



# ROMANCING *the* STONE

RUSTIC MATERIALS MARRY WITH RICH TEXTURES AND A CLEAN PALETTE IN A MEDITERRANEAN-INSPIRED GETAWAY.

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Reclaimed beams from Trestlewood and brick from Marvel Masonry lend a rustic note to the great room of this Scottsdale house. Above the Lee Industries armchairs and a coffee table by Paul Ferrante is a Formations chandelier from John Brooks Incorporated. Hickman designed the dining table as well as the chairs, which are upholstered in Kerry Joyce fabric.

**I**t was 115 degrees in July when a New Jersey couple first visited Phoenix on the advice of a friend. Almost immediately they began looking at real estate, and by the end of the week they'd put in an offer on a lot in Scottsdale's Mirabel golf community and were discussing a ground-up build with residential designer Gary Wyant and general contractor Tony Calvis. Sitting on the patio of their completed house, the wife laughs at the memory. "We weren't actually supposed to buy anything," she says. "I kept telling my husband, 'We can't be impulsive.' But we just fell in love with the place."

Wyant introduced the clients to interior designer Lissa Lee Hickman, whose gift for creating interiors that embody what she calls "livable luxury" was just what they were looking for. Hickman has called Arizona home since 1993, and she understood what drew her clients to the area. "I love the mountains here and how they contrast with the green of the golf courses," she says. "And I love the fact that it's a growing city."

Self-described "T-shirts and jeans people," the couple sought a vacation retreat that could comfortably accommodate them and their college-age son and daughter. Proximity to the golf course was key, but they also wanted a house where they could entertain friends and extended family. The wife leaned toward a rustic aesthetic while her husband was specific about what he didn't want: ultra-modern or Pueblo-style details. Wyant and Calvis responded with a plan for a Mediterranean-inspired home characterized by open spaces and an easy flow from indoors to out. "The vision was for the exterior architecture to be old-world-rural Mediterranean in style," explains Wyant, "but the interior was to be more contemporary and fun."

**This page:** A groin-vaulted brick ceiling lends character to the breakfast room, where Century chairs surround a table designed by Hickman. The chandelier is by Paul Ferrante.

**Opposite:** In the kitchen, reclaimed beams and planking contrast with white cabinets and marble counters from Arizona Tile. The lanterns are from Gregorius Pineo.



“I LIKE TO INCORPORATE DIFFERENT TEXTURES SO THAT THE ROOMS FEEL LAYERED AND COLLECTED.”

-LISSA LEE HICKMAN



Hickman chose Calacatta gold marble for the master bathroom. "There's nothing better than an all-white bathroom," she says. "And the marble is timeless." Adds the homeowner, "I was worried it would be too formal, but we love it." The tub and faucet are from Studio41 Home Design Showroom.

Project manager Mike O'Connor oversaw the build and, as the house took shape, the wife flew in from the East Coast every couple of months to shop with Hickman and check on construction. "Lissa knew we were 2,500 miles away and really took ownership of the project," she says. "I'd come to town, and one day we'd look at door hardware and the next we'd shop for bathroom tile or flooring." Designing a vacation residence isn't all that different from doing a primary residence, Hickman points out. "It's about tuning in and asking the client how they live and how they want to feel in the space."

In keeping with the wife's love of authentic materials, she and Calvis Wyant's team selected elements like hand-painted tiles and reclaimed wood and brick. The layered, textural approach begins outside, with walls clad in DC Cobble fieldstone and brick. Terra-cotta tiles line the floor of the entry, which opens to the brick-accented great room, an expansive, high-ceilinged volume that encompasses a living and dining area. In the kitchen, reclaimed beams and wood planking are balanced by crisp white walls and cabinetry and marble counters. The couple originally requested dark wood floors in the main rooms, but Hickman, who designs

A Dennis & Leen chandelier adds sparkle to the master bedroom, where Hickman went with a custom bed, bench and bedding. For the A. Rudin armchairs, she chose an upholstery fabric from Thibaut. The tray ceiling is trimmed in reclaimed planking from Trestlewood.



**Opposite:** The tile and flooring pattern by Craftsman Court Ceramics and cabinetry by Goodall Custom Cabinetry & Millwork were specially designed to outfit this bathroom for the young lady of the house. The mirror is the homeowners' own.

**Below:** In the guesthouse suite, the nightstands, upholstered bench and linens, which dress a bed by Lee Industries, were all custom fabricated for LHL Inc.





Calvis and Wyant clad the home's exterior in DC Cobble fieldstone from Modern Group. "The rural Mediterranean style is popular in Arizona because our climate is similar to that part of the world," Wyant notes. Plantings were selected by landscape designer Brandon LaCombe of Desert Springs Outdoor Environments. The Kingsley Bate wicker chairs are from Inside/Out Showrooms; the chaises are by On the Veranda.

"from the ground up," guided them instead to white oak. "Light floors visually expand a space," she notes, "and here they tie in with all that reclaimed wood." Similarly, she specified a light-colored grout for the brickwork "to keep it from feeling too heavy or weighed down."

The luminous interior is reinforced by a simple palette of white, cream and blue, along with furnishings Hickman custom designed for the house, like the dining table and chairs in the great room and the breakfast room table. Throughout, she sprinkled hand-selected pieces, such as the refinished antique doors that lead to the master bedroom. Making everything work together is all about balance, Hickman notes. "When you walk into a room, it's important that it just feels good. A space should quietly unfold as you walk through it."

Details in every room invite lingering, from the breakfast room's groin-vaulted brick ceiling to the wood planking on the tray ceiling in the master bedroom. While their guests favor the freestanding casita off the pool—"They don't want to leave," quips the wife—the couple gravitates to the covered patio off the pool or the pergola off the master bedroom, where they can watch the golfers nearby.

For now, the house serves as a family getaway and a jumping-off point for other adventures, but the wife admits she'd like to extend her visits to the desert. "My husband's not ready to retire yet, but when we leave, he'll say, 'Bye, house.'" That's music to Hickman's ears. "When my clients want to spend more and more time in a home," she says, "I know I've done my job." ■