

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

CITING UMBRIAN FARMHOUSES AS AN INFLUENCE, A SCOTTSDALE DESIGN TEAM
CRAFTS A NEW HOME BASED ON OLD-WORLD TRADITIONS.

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER SERGENT / PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICK JOHNSON

ARCHITECTURE / MARK CANDELARIA, CANDELARIA DESIGN ASSOCIATES
INTERIOR DESIGN / DAVID MICHAEL MILLER, DAVID MICHAEL MILLER ASSOCIATES
HOME BUILDER / ANTHONY SALCITO, SALCITO CUSTOM HOMES, LTD
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / JEFF BERGHOFF, BERGHOFF DESIGN GROUP INC.

Designer David Michael Miller commissioned local artisans to fabricate the walnut door he designed for the entry; the door is accented with leaded glass by Chanikva Studio and framed in forged steel. A custom Paul Ferrante lantern hangs above aged-limestone flooring. The antique Khotan rug is from Azadi Fine Rugs.



It all started with a single phone call to architect Mark Candelaria, who had designed several houses in a development north of Scottsdale where an Ohio family intended to build their second home. “My houses don’t have a look—they have a feel,” says Candelaria. In this case, the clients wanted to feel as if they were living in a rustic Mediterranean farmhouse. As luck would have it, the architect runs annual tours of the Italian countryside, and when he showed his clients pictures of the 19th-century farmhouses in Umbria where he often stays, the couple were instantly drawn to the craggy stone houses with terra-cotta roofs, beamed ceilings and tiled courtyards. “We clicked right away,” Candelaria says.

The husband then commissioned builder Anthony Salcito. In another bit of serendipity, he happened to live across the street and had built many homes in the neighborhood. This was the first project Candelaria and Salcito would work together on, but both had collaborated for years with designer David Michael Miller and landscape designer Jeff Berghoff, the final players to join the team. The three-year project began to take shape when Candelaria and his clients walked the property to scope out the best vistas. “At ground level the views were just so-so,” says the architect, who then brought in scaffolding so the owners could see the vantage point from about five feet up. “At that height the views just exploded and we positioned everything to capture them.”

Utilizing 3D software and Google Earth, the architect superimposed the evolving design on the property and drew each window and doorway to perfectly frame the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, the emerald green of a nearby golf course and, come sunset, the twinkle of the city lights. “This house is like an octopus,” Candelaria says of the sprawling home with multiple wings and connecting courtyards. “It has all kinds of arms and these cool little outdoor spaces all around the house.”

Candelaria’s approach resonated with the landscape designer. “The house is separated and pulled apart,

which created all kinds of views and areas for me to work with,” says Berghoff, whose landscape plan started with a 100-year-old ironwood tree salvaged from a local property to be the centerpiece for the cobblestone driveway. “I picked it just for this project because it is the desert interpretation of the olive tree so prominent in Italy,” he says. The rest of the landscaping was calibrated to start outward, with native plants on the property’s periphery blending seamlessly into the desert beyond. The plantings start to become more vibrant closer to the house with roses, lavender, salvia and bougainvillea, the latter espaliered onto the walls. Even more color blooms from groupings of antique planters in the courtyard—layers that soften all that stone. “When you use old relics, such as these basins and pots, it really makes the house feel like it has a soul,” he says.

Meanwhile, Salcito, whose firm owns the company that frames all the houses he builds, made the interior beams and exposed woodwork speak the same language. “A house like this is really part of the reason we started a framing company,” he says, noting that the Douglas-fir beams were hand-hewn on site. “We achieved the desired weathered look that the interior designer was going for.”

In turn, Miller formulated the interiors so they would enhance the architecture and landscape rather than stand out on their own. Warm, buttery colors and subtle earth tones, for instance, were chosen so that the rugs, window treatments and furnishings would echo the hues of the plaster, wood and stone. “I wanted it to be distraction-free—a restful palette where all the colors harmonize and everything melds together,” he explains.

Also paramount was the clients’ desire for a look that was casual and low-maintenance—important when you have three nearly grown sons and a large network of friends and extended family that frequently visit. “They didn’t want pretentious or fancy or formal,” Miller says. “They wanted the house to reflect how they lived, so furnishings needed to be practical in addition to being well-made and well-styled.”

