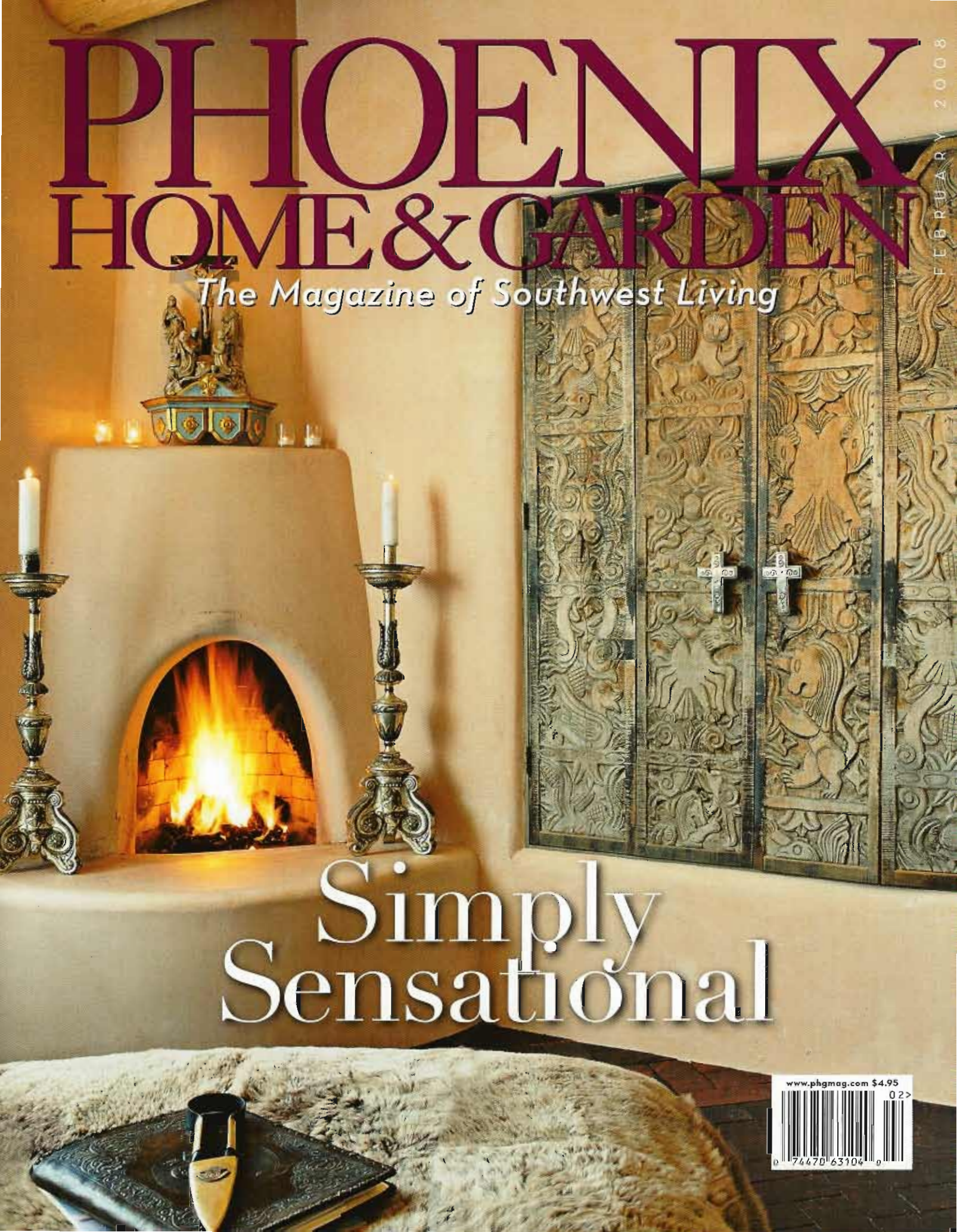


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Comfort Zone

Beautiful decor and resortlike amenities make for easy living in a Paradise Valley home

TEXT BY ROBERTA LANDMAN ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTIAAN BLOK

Its spacious

grounds, the pool area and guest house had the fine trappings of a resort. But the place this Paradise Valley, Ariz., family would be spending the most time—the inside of the new house—felt less than inviting.

