



EASTERN EFFECT

EAST COAST STYLING COMES WEST IN A CHARMING HOME THAT PUTS FAMILY FIRST AND PROVIDES FOR ABUNDANT LIGHT-FILLED SPACES RICH IN CHARACTER.

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INTERIOR DESIGN Caroline Tyler DeCesare, DeCesare Design Group, Inc.

HOME BUILDER Brett Brimley, Brimley Development

BEDROOMS 7 | BATHROOMS 9 | SQUARE FEET 13,000



As a custom home builder, Brett Brimley has constructed dozens of houses in just about every architectural style imaginable. So when his friends and clients—a couple looking to upgrade from their smaller ranch-style residence—would discuss the dream home they hoped to build for their growing family, he listened with bemusement. “They always said it wouldn’t be like anything I’ve ever seen here,” he recalls. “But I could only imagine what they had in mind.”

Brimley finally got an answer when the couple showed him plans done by Chicago architect Paul Konstant. “They saw a classic Shingle-style home I did in a magazine, and tracked me down to do something similar for them,” Konstant says. Yet the late 19th-century New England vernacular, usually clad in wood and slate, “really didn’t lend itself to Arizona’s tough dry climate,” notes the architect. The style’s open, free-flowing proportions, however, were a likely choice given the family’s desire for expansive recreational spaces like a ballet studio, ice cream parlor, game room and more. Complicating matters further, the almost 1-acre Arcadia site they chose was flooded with direct sunlight, so the pool and play areas needed heavy-duty shading,” explains the architect.



A coffered ceiling and exposed support columns are used to delineate areas in the great room, where the living area’s Ralph Lauren Macintyre sofas covered in durable Belgian linen couple with a custom ottoman by Bausman & Company upholstered in Lee Industries leather. *Left:* The foyer features welcoming pieces, including a Jasper mirror from Michael S. Smith and a cabinet by Minton-Spidell.



Designer Caroline Tyler DeCesare had the breakfast nook chairs, fabricated by Asher-Cole, modeled from an antique grid-back design in a fresh black scrub finish. The chairs pull up to a Bausman & Company table underneath a Circa Lighting chandelier. Wire-brushed white oak flooring grounds the setting.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 210

Carefully chosen materials, shrewd design innovations and sustainable building features made the project achievable, starting with cement and clay shakes that replace their cedar cousins on the home’s exterior—an option that offered a similar aesthetic without the downsides of expanding and contracting in the harsh Arizona sun. Wings off the main house, used for bedrooms, guest quarters and two garages, mask the size of the structure, which has two extra-deep basement levels. One reaches 26 feet below grade to accommodate a basketball court, while the other is at 12 feet below grade to anchor a series of recreational areas that open onto a free-form outdoor pool designed to mimic a desert oasis. It was these architectural elements that “were the most challenging part of the job,” Brimley says, pointing to the depth they had to dig—a rarity in Arizona. “But there isn’t a single inch of the structure that doesn’t have fastidious millwork with exacting transitions.”

DeCesare feels that the charming nature of the home is most evident in the kitchen, where pendants purchased at Design Lab cast a soft glow. White Pyrolave tops the island countertops while Caesarstone quartz fashions the perimeter. Cabinetry was fabricated by Shawn Stole Construction.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 213


The home's inventive design tactics didn't stop there. Inside, Konstant forged right-sized spaces that play to the family's lifestyle yet "give it the character and ambience you would find in a historic home," notes designer Caroline Tyler DeCesare, who the wife also hired for her fine East Coast aesthetic. In lieu of a formal living room, Konstant crafted a series of open spaces that includes several family rooms demarcated by elegant architectural details ranging from coffered ceilings to strategically sited columns and coves. Wood plank paneling found throughout is a refined take on rustic shiplap and creates a polished elegance.

Furnishing such as a large space was equally challenging, especially given the fact that "we had to find things that played to the style yet were comfortable and durable enough to survive five kids, one a baby they had while they were building the home," notes DeCesare, who adroitly mixed pieces from a wide range of sources to achieve these goals.

In the game room, swivel chairs from Lee Industries are covered with durable Sunbrella fabric. Poufs by Go Home, clad in a woven rug with an American flag motif and purchased through Design Lab, surround a wood and galvanized metal-topped table from Van Thiel & Co.



The pool area lies 12 feet below grade, with the main level porch above edged with a picturesque pergola. Landscaping by Gilliland Design emulates a tropical oasis. Lounge chairs from Restoration Hardware sit by the pool, fabricated by Mirage Pool and Spas.

A large, two-story house with a wide porch, a palm tree, and a lawn. The house features a dark grey shingled roof, light grey fiber cement siding, and white trim. A prominent porch with white columns runs along the front. A palm tree stands in the yard, and a lawn is visible in the foreground.

“Spaces play to the family’s lifestyle yet give them the character of a historic home.”

Native stone is used to accent the fiber cement shingles that clad the house and clay shingles that cover the roof, fabricated by Paul Rich Roofing & Construction. The home’s two wings flank the pool area and a fire pit. Windows are by Sierra Pacific Windows & Doors.



DeCesare paired a metallic wallcovering from Weitzner Limited with an enchanting Ralph Lauren chair covered in a striped crushed velvet by Bergamo for the wife's dressing room. A Chelsea Textiles fabric makes up the vanity skirt.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 214

For instance, chic armchairs from Lee Industries in the game room were covered in sturdy Sunbrella fabric, “especially because we knew the kids would drag them out by the pool,” says the designer. But the most daunting part of the process was “the sheer scope of the undertaking,” she says. “The homeowners were coming from a much smaller house so we had to buy almost everything new. Strategy and thoughtful planning were key because, for a house this size, you can go through a couple hundred fixtures.”

Today, Brimley calls the project his “labor of love.” But the biggest measure of its success is the fact that “the kids never have to leave,” he says, “and all of their friends come over to play—including mine.” **L**

The master suite sports sumptuous touches including a custom four-poster bed from Asher-Cole, luxurious bedding from Valerianne and a carved-limestone fireplace mantel by architect Paul Konstant. A Dennis & Leen mirror presides over the hearth. Drapery fabric is by Barbara Barry for Kravet.