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# *Forging New Traditions*

A Unique Two-Story Home Is a  
Fine Fit for Its Empty-Nest Owners

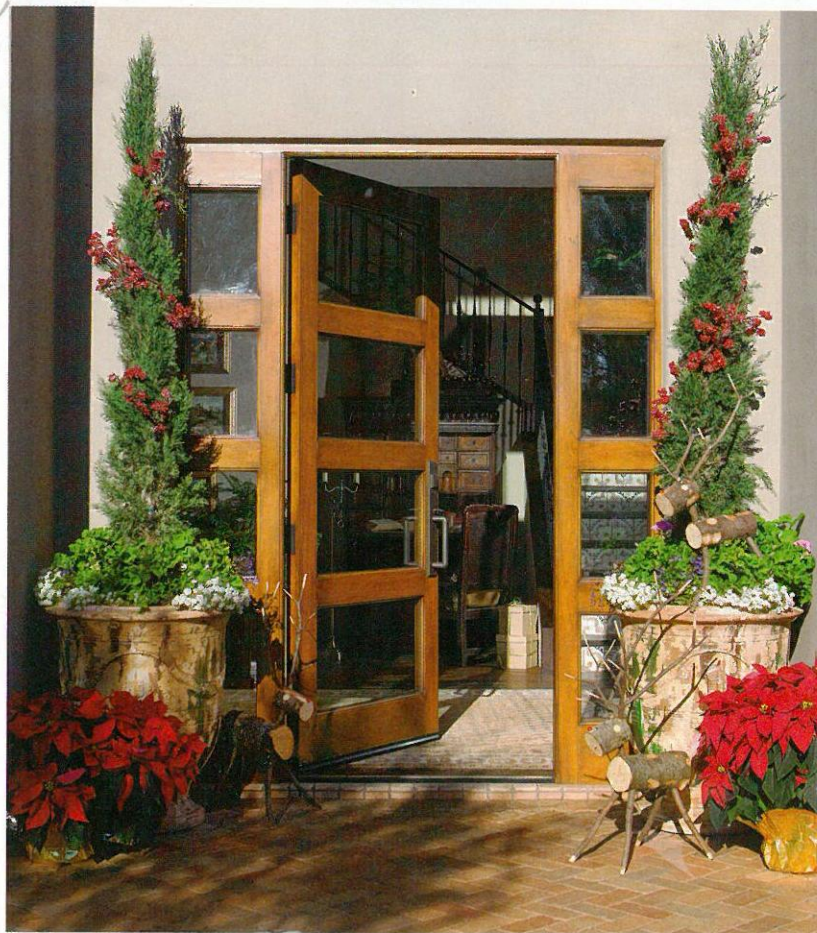
BY ROBERTA LANDMAN ■ PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS LOOMIS





Simply embellished Norfolk Island pine trees in pots offer a cheery welcome in the foyer. The antique desk once graced Hearst Castle in San Simeon, California. The stairway has wood steps with risers clad in ceramic tile.





Potted Italian cypress trees wrapped with strands of red berries, paired with poinsettias and little log reindeer, flank the wood-banded glass entry doors.

**WHILE MANY EMPTY NESTERS DOWNSIZE** their housing when their children are finally “flying” on their own, others, whose kids come home now and again, do just the opposite. A Phoenix couple falls in the latter category. Working with interior designer Sue Calvin and builder Rod Cullum, they built a dream house that fits their personal style and grown-up wishes.

Their new two-story home, located in a mountain-surrounded, gated community, is about as spacious as the last one but richer in adult amenities, such as an elevator and an underground wine cellar. Downsizing did occur as far as site size, but other niceties make up for it, according to the wife. “The patios have beautiful fountains and great outdoor living spaces,” she says.

The house is “integrated into a mountain,” explains Cullum, and it was oriented to capture views of Camelback Mountain, the city of Phoenix and more. He calls the residence, with its man cave and unique layout, an “adult house” that truly fits the homeowners’ lifestyle.

The main living areas—including the great room, open-concept kitchen, dining room, master suite and library/man cave—are situated on the second floor. It is from this top story—where

most daily living takes place—that the homeowners have the best mountain and city views, explains Calvin. She worked out the residence’s interior floor plan, was involved in the interior architecture, and planned the decor.

The first floor contains guest suites, the wife’s office and other areas. When adult children visit, they occupy the guest quarters. Says their mom, “They easily settled into their new rooms,” which are more luxurious than what they had before and also have en suite baths.

“They do use every room in the house,” says Calvin of the homeowners. She describes the interiors as Euro Country with a little bit of a sophisticated edge. The dining room, decorated for the holidays, displays that edge: Here, classic Queen Anne chairs mesh well with a large Contemporary mixed-media painting by Dirk De Bruycker. The master bedroom, gracefully dressed, gains drama from a life-size Modern figural clay sculpture by Mark Chatterley.

Thanks to Calvin and the elves from Christmas by Ronaldo, who gave the home its holiday vibe, the owners are loving their dream digs and happily forging new traditions there. ■





**Left:** A plaque depicting San Pasqual, patron saint of the kitchen, is an apt adornment for the tiled backsplash, notes interior designer Sue Calvin, for the lady of the house loves to cook. Cabinetry is painted a mix of light and dark tones, the island has a zinc top, and the range hood is plaster. Small transom windows under upper cabinets let in natural light and fresh air.

