

PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

The Magazine of Southwest Living

A photograph of an ornate arched niche containing a classical urn, framed by rustic wooden doors. The scene is set in a hallway with a tiled floor and pink flowers in the foreground.

**BOLD &
BEAUTIFUL**



ANYTHING BUT ORDINARY

A truly special Scottsdale home offers a grand and welcoming sense of style

TEXT BY ROBERTA LANDMAN ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER SEGARRA

Surrounded by magnificent desert and mountain vistas, Merrie and Pat O’Rahilly’s stone-clad home looks as if it always has been part of the rugged landscape and always will be.

“This house is a classic that’s going to be here for a long time,” Pat says of the year-old residence, likening its stone facade to a warm and welcoming castle.

Reminiscent of the best of castles and manor houses through the ages, the 9,000-square-foot residence, on 2.5 acres, is graced by extraordinary craftsmanship, both indoors and out. From its stone fountains, to its impressive hand-carved mesquite entry door, to a groin-vaulted foyer ceiling gleaming with glass mosaic tiles, to rooms dressed in sumptuous yet unimposing style, this home makes a statement at every turn.

Those who took the north Scottsdale residence from drawing board to completion—architect Mark Candelaria, builder John Schultz and interior designer Kimberly Colletti—speak of its design as one that will stand the test of time. “I think it can be here hundreds of years,” says Candelaria, a Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest. And who would argue, for many of those “castle-like” walls are 2 feet thick, according to Schultz.

The style of this dwelling and its environs is Rural Mediterranean, a theme Candelaria says lends the charm of a small European village. The centerpiece is the main house, with rooms that open to multiple patios, water features and courtyards. Adjacent to the larger residence is a detached 1,700-square-foot guest house. It was against this rambling “village” backdrop that Colletti designed rooms dressed with plush yet durable textiles, custom furnishings, and stone, tile, wood and metalworks made by a corps of talented craftsmen.

Parents of two college-age children and one high-schooler, the O’Rahillys “wanted a home that is warm and casual, and also elegant, to fit the lifestyle of the family,” Colletti comments. That lifestyle includes frequent visits from out-of-town friends and relatives. Says Pat: “We needed a house where we could entertain quickly and easily, and with an open floor plan—where you

can see everybody who is there.” The couple got that and more, including a home theater with velvet-clad walls, an inviting dining room fitted with luxurious banquettes, and an upstairs billiards/game room with thronelike seating fit for a king.

An important aspect of Colletti’s design scheme was to make the main house feel comfortable. This was especially so in the enormous great room, with its 17-foot-high ceiling. To cozy things up, she divided the space into two areas, one a casual setting for watching TV, and the other a more formal sitting area. “Even though the scale is grand in the great room, it feels amazingly warm,” the designer remarks. She explains, “To help soften the walls, we created a warm butterscotch palette of Venetian plaster. The ceiling is detailed with brick in a darker palette, to help pull in the scale.”

The focus on comfort and attention to detail are hallmarks of this special home, and the kitchen, a natural gathering spot, exemplifies both ideals. Here, high-tech appliances vie for attention with a massive custom mesquite-topped island. Merrie agrees that this room, like the rest of the house, is indeed wonderful but admits with laughter, “I’m not a big cook. We have friends who like to cook, so we invite them.” □

Opposite: Adding to this residence’s Old World look, most exterior walls are encrusted with stone from an Oklahoma quarry. “Only timeless, real materials” went into the home’s construction, says builder John Schultz. The arched entry, with a deep cantera surround, frames a tall mesquite door conceived by interior designer Kimberly Colletti and crafted by Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest John Taber. Iron lanterns and tall pots complete the vignette.



This page: Landscape and hardscape designer Jim Lucas added shade trees to patios such as this one, located near the home's entry. **Opposite:** The great room, which has two sitting areas, lies under a high ceiling with timbers and brick in a grid pattern. In the foreground, a chenille sectional and chair and a round fringed ottoman offer ample seating. At the other end of the room—a more formal space with a limestone fireplace—sofas are upholstered in velvet, and sheer linen draperies allow filtered light. Twin iron chandeliers, one above each sitting area, help to unify the great room's 28-foot-wide by 34-foot-long space.





This page: Extravagantly fringed banquettes, a tiered iron chandelier, and a circular mesquite table create a casual yet elegant space in which family and friends can relax, says interior designer Kimberly Colletti. Built-in mesquite hutches flank a wine room.

Opposite: Located off a vestibule, this water feature is fed by dual fountains. Steppingstones across the basin lead to a path that goes from the main residence to a separate guest house.



This page: A custom mesquite bed takes center stage in the elegant master bedroom. Against a far wall, a large landscape painting mimics the home's Rural Mediterranean mood. **Opposite:** In "her" side of the master bath, the wall above the vanity glistens with a jewelry-like application of glass mosaic tiles. Painted wood cabinetry, designed by Kimberly Colletti, has doors with a quilted effect. The mirror's frame is detailed with a distressed silver-leaf finish. The countertop is polished granite and flooring is travertine.



This page: Delicate-looking chandeliers hang above the kitchen's mesquite-topped table island, which contains built-in refrigerator drawers and storage space. Antique French terra-cotta paver flooring is set in a herringbone pattern, and brick-size pavers form the stove backsplash. Cabinets have a pale painted and glazed finish. **Opposite:** Earthy mesquite rules in the billiards/game room, where it was used for flooring, beams, wainscoting, the billiards table, side tables and the noteworthy throne-like chairs, which are set on a dais. Paintings by Victor Ostrovsky underscore the setting's playful tone.

See Sources.

