

Three-Part Harmony

A Home's Hillside Siting, Landscape and Interiors Work Together to Frame Near and Distant Views

BY TERESA ESQUIVEL PHOTOGRAPHY BY ART HOLEMAN

This view from inside the draped poolside cabana reveals an amenity-filled landscape that flows toward the natural desert and mountains beyond. The green trim on the window frames is a favorite element of the homeowners, notes interior designer Leslie Fry.



Above: The front courtyard, situated just beyond a steep, winding driveway, creates a true sense of arrival. "This courtyard is very much like a little oasis," notes landscape designer Jeff Berghoff. In addition to lush plants and colorful flowers, there are trees that create shade, he points out. Architect Scott Carson included a watch tower to allow for bird's-eye views of the city and mountainsides.

Opposite: The space in front of the glass and iron entry door was left open in order to provide unobstructed views through the large window and over the long, low fountain. The softly colored rug in the foreground helps to keep the focus on the view.

IT'S NOT UNUSUAL TO HEAR THAT A HOUSE built on a mountainside has fantastic views, but this Arizona residence, built by Tom Argue of Argue Custom Homes, offers vistas of a different sort.

"With a lot of mountainside homes, part of the house is up against the mountain, so you really live away from the mountain," says landscape designer Jeff Berghoff of Berghoff Design Group. "But this one is unique in that it's kind of situated in the middle of the lot, so there are 360-degree views all around. You really get the sense that the natural landscape envelops the whole home."

From its steep hillside perch, the residence affords views of the city to the west and desert mountainside to the east. "The reason the homeowners purchased this lot was for those views," explains Scott Carson, architect and principal with PHX Architecture. "So the goal from the very beginning of the project was to capture the uniqueness of the site."

In particular, the homeowners wanted to highlight the mountain pass behind their property. "The entry hall is centered right on the pass, so when you walk through the front door that's the first thing you see," Carson notes.

Berghoff further drew attention to the view by designing a linear water feature that directs the eye outward. "It's like a little gunsight, like a slot that draws your eye out and across to the distant vista," he says. "To me, it's the 'wow' that frames it. The architecture and the landscape work together in harmony to really accentuate that view."

The interiors, too, are designed to make the most of the mountainside. For the 7,200-square-foot Spanish Colonial-style residence, designer Leslie Fry of Hasbrook Interiors kept the mountain in mind from start to finish. Every window covering and chair was carefully selected and placed to spotlight the remarkable setting.

"Because of the natural backdrop and the views of the landscaped garden in the foreground, it was important for the rooms to not only be beautiful but also to allow the eye to pass through the spaces to the outdoors," comments Fry. "The challenge was to make sure the furnishings were large enough in scale but not too large to interrupt the view, which is incredible. I'm, of course, proud of my interiors, but you can't ignore the setting of the home."

The design team worked closely together from start to finish to ensure that the residence captured the picture-perfect natural landscape. The lady of the house also had a clear vision for what she wanted and was involved in every step, from the first architectural drawing to the selection of the color scheme and every tile, cabinet and window covering in between.

"The homeowner was there with us all along the way, making decisions and talking about her dreams and desires for the house," Carson says. "So we listened to her and took it all in to create a very unique home in a breathtaking setting." ■