Although existing stone flooring was an attractive fit with elements of Old World decor, and also easy to maintain, the all-white walls made the otherwise beautiful and luxurious spec home seem cold. The setting cried out for color and a soft touch, says the woman of the house, who engaged interior designer Sue Calvin of Wiseman & Gale Interiors to work her magic.

The mother of three teenagers recalls telling Calvin what she and her husband desired for the interior of the residence. With the idea of “relaxed living” a prime objective, the homeowner notes, “We wanted our house to be elegant but also comfortable—where you could go in and feel right at home, and not feel like you were in a model home.” Another important requirement: Keep things serene and unfussy. “I don’t like clutter.”

Calvin achieved the ambience she calls “European Country” in several ways: by incorporating a rich blend of color in both wall treatments and fine fabrics; by uniting pieces the homeowners brought from their former residence with new and compatible furnishings and antiques; and by paying attention to the size of rooms and their high ceilings, and bringing all into a comfortable scale. She kept in mind that for clients who “really live in their home,” the design had to be “family-oriented”—from the recreational billiards room and home theater to the more refined

formal dining and living rooms.

“This house was bland,” recalls the designer. “We really worked hard to warm it up.” Toward that end, walls now are plastered in a variety of soothing hues and textural finishes, providing a suitable canvas for furnishings and art.

Upholstered pieces, some re-covered and others new, are dressed in fabrics with a luxurious yet durable hand, and fitted with inviting over-stuffed seating. In addition, draperies throughout “do add a lot of warmth,” states Calvin. “It is all quite European and very sumptuous, but the fabrics are not necessarily fancy.”

The revamped house has just the appeal the homeowner sought. “It is very comfortable, it has an elegant feeling, and there is no clutter,” she says.

Plus, she adds: “There is a feeling of fun in this house. We really do enjoy entertaining here, and our children love having their friends over.” ■

Opposite: This miniature grand piano and two antique Spanish chairs create a surprising and delightful vignette in a corner of the home's entry. Resplendent with an urn of fresh flowers, the nearby wall niche gained its fool-the-eye curvaceous “wood” border with a painted faux bois treatment. As elsewhere in the rambling residence, the formerly white walls were given warmth and character with textural custom plaster in a crème hue enriched with brown undertones. Flooring is easy-care stone.





This page: Because of its high ceiling and massive fireplace, attention to scale was an important factor in the living room's design scheme, says interior designer Sue Calvin. She brought the space into more livable proportions with furnishings and such accents as an oversized antique metal initial "E," and tall plants on the cantera mantel. **Opposite:** A large floor-standing mirror reflects not only the dining room's antique pieces and crystal chandelier, but also its low-slung triple groin-vaulted ceiling.



This page and opposite: Earthy plastered walls, a mix of antique and new furnishings, and striped and print textiles bring coziness and European Country grace to the kitchen and its breakfast area, and to the adjacent great room. The table and tufted chairs in the breakfast nook are new, while the sofa table, mirror and cabinet in the great room are antiques from the homeowners' former residence.

