

# Above the Clouds



Written by Michele Perillo  
Photographed by Alexander Vertikoff

(Shown here) This handsomely structured setting serves as a central gathering enclave with views and open air from front to back. Through an introduction made by **Mark Candelaria** to designer **Anita Lang**, the clients were able to have a seasoned professional assist in the procurement of many to-the-Trade items, such as the stunning custom rugs from **David E. Adler** and the sofas and club chairs (with upholstered fronts and book-matched walnut backs) from **HOLLY HUNT** through **John Brooks, Inc.** The large custom coffee table constructed in slabs, which the owners found at **Walker Zanger**, is reminiscent of a fine-tailored men's suit jacket. Designed in collaboration with **Kendra Vaughn** of **IMI Design**, the table was fabricated by **Stockett Tile & Granite**.

#### FUN FACT:

**Chrissy Donnelly** is a #1 **New York Times** bestselling author and has co-authored ten **Chicken Soup for the Soul** books, and is now also producing feature films based on uplifting true stories with her husband **Mark Donnelly**. Chrissy brings this same energizing approach to her luxury real estate clients, helping them find dream properties that inspire for years to come.

Although the state of Arizona is well-known for having some of the nation's most stellar views, this 220+ degree sweep of the entire Valley might beat all.

For those who call this little piece of paradise "home," their thanks go to architect **Mark Candelaria** and builder **John Schultz** for embracing the task of tackling this challenging lot.

It all began when savvy real estate agent (and co-author of the *Chicken Soup* series of **New York Times Best Seller** books) **Chrissy Donnelly** of **HomeSmart Real Estate** reached out to architect **Mark Candelaria** to review a lot located up over the Phoenix Preserves. With that, this story began.





(Shown right) Artist **Carolyn Reynolds's** nature-themed pieces in gold and silver-leaf bring a healing quality, a sense of well-being, harmony, and tranquility through both her subject matter and use of color. "Flight of the Hummingbird" was commissioned by the owners as a sentimental reminder of the blessings of family. In the center panel, mother and father hover close as their son takes his first "flight" away - to begin his college life.



The dining room has a spectacular open-air, almost celestial feel about it. The ceilings plane at a slight angle to nearly 15 feet high. This room (shown on the opposite page) features two glass walls that recede into steel pockets, guiding them into their own separate envelopes. With upper glass grids that are cantilevered by two abutted, intersecting I-beams, this room literally becomes part of the exterior space when the sliding doors are in their fully retracted position.



(Shown below) Terrace furnishings from **Inside/Out Showrooms** in Scottsdale; Landscape architecture and water feature design by **Greey I Pickett**; All interior and exterior lighting by **Creative Designs in Lighting**, designer **Mark Mueller**.



Hundreds of steel rods, each measuring anywhere from 10-20 feet, were literally embedded by a monster drill spiraling into the mountain-side in order to secure and stabilize the cut of the slope.

(Below) The Bird's Nest - exterior shown in upper image - is the highest vertical point of the home. Located off the master, it serves as *his* office and *their* den. With discerning eyes, the owners selected a **Verellen** sofa that is upholstered in a handsome cashmere flannel with elegant mohair pillows. Flanked on either side are two leather chairs - a whimsical play on the classic wingback.



The original footprint of the lot, which housed a 1960's tri-level ranch, was less than half the size of what would be needed to design and build the clients' vision. In pure **Candelaria** fashion, **Mark** went to work with pen in hand, free-sketching a strategy that would require an environmentally-sensitive *dismemberment* of a mountainside. No easy task. **Candelaria** soon brought in the big guns: Builder **John Schultz** and his team to survey the site. An instant rapport with the prospective clients, along with the unlikely coincidence that this same elite team had built the home of a close business associate, made for a serendipitous connection. It was only shortly thereafter that excavation and the five year concept-to-completion of this extraordinary home began.

