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A second home in Phoenix fits

BY SANDRA S. SORÍA PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAL VENERA PRODUCED BY BARBARA MUNDAL



desert

a couple to a tee.

rose





Mary Ellen and Gates Hawn's collection of museum-quality Native American pottery adds drama to their adobe home. **Opposite:** Floral linen fabric kicks off the red-and-brown palette, complementing existing rosy plaster walls. Nevil, the cocker spaniel, likes to relax in the colorful chair. **Left:** Peeled timbers with carved corbels define the entryway. **Preceding pages:** Furniture pieces in the *sala grande*, or grand living area, are Spanish Colonial antiques. The entryway's Guatemalan masks and kilim rug are among aged accessories that add authenticity throughout the home.

It was 2004, and Gates Hawn was settled into his 100-year-old English Tudor home in New Jersey when he got the call. "Hi," said the chirpy stranger. "I'm your realtor." Gates didn't know he *had* a realtor. Back up another step—he didn't know he was in the market for a home.

Cut to Arizona, where his wife, Mary Ellen, was golfing with girlfriends, going on a few open-house tours with home sellers in the Phoenix area, and dreaming of teeing up a whole new lifestyle with her newly retired husband. "I'm full of surprises," says Mary Ellen, "but this one was a biggie. We really weren't considering a second home anywhere. But things happen."

What happened was that Mary Ellen was falling for the Sonoran desert landscape, with its saguaro cactus popping up like enthusiastic cheerleaders. Even more, she was quite literally getting into the swing of the sunny, casual lifestyle of the West. Then came the kicker: She found a Pueblo-style adobe home in a picturesque community dotted with six Arnold Palmer-designed golf courses. "I took one look at this home," she says, "and fell in love with its traditional Southwestern design and the setting. And it's in Carefree, Arizona. Isn't that a great name?"

Today, after enjoying the home and its environs for four seasons, Mary Ellen attests that the place lives up to its name. "It's like adult camp!" she says. Obviously, Gates played along. "Gates took up golf four-and-a-half years ago," she adds. "And thankfully he did! Now it amazes me how much he loves it."





"It's a nice balance," reports Gates. "Now we have six months in the New Jersey green zone and six months in the Arizona brown zone, each with its own look and lifestyle."

Mary Ellen credits designer Patty Burdick with the loveliness and livability of the home. "All the design credit goes to Patty," says Mary Ellen, who spotted Burdick's work on the cover of *Traditional Home* (June/July, 2004). "I just told her I didn't want the kitschy Southwestern look; she got me right away."

Good thing, too, since the Hawns purchased the home in August and wanted to enjoy the holidays in Arizona. "They leaped into the lifestyle and aesthetic completely," remembers Burdick. "And it was clear they wanted an authentic house."

The 10-year-old house needed no structural changes. The Hawns loved the great room's soaring 20-foot-high ceilings constructed with *latillas*, the Southwest's traditional peeled-pine tree limbs laid in a herringbone pattern, and supported by *vigas*. The living area flowed to a courtyard with a naturalized pool. Perfect for entertaining, the home had two guest rooms with private entrances and a separate casita for visitors.

One hitch in the design was that Mary Ellen and Burdick couldn't use the traditional yellows they first envisioned because of Venetian-plastered walls done in a soft rose. Redoing the

Right: A small dining area and a nearby courtyard make an ideal space for entertaining. Hefty linen-covered chairs are scaled for the house.

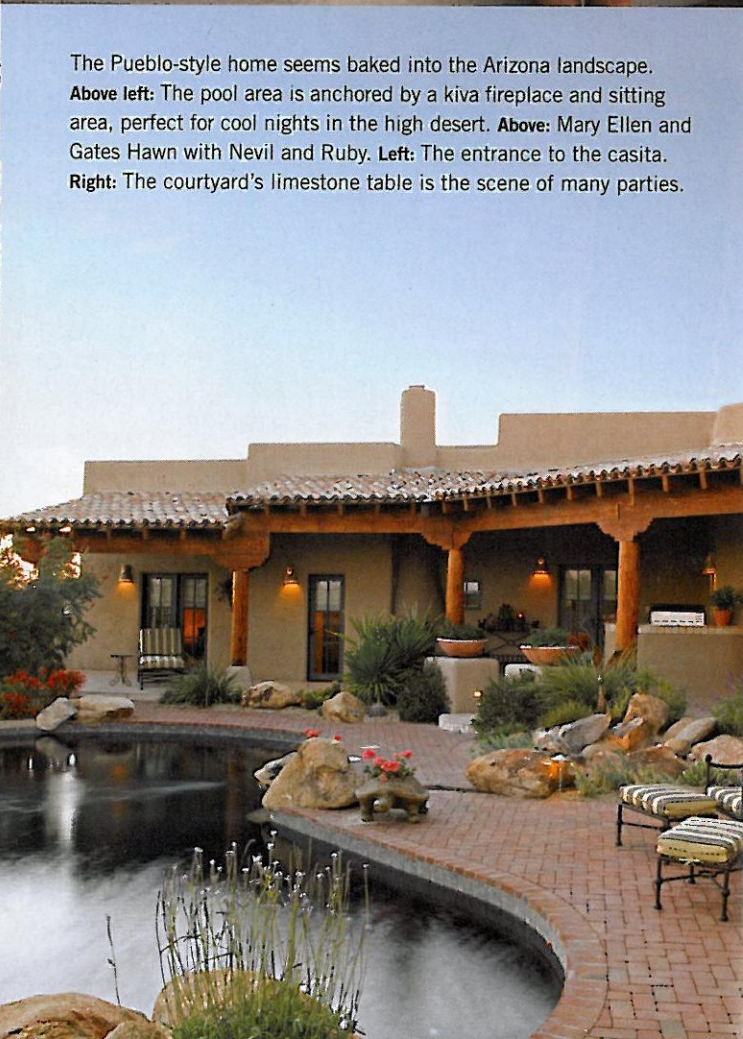
Left: A braided sisal rug plays off the living room's pine-log ceiling.

Below left: Sculptural-shaped cacti influenced the desert theme.

Below: The breakfast sitting room is perfect for morning lounging.







The Pueblo-style home seems baked into the Arizona landscape. **Above left:** The pool area is anchored by a kiva fireplace and sitting area, perfect for cool nights in the high desert. **Above:** Mary Ellen and Gates Hawn with Nevil and Ruby. **Left:** The entrance to the casita. **Right:** The courtyard's limestone table is the scene of many parties.





treatment would have been costly and time-consuming. "The pink cast drove many of our choices," says Burdick.

It drove them first to red. Burdick began with red and brown floral linen on the wing chair and added brown leather upholstery plus tartan plaids gutsy enough to balance the ceilings.

In the end, the palette of browns with pops of deep red and sage green mimics the desert landscape beyond the windows. "By picking colors for the inside from what you see on the outside," says Gates, "you feel like you're always outdoors."

For the final layer of the home's design, the Hawns tapped into the rich artistry of the area and discovered an affinity for its bold pottery. These artful pieces remind them that they are far away from New Jersey. "We wanted a place completely different from our home back East," says Mary Ellen. "Our home in New Jersey is fussy, and we didn't want to fuss with this house."

When your winter destination is Carefree, Arizona, creating a fussy house would certainly seem a high design crime. ■

Interior designer: Patty Burdick

For more information, see sources on page 152.

Top: An iron four-poster adds needed height to the master bedroom. Comfit pots become right-sized lamps. **Center:** A kiva fireplace wards off the chill of the high desert.

Right: Stripes lend the guest room pizzazz.

