

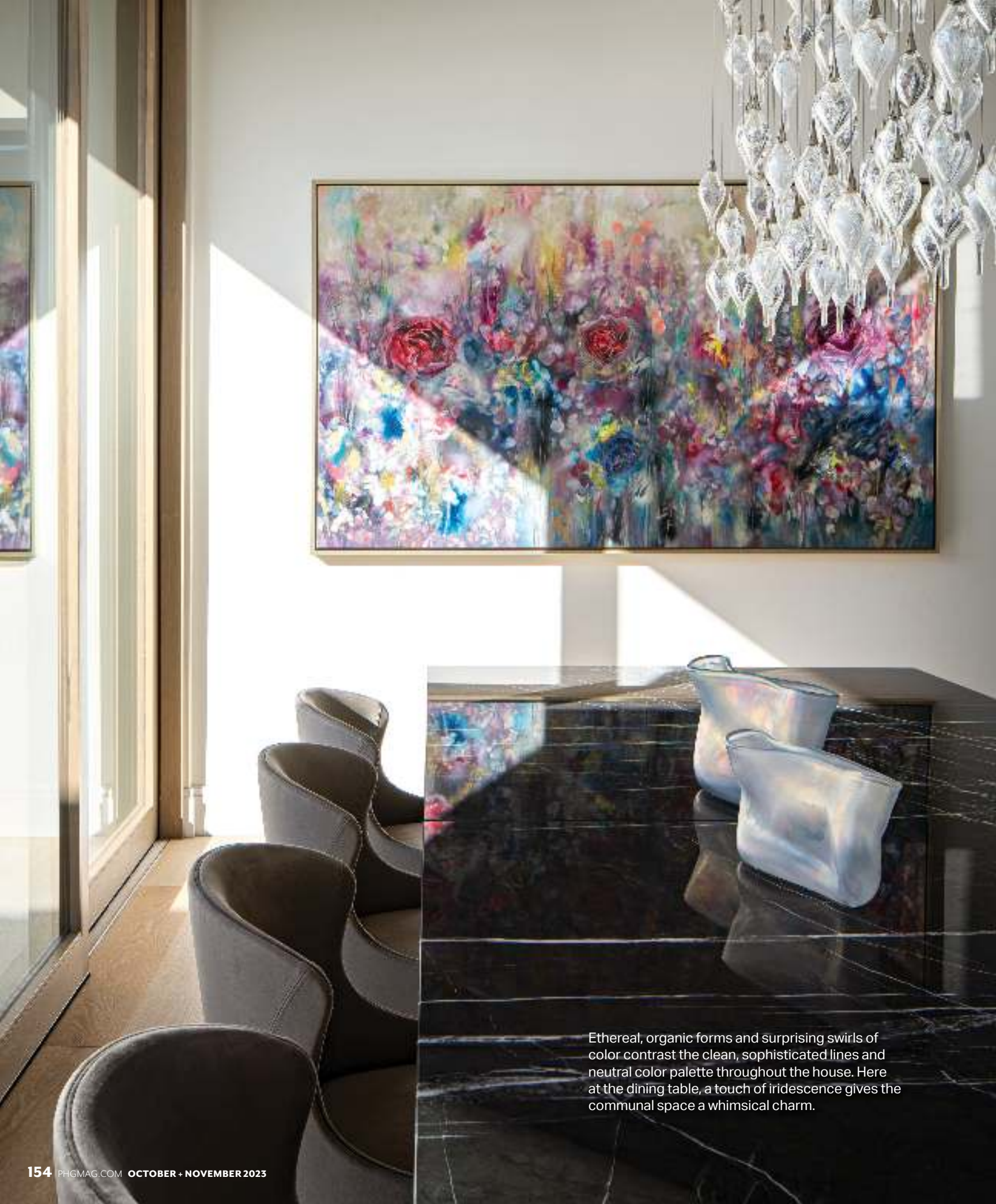
In the shade of the deep architectural overhangs, a row of low-profile pool loungers have the best seat in the house to take advantage of the view of the McDowell Mountains.



A Sight to Behold

From its perch on a hill in North Scottsdale, a magnificent modern abode soaks in the best the desert has to offer.

BY CARLY SCHOLL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUSTIN LARUE BAKER



Ethereal, organic forms and surprising swirls of color contrast the clean, sophisticated lines and neutral color palette throughout the house. Here at the dining table, a touch of iridescence gives the communal space a whimsical charm.



Sliding pocket doors open the dining area to a burbling water feature that not only provides guests with pleasant background noise, but also helps filter out the sound of passing cars nearby. “We wanted the interior to flow beautifully, feel open and uncluttered, and be light and bright,” says the homeowner. “And water features were a must-have for their soothing and beautiful qualities.”

ONE WOULD BE HARD-PRESSED TO

find an Arizona resident who, even after decades of living in the desert, doesn't still marvel at the Technicolor sunsets or the stately cactus-flecked mountains that make this landscape so breathtaking. For one couple, who have resided together in numerous cities around the state over the course of nearly 40 years, their latest home in Scottsdale is an ode to the livability, majesty and magic of the desert.

Looking to reduce square footage and also offer plenty of space for visiting guests and grown children, the couple found themselves

in the Silverleaf neighborhood of North Scottsdale. “We were ready and excited to downsize from the large six-bedroom home where we raised our family, but we still wanted our new house to feel spacious,” says the wife. “We took a less-is-more approach.”

Though it featured unbeatable mountain views, the pie-shaped lot posed some initial concerns. “This kind of project is our sweet spot—we like the challenges,” says architect and *Phoenix Home & Garden* Masters of the Southwest award-winner Erik Peterson. “When you

get a perfect blank sheet of paper, it's tough to figure out what inspires you, but when you get some obstacles to work around, you get to be creative."