As hugging the hillside was Plan A (and B and C), both **Candelaria** and **Schultz** agree that the challenge and the reward came from the magnificent marriage of mountain to the make. Upon this monumental backdrop, an earthen canvas was formed, its face a pointillistic display of steel rods against tectonic plates. With the sun moving like a compass, the hillside unveils itself slowly throughout the day, making the mountain a sculptural element of the home itself.





Located in the center of the home, directly off the formal dining room and grand living room, the kitchen was strategically designed for accommodating both large and small gatherings of guests. Still in keeping with a minimalistic approach, the streamlined cabinetry features floor to ceiling fronts and is finished in a matte gray industrial lacquer that is as durable as it is aesthetically refined. All millwork and cabinetry by **Linear Fine Woodworking**.



Engaging the precision-perfect talents of the master fabricators at **Stockett Tile & Granite**, **Anita Lang** of **IMI Design Studio** worked closely with both builder **John Schultz** and architect **Mark Candelaria** to create this dynamic multi-level center island, proving *the team does make the dream*. Ceilings and custom wood doors are by **Door Works, Inc.**

Artists **Mark Klett** and **Byron Wolfe's** 2008 collaborative composition, "People on the Edge" - a series of photographs, authors unknown, of visitors at the Grand Canyon - is backdropped by the mountains as seen through the entrance to the master. The stark and quiet simplicity of this upper landing prompts one to take pause - a transition that demarcates the approach to a private space.



Artist **Mark Klett** is represented through one of the nation's most important and prolific resources for art, the **Lisa Sette Gallery**.



verlooking North Scottsdale, with a circumference reaching downtown Phoenix, the radial view corridor in this home is no less than spectacular.

Carrying on that theme throughout the structure, there are subtle nuances of curvature in varying elements, such as the stair's walls and railings (*shown on page 57*) that are unexpected given the otherwise straight-lined geometry of most of the interior. Nonetheless, they are all welcoming, soothing and nurturing components within this home.

There are homes that beg to be "dressed" and others that just seem to want to stand on their own - beautifully naked with the outside world. This is one of them.

In terms of interior accoutrements, this **Candelaria** design dictates its very minimal furnishings throughout. What pieces do exist were selected by the homeowners for comfort and function as much as any aesthetic purpose. Strikingly in all cases, the interior decor and artwork appear to be more of an extension of the home's architecture and the owners' love of the arts rather than a reflection of any separate design process. It speaks quietly, but what it says is meaningful.





Designed and built by **Classy Closets**, designer **Fawn Peterson** in collaboration with the homeowner.

**Editor's Note:** No, this closet does not typically look like a fine boutique "display." But its size and streaming light, along with a stunning view beyond the vanity, made it impossible to resist a photo op. Many thanks to the Madame, who in gracious fashion allowed us to have some fun!

The owners, who are very unassuming, just happen to also have some of the best taste - ever. Their shared appreciation of fine textility and objects of superior craftsmanship is evident throughout the entire home, right down to their clothing selections. Further celebrating their fascination with the art of costumery, the front entry exhibits the work of **Xawery Wolski** with his 2017 Terra Ossis (shown right), measuring nearly 6'5" in height. "Wolski's solemn, startling works begin with elemental forms and materials: Bones and terra cotta beads are woven into a fabric from which archetypal garments, or vestidos, are composed." Represented locally by **Lisa Sette Gallery**.



Within a relaxed and tranquil setting located in its own separate quadrant, these guest quarters provide a very private getaway for weekend guests wanting a special retreat. En suite with its own entrance, this room is donned in soothing soft shades of pale green and white.

Custom area rug from **David E. Adler**; **Fortuny** pillows from **John Brooks, Inc.**



It's almost impossible to tell which rooms in this home are for guests and which belong to the residents. The entire property suggests a slower paced life. Separating out personal effects, all areas are tastefully dressed in a relaxed theme of mind, body and spirit - a theme carried throughout the rest of the home. Without excess, each room is thoughtfully designed with a very calm palette echoing varying shades of foliage, cacti and the desert sage that surrounds. Basic furnishings, such as this sleek platform bed and cocoon-like modern lounge chairs, are purposely architectural in nature, as not to detract from the overall flow and harmony.