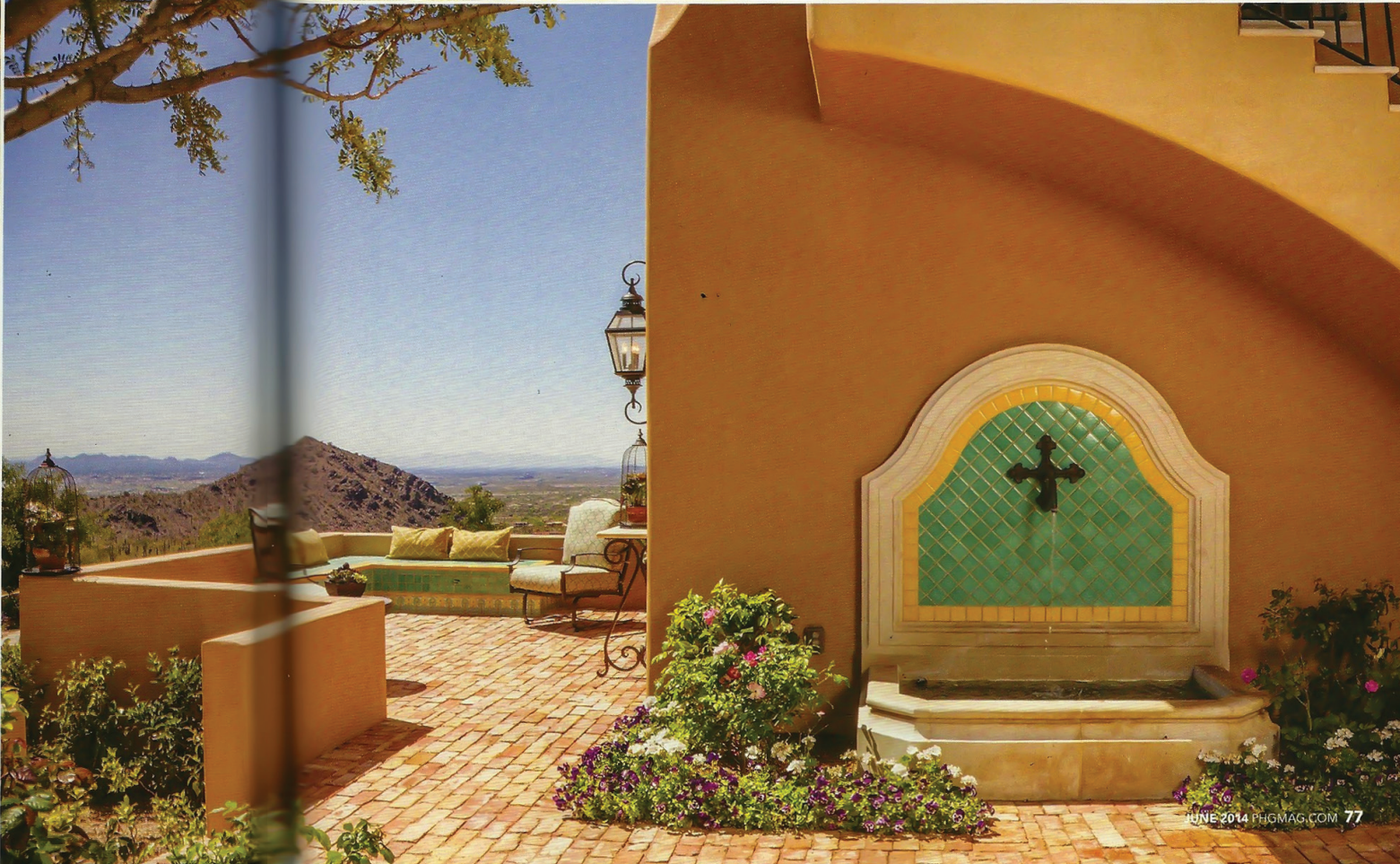


Above: Nicknamed The Happy Hut by builder Tom Argue, the pool ramada has striped ottomans that can be pushed together to form a coffee table. Built-in banquettes provide additional seating. To the left of the ramada is a outdoor dining area with a full kitchen.

Left: The pool bath features a custom vanity crafted of wood pieces cut from beams used on the great room's ceiling. Flooring is terracotta tile accented with turquoise tile decos.

Opposite top: The spa was given its own special setting, notes Jeff Berghoff. "When you're in the spa, you're surrounded by this miraculous desert and you really feel like you're in a private little enclave," he enthuses.

Opposite bottom: This patio off the front courtyard was designed to capture city views. Tile on the wall fountain is repeated on the corner banco.





Above: Working with colors that complement the home and its surroundings, Leslie Fry kept spaces visually simple. In the dining room, walls are finished in Venetian plaster in a desert-inspired terra-cotta tone; a metallic pigment was added to the ceiling. The painting is by R.S. Riddick.

Right: The design of the breakfast nook began with the chairs, Fry notes. "We liked the old Arizona look of them, plus we wanted something that offered color, and these really make a statement here." A clavos-studded Dutch door (foreground) adds a homey touch. To help control light pouring through the corner windows, Fry chose shades with a tight weave and dressed them up with sheer drapery panels. Floors are hand-scraped walnut planks.

Opposite: "The great room is very large and needed a lot of furniture to make it cozy," Fry says. "The comment we get from people is that the house is very cozy for its size, and that it's very welcoming. I think this room shows that." As in the dining room, furnishings in terra-cotta tones balance the aqua hues of the rug and hand-painted draperies. All wood furnishings were custom-made to fit the scale of the room. The wood pear sculpture to the right of the fireplace is by Arizona artist Mitch Fry.





Left: Silk draperies in a large aqua and apricot plaid enliven the otherwise solid-color fabrics used in the master bedroom.

Below: The plaid fabric makes another appearance in the Roman shade over the window behind the bathtub in the master bathroom. As with cabinetry throughout the house, the light-toned woodwork here was custom-made and detailed with input from the homeowners. The wall behind the vanity area is tiled. "To me, this room is about a pretty chandelier over a tub with a view that looks like a painting," comments Leslie Fry.



The master bathroom's outdoor shower is separated from the indoor shower by a glass and iron door. "It's under roof but there are no windows," Fry points out. The shutters were added to keep birds from flying in when the shower is not in use.

See Sources.