Because of the way the lot is situated, with a street on one side and a desert wash on another, the architect and building team had to figure out how to achieve maximum privacy and security. "The site also came with a square footage restriction, so there was a tremendous amount of time spent in the early stages on space planning, furniture placement and orientation," adds builder and fellow Master of the Southwest award winner Anthony Salcito.

With awe-inspiring views of the McDowell Mountains, the homeowners knew from the start that they wanted to take advantage of the vistas every chance they could. "But we also wanted to make sure our outdoor and indoor spaces offered privacy from neighbors and roadways," the husband recalls. To achieve this, Peterson designed clever solutions, such as a pool cabana to block the street, and water features that reduce noise from passing cars.

Additionally, the architecture itself, defined by Peterson as "Arizona modern," is designed to provide a sense of privacy and intimacy despite the expansive surroundings. "There is a bit of a nod to the famous 'Fallingwater' house in this project," notes Peterson, referencing one of the most well-known modernist architectural works by Frank Lloyd Wright. "The home features a series of deep, flat roof planes and overhangs that seem to float over the landscape. The recesses create shadows and protect the floor-to-ceiling glass walls from too much exposure. Plus, we didn't carry the patio walls down to the ground so that the natural wash could flow under the building—similar to Fallingwater."

Crafted from steel, glass and natural stone on which the desert light and shadows create ever-changing patterns, the home somehow manages to both complement and contrast its surroundings. "All of the materials blend so seamlessly with the Sonoran Desert," says Salcito. "The stone emphasizes the verticality in areas of the home, and the strong, dark steel fascia emphasizes the horizontal planes of the architecture."

Inside, the impact is just as breathtaking. "The overall exterior architecture is decidedly modern; however, the couple was looking for a softer touch inside," says interior designer Rebecca Salcito. "We love the challenge of blending both. Natural, textural finishes, including oak, marble, boucle, leather and floor-to-ceiling sheer



Inspired by classic modernist forms as well as its stunning desert surroundings, this north Scottsdale home is a study in serenity. "There is a big element of surprise with this home," says builder Anthony Salcito. "When you walk through the front door, the impact is exceptional."



"Walking through the entry, the expansive windows out to the entertainment patio create the focal point," explains interior designer Ashley Willoughby, who co-designed with Rebecca Salcito. "This set the stage for selecting finishes, especially in the great room. We brought the outside in by wrapping columns in stacked stone and then added warmth by staining the interior window and door frames in a neutral oak finish to match the floor. The overall palette is soft but airy, with tone-on-tone and natural materials."



Framed by clerestory windows, expansive glass pocket doors and window walls in nearly every room, a sweeping tableau of mountain vistas is visible from virtually every vantage point on the property. In the living area of the great room, seating is arranged to host plenty of guests, take in the warmth of the fireplace on cool evenings and have a front-row seat to the views.



"The kitchen was very important," says the homeowner. "Some of our must-haves were two islands, a back kitchen with extensive storage, great views in both areas and fabulous flow. And, we wanted a pass-through counter to the dining patio to make serving easy."

"The master suite is probably my favorite part of the finished product," Willoughby says. "This multi-functional space, with bedroom, sitting room and bathroom became a highlight of the project. So much time went into this personal wing of the home to create a retreat for the couple (and their dog) to escape to. With custom bed and headboard, a combination of wallcoverings on the fireplace surround and carved marble bathroom vanity walls, every detail was bespoke."



linen drapes balance the hard surfaces and angular architecture, while stacked stone columns throughout the home echo the exterior design. "The couple wanted to feel a sense of peace and tranquility when coming home," adds fellow interior designer, Ashley Willoughby. "The combination of curved furniture, large-scale light fixtures and mixed materials helped create a welcoming space that is both fresh and cozy."

Whether taking in the twinkling city lights outdoors or relaxing with friends and family, the couple is immersed in the beauty and serenity of their new home. "We were thrilled with the outcome," says the wife. "The exteriors perfectly complement the interiors and vice versa. The views are exceptional. At dusk, the homes on the hills in Silverleaf light up and give you the feeling of being on the Amalfi coast or the south of France—it's like being in a private resort all our own."

"Our design team perfectly captured our vision and added to it in amazing ways," she continues. "We learned that an experienced and expert builder can get things done, even at times when the supply chain was a problem. We learned that a highly skilled interior designer can create magic and beauty in any space while incorporating function. We learned that a fine architect can quickly interpret and improve upon your visions and dreams in ways you never imagined."

ARCHITECT: Erik Peterson, AIA, NCARB, PHX Architecture.

BUILDER: Anthony Salcito, Salcito Custom Homes.

INTERIOR DESIGNERS: Rebecca Salcito and Ashley Willoughby, Salcito Custom Homes. **LANDSCAPE**

DESIGNER: Jeff Berghoff, Berghoff Design Group.

For more information, see Sources.





“THE MCDOWELL MOUNTAINS WERE A BIG INSPIRATION. JUST STANDING ON THE SITE EARLY ON IN THE BUILDING PROCESS, THEIR IMPACT WAS AMAZING.”

—REBECCA SALCITO, interior designer



The “entertainment patio” lives up to its name, with numerous seating, lounging and dining areas, an impressive gas grill, an indoor-outdoor wet bar and a sparkling blue pool at the heart of it all. “The mornings are sunny and bright, and there is always plenty of sunshine and shade for swimming in any season,” says the homeowner. “The late afternoon views are perfect for entertaining, and the McDowell Mountains reflect the gorgeous colors of the setting sun in shades of purple and peach. We can move from one patio to another, upper and lower, and enjoy views, the moonrise, and all the fire and water features as our moods dictate. Our friends and family agree, our house is the place to be.”