The desire to see through to the landscape and views was a top priority when it came to the concept in design and architecture of this home. To that end, the wildlife and vegetation have been left completely undisturbed, and the vistas remain visible from nearly every location in this residence, including the six spa-like bathrooms.

(Shown left) The master bathroom features a freestanding wall faced on three sides with full slabs of honed Thassos pure white marble. With a clean, straight-edge detail, the countertops were also fabricated in the same clean, opaque material. Underfoot, simple over-sized rectangular tiles of Absolute Black granite keep a cool step in the summer while the radiant heat beneath them warms the slight chill off the winter floor.

Cabinetry and millwork by **Linear Fine Woodworking**; **Fantini®** faucets and fixtures from **Clyde Hardware**; Lighting by **Mark Mueller of Creative Designs in Lighting**; Tile and slab fabrication by **Stockett Tile & Granite**.

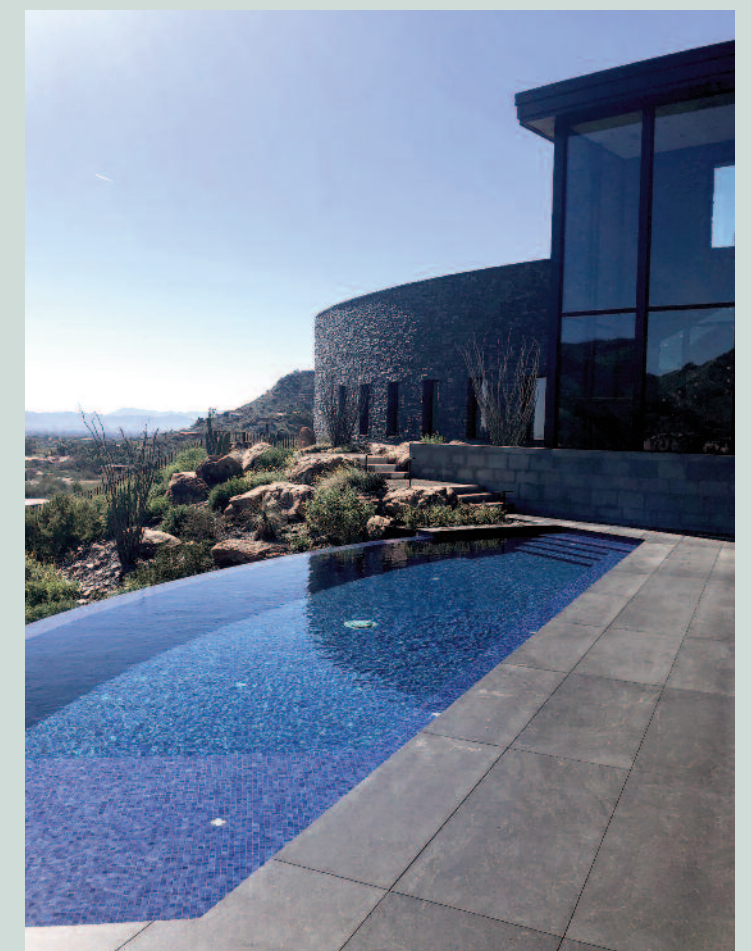
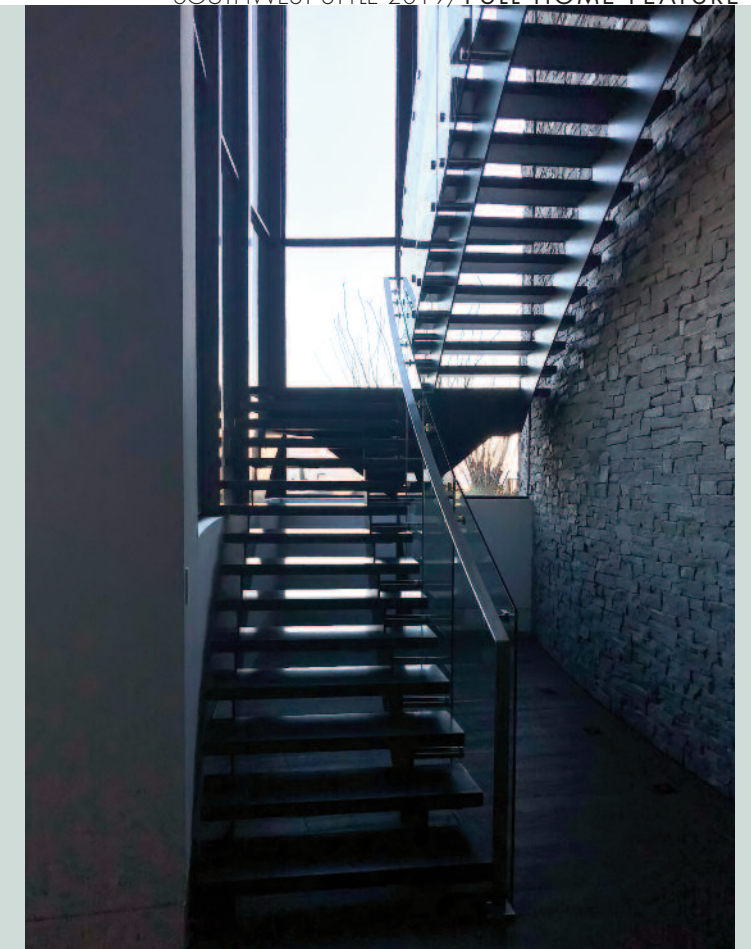