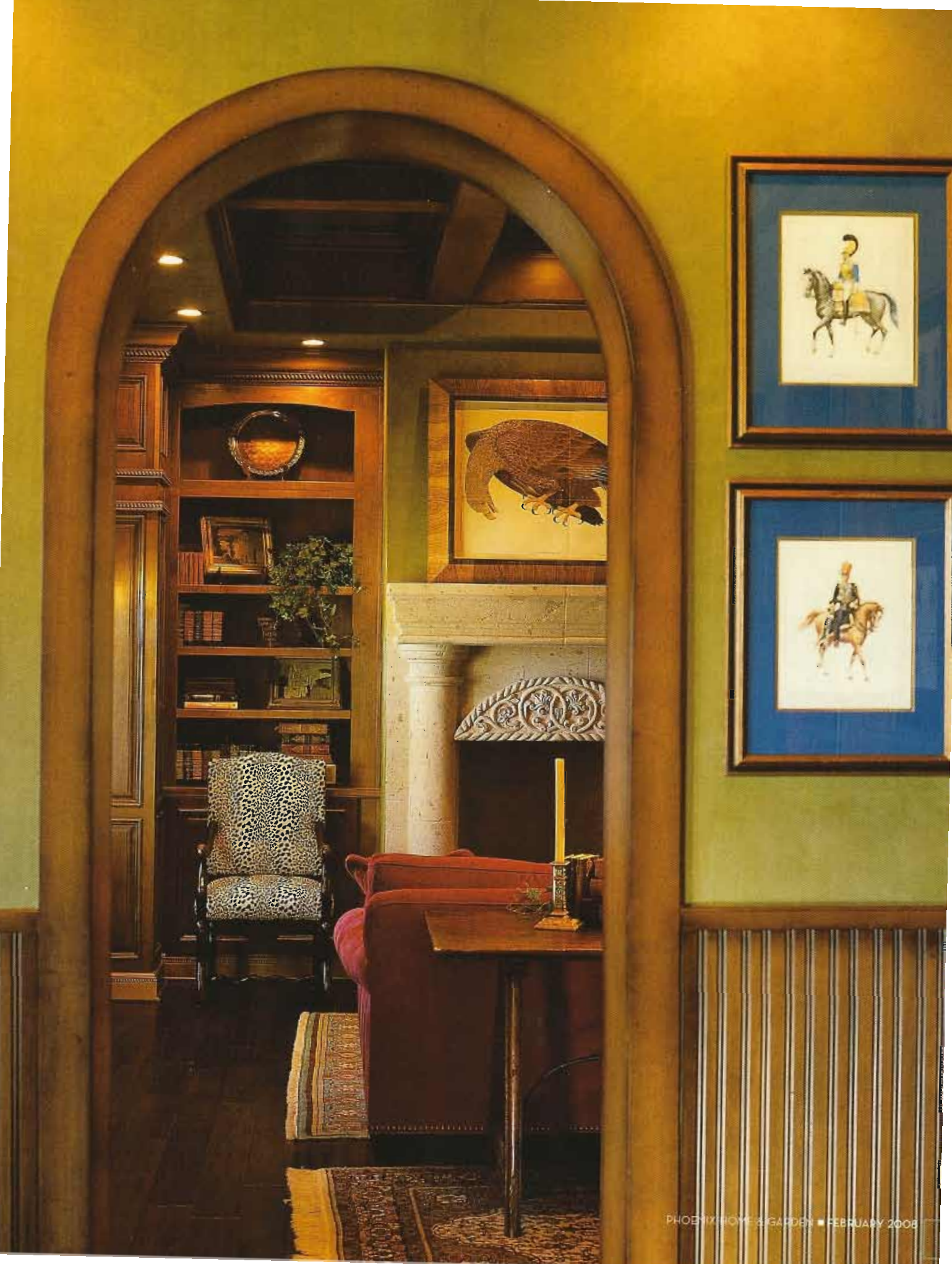




This page: With an area carved out for reading or relaxation, the master bedroom is a sanctuary of serenity. Fine textiles used in draperies, the bench and upholstered chairs add to the room's charm. The Oushak carpet was made in Turkey.

Opposite: Green-hued walls of the study and library beyond are warmed with wood wainscoting and built-ins. A leopard-print chair adds pizzazz.







This page: The mood is French Country in the quaint detached guest casita, which features a carved cantera fireplace. Furnishings are antiques. **Opposite:** A black pigment in their mustard-gold plaster finish gives the walls of the billiards room the look of burlap, says Sue Calvin. A bold-colored painting of folks enjoying life by Earl Linderman suits the spirit of the space, the designer notes.

See Sources

