

JUNE 2011

LUXURY HOME

quarterly

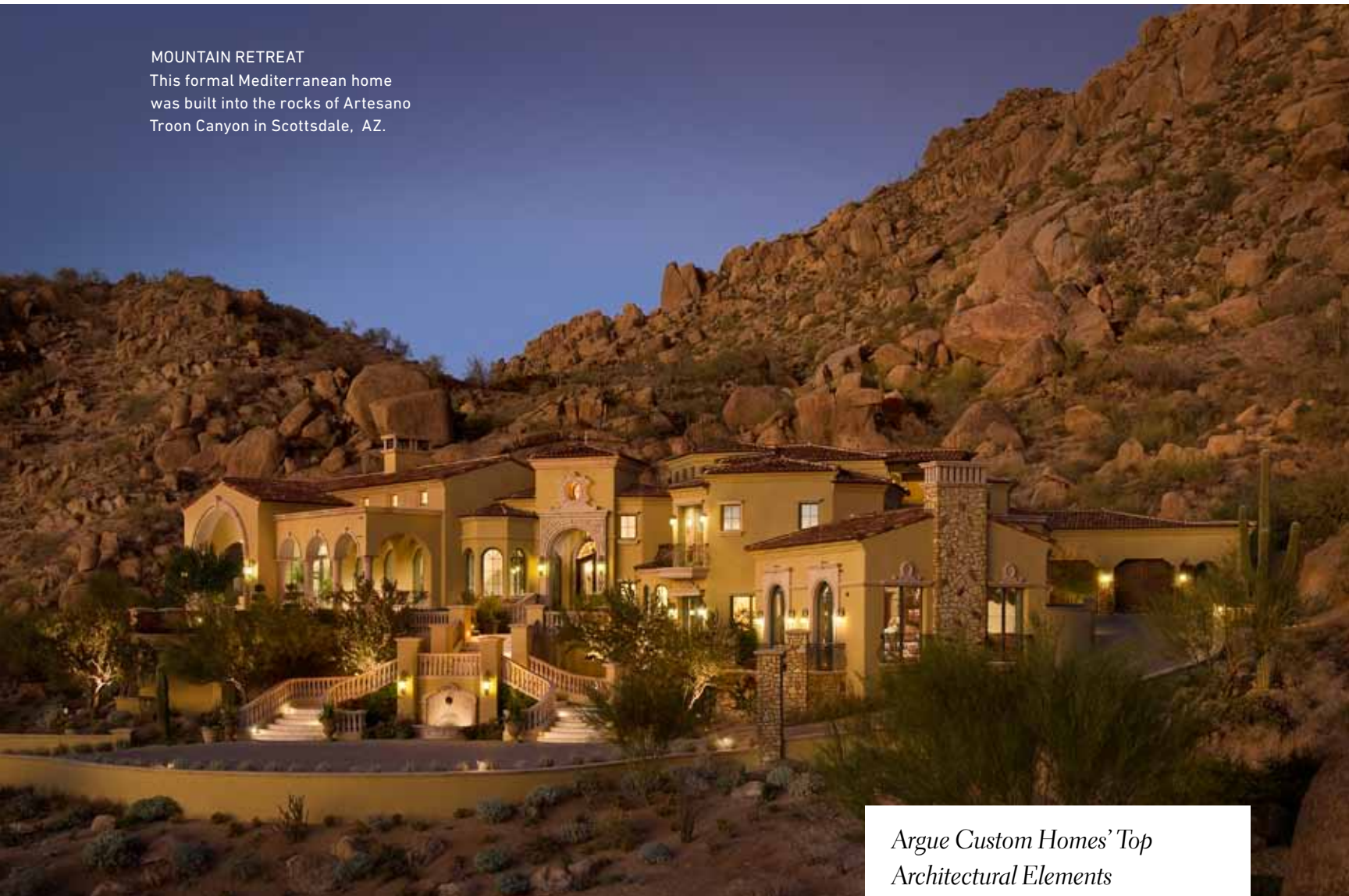
The [new]
Glass House

FRANK HARMON ARCHITECT
creates a modern oasis among the trees

+ A PEEK INSIDE Jeffrey Hitchcock's
gallery-style design at the Plaza Hotel

MOUNTAIN RETREAT

This formal Mediterranean home was built into the rocks of Artesano Troon Canyon in Scottsdale, AZ.



Argue Custom Homes' Top Architectural Elements

Argue Custom Homes

PERSONAL DETAILS AND MEDITERRANEAN STYLE CREATE BEAUTIFUL HOMES

by Laura Judy

In the competitive Arizona building environment, Argue Custom Homes works hard in and around the Scottsdale area to create unique, high-end custom homes that continually place the firm at the top of the residential market. "We've been very fortunate to rise to the top," president Tom Argue says. "I definitely feel lucky to be where I am and doing what I'm doing."