This over-sized leather **Verellen** sectional anchors the room as both a media area and a conversation pit. Available retail through **The Collector's House**.

Seemingly a world in and of itself, the lower level of this residence can be accessed from both an eight car turnaround-style garage, as well as the drive and its adjoining exterior curved walkway, which connects it to the home. The casualness and comfort of decor in this area speaks volumes of the residents who enjoy family time and entertaining guests in this expansive, view-filled hideaway. With a 1,500+ bottle wine room (*far right*), a secondary convenience kitchen located just north of this family room, and a negative-edge swimming pool just steps from the door, the space simply captivates and draws you in. And on those late nights where wine sipping leaves you a little too tipsy to take the free-floating stairs up to the main level, an elevator adjacent to the cellar awaits your arrival. *Of course it does.* If at the end of the day what matters most is the enjoyment of living in a space that allows you to live as you do, on your own terms and at your own pace, with friends and family sharing the same sense of sanctuary, this home truly hits it on the highest level - literally straight up to the clouds.

**CREDITS:** Builder: **Schultz Development**; Architecture: **Candelaria Design**; Interiors: **IMI Design Studio**; Landscape Architecture: **Greey I Pickett**; Steel windows and doors: **Western Window Systems**; Kitchen and bath cabinetry: **Linear Fine Woodworking**; Stairwell steel fabrication: **Accent Stairs**; Motorized window shades: **AZ Custom Designs**; Lighting design: **Mark Mueller, Creative Designs in Lighting**; Closet designed and built by **Classy Closets**, designer **Fawn Peterson**; Plumbing fixtures, cabinetry and door hardware: **Clyde Hardware**; Entry and wood doors throughout, and custom ceilings: **Door Works, Inc.**; Pool and water features: **Mossman Brothers Pools**.






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ARCHITECTURE: CANDELARIA DESIGN; INTERIORS: IMI DESIGN; LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: GREEY I PICKETT; PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEXANDER VERTIKOFF

  
SCHULTZ DEVELOPMENT 7890 EAST MCCLAIN DRIVE, SUITE 1, SCOTTSDALE 480-991-6054  
[WWW.SCHULTZDEVELOPMENT.ORG](http://WWW.SCHULTZDEVELOPMENT.ORG)