

SANTA FE DESIGN—HERE & THERE

# PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

THE MAGAZINE OF SOUTHWEST LIVING







# SECRET HIDEAWAY

## A CLASSIC SCOTTSDALE ADOBE OFFERS REFUGE AND COMFORT

Text by Judy Harper • Photography by Christiaan Blok

Ask the owner of this north Scottsdale residence if wildlife frequents her property and she's quick to point out scratches on the wooden windowsills in her bedroom. Today, she can laugh about the baby bobcat that wandered into her house last spring and briefly took up residence.

"There are scratches where the mother was trying to get to the

baby inside, and where the baby was trying to get out," says Sue Calvin of Wiseman & Gale Interiors. "The owner noticed the scratches and found some scat, so she knew there was an animal of some type in the home. The housekeeper found it curled up under a dressing table in the master bath."

Perhaps it shouldn't come as a surprise that the young feline





**Above left:** This home's thick adobe walls, small windows and entry courtyard with stepped wall are typical of Santa Fe-style homes and those by the late Bill Tull, the home's architectural designer. Desert landscaping provides a softening effect. • **Top right:** A variety of vegetation borders the driveway leading to the home. • **Above right:** Tull created intimate sitting areas indoors and out, including this one off the kitchen.

might seek refuge—much like the homeowner herself—in a place of undeniable privacy and luxury. In harmony with its natural surroundings, the home is largely about comfort, seclusion and beauty. It's a hidden oasis, a little piece of paradise away from the hustle of the world outside.

Nestled on two lots at the end of a cul-de-sac, the dwelling

blends in so well with its Sonoran Desert surroundings that it's barely visible from the street. As guests travel along the driveway past mature cacti and gnarled mesquites, they are treated to breathtaking views and to the Pueblo-style home designed by the late Bill Tull. As so many have said of Tull's designs, the house seems to rise naturally from the earth, almost as if it had been

Architectural designer Bill Tull devoted equal energy to his artwork. Examples are showcased throughout the home, including the living room (this picture) and entryway (opposite top). Complementing the entry's simplicity is a trio of African stick figures and an old sabbino table. A pair of custom armless wingback chairs flanks the fireplace in one of the living room's two sitting areas. • **Opposite bottom:**

A second sitting area is grouped in front of an antique Peruvian *armario*. The small arched leaded-glass window was a trademark of Tull's.

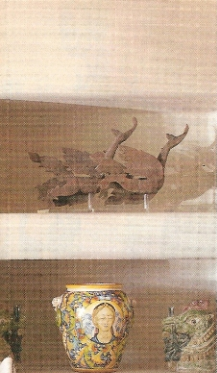


sculpted from the land.

"Bill was amazingly talented," says Calvin of Tull. A 1990 *Phoenix Home & Garden* Master of the Southwest who passed away in 2000, Tull designed nearly 50 adobe homes in the Valley and is largely credited with bringing Santa Fe's favorite building material to this area. He worked on this project with contractor John Mechem and architect James Coady, who turned Tull's render-

ings into precise architectural drawings.

Taking her cue from the architecture, Calvin says that understanding the scale of the home was crucial as she embellished its interior spaces. Oversize furnishings ground the rooms, preventing anyone walking in from being swallowed up by the generous spaces. In each room, the eye takes in the time-worn ambience of the home and the shapes and textures of its appointments.



A variety of one-of-a-kind furnishings enhance this earthy-looking and timeless residence. Standout pieces include a hand-carved Mexican Colonial mirror from the mid-1800s, antique Peruvian armoire, sabino table and Japanese hibachi. An old grain bin serves as a sideboard in the dining room, where 17th-century Spanish host chairs flank a mahogany monastery table. Bolivian silver pieces and a glass table with aluminum base add

a touch of sparkle.

"The architecture of the room says a lot," Calvin remarks. "My job was to put in fine understated pieces that don't compete. There is so much strength in the architecture, and these good sturdy pieces complement that. I love the owner's taste and the softness of the neutral palette. It provides a very relaxed feeling that invites you to curl up. The owner has lived here at least





10 years now and says the longer she's here, the more she loves it."

While large windows maximize picture postcard views, smaller ones are often surprising, such as small arched leaded-glass windows. A step-down wine room also adds interest. An exposed adobe wall here provides a clear example of the ever-present feeling of calm and quiet that the home exudes, a byproduct of the way in which the organic walls absorb sound and regulate changes in temperature.

A wood-beam ceiling and flagstone flooring that extends to

the outdoor patio continue the organic look within the home. Signature Tull design elements such as niches, arches and plenty of built-ins also were incorporated. "A lot of the furniture was built right into this house," Calvin notes.

The gracious space is meant for the pleasures of kinship. With an outdoor living and dining area, pool and two guest houses, it offers a vacation haven for the owner's grown children, grandchildren and friends. A second bedroom in the main home was designed with visiting grandchildren in mind. The charming







space features a *chimenea*, twin beds and one of several paintings in the home created by Tull. "The paintings look so good in this home because they are Bill's, and they blend with the architecture," the designer adds.

Tull was a master at capturing views, Calvin affirms. Her favorite part of this home is a secluded courtyard that intrigues with its dramatic architectural elements and a weathered Mexican bench that beckons one to linger. "The courtyard has a walkway that literally draws you down the path to enjoy the vista. These inviting spaces make you feel welcome to just sit and be, and the homeowner enjoys each one of them.

"I just did what the architecture told me to do," she adds. "This was definitely a home where the house had its way, and I simply provided the lifestyle." 🌿

*See Resource Guide.*

Tull touches are evident outdoors as well as in. Note the sculpted walls and deeply recessed windows (left), the entry courtyard's *chimenea* (below), and the back patio's skylight and *banco* (right). An opening above the *banco* frames the natural setting beyond.