To that end, Miller selected furnishings from such brands as Paul Ferrante, Rose Tarlow Melrose House and Dessin Fournir because their pieces had the right scale and profile to fit the period sensibilities of an old Umbrian farmhouse. In most cases, the designer also opted for reproduction antiques and rugs instead of the real thing so they would hold up well for the busy family. Says Miller: “We wanted to have the effect of antique and age without our clients having to live with such delicate things.”

Two years later, Candelaria says the house feels every bit like a luxurious version of the farmhouses he continues to visit in Italy, while Miller reports that it’s become more the family’s primary home than their property in Ohio. Berghoff adds that the landscape has now matured, making the home a beacon within its desert surroundings. “It’s like a mini-resort,” he says. “It’s just paradise, really.” ■

“I WANTED A RESTFUL
PALETTE WHERE THE
COLORS HARMONIZE
AND EVERYTHING
MELDS TOGETHER.”

-DAVID MICHAEL MILLER



Above: A Dessin Fournir sofa in the living room is upholstered with Rose Tarlow Melrose House fabric. The Morrison coffee table is by Gregorius Pineo and the Formations lounge chair is covered in Fortuny's Solimena fabric.

Left: The living room exudes rustic elegance with a backdrop of tinted plaster walls by Hopper Finishes and an antique limestone fireplace. A pair of Castillo armchairs by Formations, wearing Rose Tarlow Melrose House leather, flanks a Biedermeier side table by Gregorius Pineo. The Louis XIV-style chandelier is from Dennis & Leen in Los Angeles.



This page: On the breakfast patio, a table designed by Miller is surrounded by Amalfi Living iron dining chairs topped with cushions upholstered in DeLany & Long fabric available through Town Studio.

Opposite: In the front entry, landscape designer Jeff Berghoff chose ironwood trees, evocative of olive trees common in Italy. For the building's exterior, architect Mark Candelaria used locally quarried DC cobble with a heavy mortar and clay roof tiles to create a look reminiscent of Mediterranean design.

“THE HOUSE IS SEPARATED AND PULLED APART, WHICH CREATED ALL KINDS OF VIEWS AND AREAS FOR ME TO WORK WITH.”

-JEFF BERGHOFF



Above: The cabinetry, conceived by the designer, was fabricated and installed by Arizona Custom Cabinets. The curtains and sink skirt are clad in a Rogers & Goffigon fabric and the wood floor is from Exquisite Surfaces in Beverly Hills.

Opposite: The kitchen's Tuscan-style chandelier is by Formations; underneath, Gregorius Pineo's Henri II barstools pull up to honed Calacatta marble counters. A pizza oven featuring hand-forged steel doors adds character to the space.

In the breakfast room, a leather trunk with nailhead trim conceals a television that rises up without blocking the mountain views. A Formations chandelier hangs above the custom gateleg table and Gregorius Pineo armchairs in a French Country style. The printed-linen draperies are by Rose Tarlow Melrose House.



Soft blues and creamy neutral hues set a soothing tone in the master bedroom, where a Dessin Fournir bed, with a headboard upholstered in blue Rogers & Goffigon fabric, resides next to an AK Josephine side table from the Kerr Collection in Dallas. The Ravenna candlestick lamp is by Minton-Spidell.



The Water Monopoly's Bateau tub—with a Rohl tub filler from Clyde Hardware Co.—sports a pitted-pewter finish and provides a focal point in the master bathroom. The flooring is composed of rectangular antique-limestone pavers; the drapery fabric is by Rose Tarlow Melrose House.



Opposite: The home features a series of wings with multiple courtyards that capture views in every direction. The covered patio is furnished with a Murray's Iron Works Etruscan sofa, cedar-framed armchairs by Reed Bros. and a Formations coffee table. A Chateau lantern by Paul Ferrante hangs above.

Below: Italian garden lights strung over the Miller-designed dining table and stools, left, provide a festive atmosphere in the courtyard. A covered balcony connecting to one of the guest rooms, right, allows visitors to soak up the landscape on Amalfi Living chaises.

