with a casual attitude. For comfortable lounging, double chaises by Amalfi Living from Inside/Out, covered with Delany & Long fabric from Town, rest near the pool. The side tables are by Formations.



**Opposite:** Soothing hues set the tone in the master suite, where the Gregorius Pineo chairs and ottoman sport Rogers & Goffigon fabric from Town, and the John Saladino drapery fabric is from Design Alliance L.A.

**Below:** The master suite's Ironies canopy bed is from Kneedler-Fauchère; its headboard is upholstered in Rose Tarlow Melrose House's Kensington Stripe from John Brooks Incorporated. The painted nightstand and customized leather chest, which conceals a pop-up television, are by Formations.



An extension of the master suite, the master bathroom features painted cabinetry from Arizona Custom Cabinets with Ashley Norton pulls from Clyde Hardware. Granite counters from Stone Mart in North Hollywood, California, are similar in color and attitude. The pivot mirror is by Urban Archaeology; the sconces are by Waterworks.



too polished, but it turned out to make the exact casually elegant statement they desired,” Miller says. A design shift is evident in the master suite, where the aesthetic is noticeably more refined. Here, the use of color—a variety of hushed shades of blue—distinguishes the private quarters from the rest of the house. The adjoining bathroom extends the tone and attitude with gossamer drapes, marble floors and a nickel-coated tub.

When it came to detailing the outdoor living spaces, Miller credits Berghoff for establishing a noteworthy backdrop. “Jeff understands the big picture and made the landscape fit the direction it needed to go,” the designer says. Just outside the great room, Berghoff introduced a cream-colored flagstone patio that complements the palette of the exterior

materials. From here, Miller created a welcoming lounge area and dining space under the shade of the loggia. The architecture also dictated the plantings of rosemary, Texas sage and green agaves in the front yard and myrtle, sage and olive trees in the back. “The various shades of green and silvery grays all reinforce the Mediterranean feel,” Berghoff explains. “Combined with the rock walls and other finishes, the house is an unassuming jewel that connects perfectly with its surroundings.”

Similarly, connectivity defined the overall project for the design professionals involved, who related to each other effortlessly from start to finish. “We never drew a line between design and architecture,” Peterson says. “We went for seamless interaction, and that’s what we got.”

A Drummonds soaking tub with a Lefroy Brooks tub filler, both from Clyde Hardware, makes a dramatic statement in the master bath, where marble floors add a touch of elegance. Mac’s Custom Drapery fabricated the Jasper drapes from John Brooks Incorporated. David Michael Miller Associates designed the custom drapery hardware.

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20909 N 90th Place, Suite 202  
Scottsdale, Arizona  
480.585.5065

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