After graduating from the University of Arizona in 1989, Argue worked for various businesses in California and Arizona before starting his own company in 1992. "Before I started my company, I worked mostly in commercial and environ-

mental construction," he says. "In this company, we've touched on commercial, but our passion is residential." Argue works with a reliable base of subcontractors, which he says is extremely important. "With the competitive environment here, we have to be very careful who we work with to make sure they really know what they're doing," he says.

While Argue Custom Homes has taken on up to 18 projects per year in the past, currently that number is closer to five—however, tough economy aside, there's another reason the number is lower this year: the company has been working

1. **Proper placement:** "How a house blends into the lot and environment is very important to us. The lot is a canvas, and we paint the home onto it," president Tom Argue says.
2. **Home automation:** "[It] is big in Arizona, and there are constantly new, interesting, and sophisticated products available."
3. **Reclaimed materials:** "We love using reclaimed products like wood and rock, and we often incorporate rock from the building site right back into the construction of the home."
4. **Light finishes:** "We love how lighter finishes and the use of a lot of glass are bringing the popular style back to more minimal and traditional. It's a more timeless and lighter way of living."
5. **Solar power:** "We are looking at using more and more solar technology. We like where the industry is going, and government rebates make it easier and easier to use."



FROM ITALY TO ARIZONA

This kitchen was designed to the specifications of an Italian kitchen the clients wanted to replicate.

Artesano Lot 27 & 28 in the Troon Community

Location: North Scottsdale, AZ

Design Style: Formal Mediterranean

Square Footage: 14,600

Beds/Baths: 5 bedrooms, 7 baths (in the main house)

Lot: Integrated with boulders on the side of a mountain

Highlights: A separate guesthouse, a workout facility with a locker room and sauna, a three-story elevator, a wine cellar with tasting patio, and a reverse negative-edge pool with Chinese glass tile.





The Scottsdale Elegant Estate Home

Location: Scottsdale, AZ

Design Style: Rural Mediterranean

Square Footage: 30,000 (24,000 livable space)

Beds/Baths: 6 bedrooms, 7 baths (in the main house)

Lot: 40 acres with a sweeping mountain view

Highlights: A separate guesthouse, a tennis court, a horse barn and arena, an all-rock exterior, a back patio with a brick ceiling, and a negative-edge pool facing the mountains.

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TOM ARGUE, PRESIDENT

on a massive project. “This home is worth the equivalent of about 10 of the homes we usually do,” Argue says. The Scottsdale home, which will be one of the largest homes in Arizona, is 103,000 square feet with about 76,000 square feet of livable space. Built on top of a mountain, the home will include an IMAX theater, a three-story nightclub, and a lazy river.

Of course, while still on the high-end of the market, most of the homes the company builds are on a slightly smaller scale, and style varies from

project to project. “I wouldn’t say that we have our own distinct style because we enjoy working with different styles, but we don’t do a lot of true contemporary homes,” Argue says. Some of the styles the company references frequently are rural Mediterranean, formal Mediterranean, Tuscan, and ranch hacienda, all popular in the Southwest market.

A recent project that the company built in North Scottsdale’s Troon community truly exemplifies formal Mediterranean style. While the project

was a little difficult to get through—it became the company's longest build ever—it turned out to be amazing in the end. "The client was very tough and discerning, and he kept changing his mind, but now he's turned into a great friend," Argue says. "He just wanted to make sure every detail was something he'd want to live with." Some of those details include reclaimed materials, Venetian plaster, automatic pocket doors, and an elegant office opening onto a "trophy" room for the big-game hunting client.

One of Argue's favorite elements is the ceiling in the breakfast room. "The client wanted a skylight, but we were worried about too much light coming in, so we created an illuminated, mirrored ceiling that creates the illusion of a window," Argue says. The company enjoys finding solutions to tricky problems and making sure every client gets the best. "It's all about filling in those personal details," Argue says.

Another favorite project, which Argue Custom Homes built about seven years ago, is an elegant estate home in the rural Mediterranean style. The home takes full advantage of its 40 acres of property with a large yard, a negative-edge pool, tennis courts, a horse barn and arena, and a huge back patio featuring a mountain view. An all-rock exterior, brick ceilings, and walnut floors add to the unique style of the home.

Most of the company's clients come from referrals, and Argue is thrilled with its success over the years. "We put forth a team approach to a project, articulately explaining the process to the client and managing it all the way through, which is the best thing you can do in this industry," Argue says. "It's also important to click with clients personality-wise, and we've been blessed to have some great clients who have really pushed us to get creative and find new, unique solutions." ■



ARGUE CUSTOM HOMES

It's not the graceful arches or grand entryways that make our homes so special. Nor is it the hand-cut stone that adorns the outer walls. It's not the meticulous laying of tile, the imported wood doors or vaulted ceilings framed with ornate trim that makes them so magnificent. It's not even the organic flow of the floorplan that creates such outstanding beauty.

No, none of these things can compare to the most important thing we put into every home we build: artistic vision and unrelenting passion to create the home of your dreams.

We only build a select number of homes each year. This allows us to deliver unparalleled attention to detail and quality. And, at the same time, we are able to maintain a very high level of personalized attention to each and every customer.



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