**Opposite:** From art to textiles and holiday decor, the dining room is a symphony of red and gold. Topping a table for eight is a centerpiece composed of glass balls mixed with pinecones, ornaments and greenery. A platform light fixture with illumination provided by faux candles is suspended from the brick barrel ceiling. A large evergreen wreath embellished with berries and pinecones dresses the window.









**Left:** The powder room shimmers with light from a pair of angel sconces, with additional sparkle emanating from a repoussé silver-framed mirror, along with Bolivian silver pieces and a sequined topiary on the vanity's marble top. An area rug brings out the red of the vanity's painted and distressed finish. Tile wainscoting is in a classic European Country design.





**Right:** Vintage tufted leather sofas face each other in the paneled library. The wood bench is Jacobean; the wing chair's upholstery is hair-on-hide dyed an acid green.

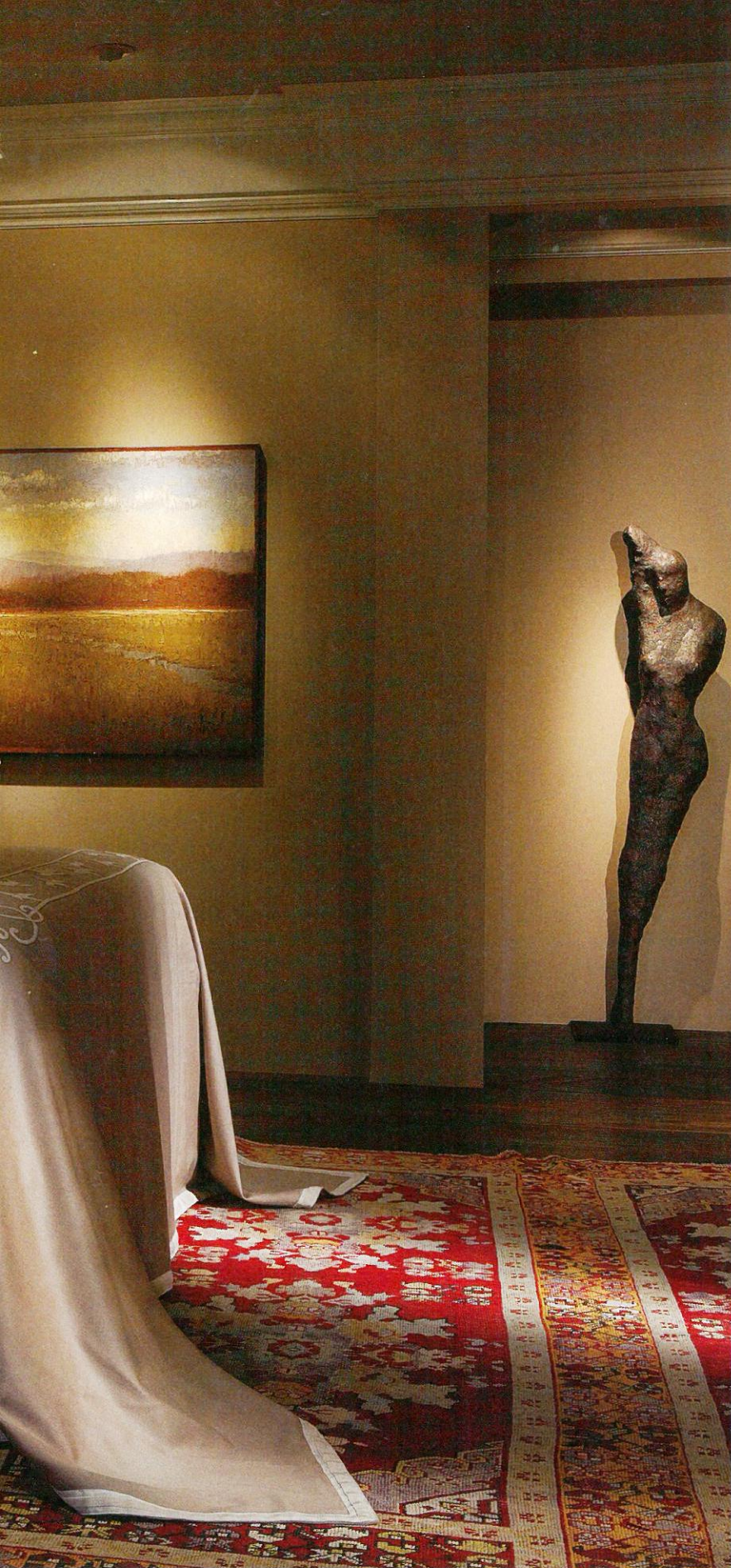
**Below:** Sue Calvin designed the great room's limestone fireplace and the shapely wood surround above for the TV. Draperies are hand-cut, hand-knotted linen.











**Left:** With its neutral palette and deep crown molding of plaster and wood, the master bedroom is a study in restrained elegance. The curvaceous custom headboard is upholstered in a muted paisley print fabric, and the coverlet is embroidered with fleur-de-lis. Serving as a nightstand is a leather chest heavily embellished with nailheads. Upon it are a potted Christmas cactus and a lamp with a base made from an old iron fragment. The oil painting is by Jeff Cochran and the tall glazed-clay figural sculpture is by Mark Chatterley.

**Below:** Gracing a hallway wall are large wooden angel wings that herald a sense of joy throughout the year.

*See Sources.*

