

Tuscan Style

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Elegant interiors and gracious outdoor living spaces make this new Arizona home a treat for the senses.

Formal OVERTURES

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Nestled under a loggia, a fireplace of hand-cut Texas limestone provides warmth on cool evenings. A mirror designed to mimic an old windowpane reflects light above the fireplace, keeping the seating area bright even as guests enjoy its cool shade on hot days.



OPPOSITE: Curvaceous walnut armchairs, with solid-color velvet covering the backs and patterned-velvet adorning the fronts, deliver sophistication and comfort to the formal dining room. A crystal chandelier, a silver-leaf ceiling, and a mirror add sparkle. **ABOVE:** A symmetrical plan, towering palm trees, and formal gardens give the front of the house appealing visual balance.

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Arizona's balmy nights and temperate winters encourage living outside. And when the environment so perfectly suits

a style of home that has proven itself over centuries, why not tap into the best the style has to offer? Certainly, opting for a Tuscan-inspired design seemed natural for interior designer Caroline Tyler DeCesare and architect Mark Candelaria when they were called upon to create a new home for a Phoenix family.

Taking cues from the climate, the landscape, and homes in the Mediterranean—with a little influence from Texas Hill Country—the team cultivated the finest parts of their muses, crafting a plan that is at once elegant and true to old-world notions. "I believe that authenticity in materials is key," DeCesare says. "When the materials are authentic, they speak their own language, and they give a space a great foundation."

For this house, that authenticity meant working with resources that suit the desert climate and work in harmony with it—both aesthetically and from a practical standpoint. Carefully researching their project, the team studied Mediterranean style and traveled to outlying areas of Austin and Dallas to gather ideas and inspiration. As a result of their diligent homework, the home's careful blend of textures and palettes speaks to refined luxury. For the front facade, each piece of Texas limestone was hand-selected, the tones blending seamlessly with the stucco finishes that wrap to the rear.

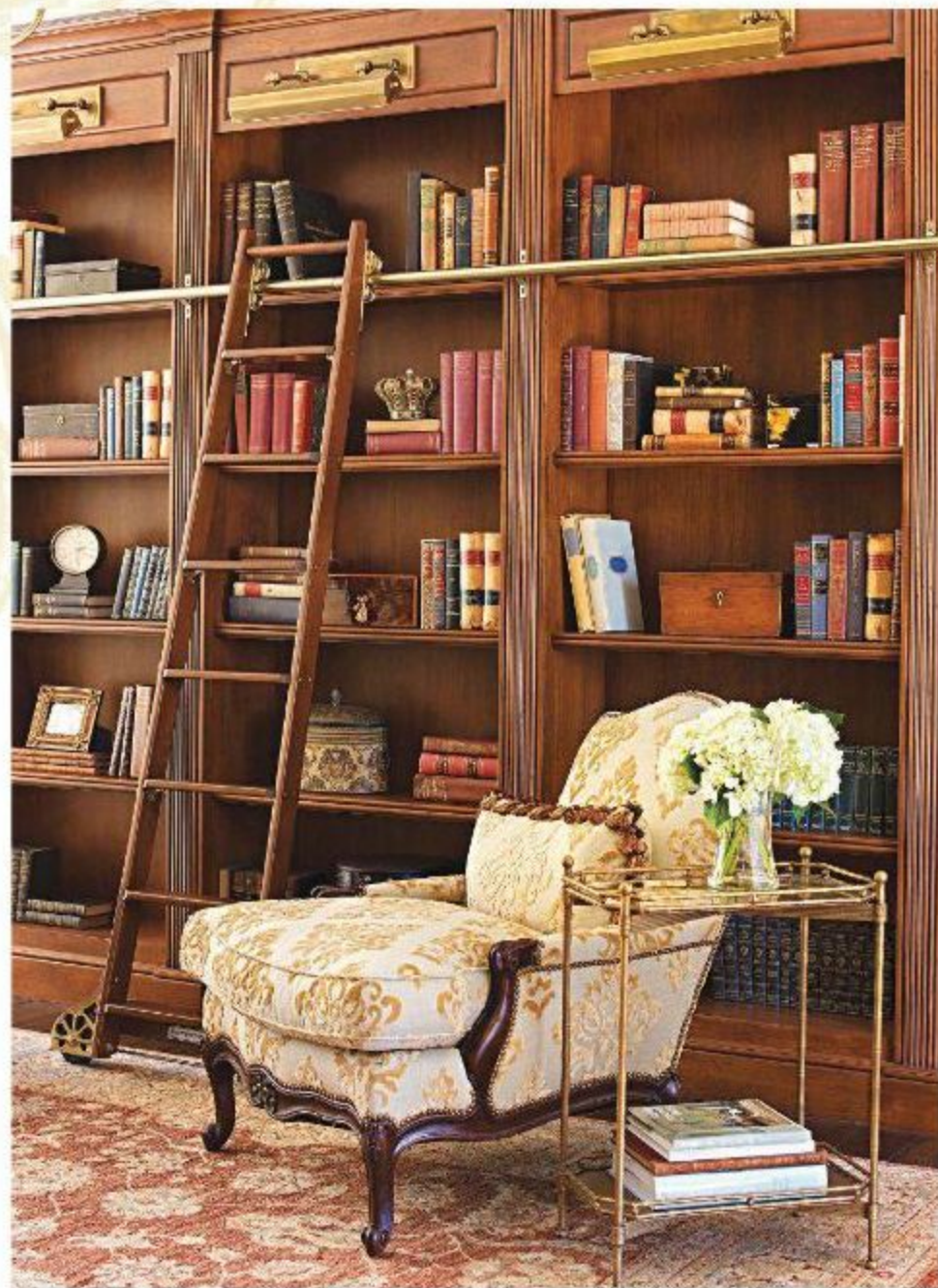
Inside, the finishes are equally deliberate. Dark-wood furnishings complement dark-wood beamed ceilings, kitchen cabinets, doors, and window casings, while granite, concrete, and hardwoods introduce additional layers of depth. Venetian plaster walls, limestone accents, and strategic lighting keep things feeling light, and tonal contrasts, weighty furnishings, rich velvet fabrics, and silver- and gold-leaf finishes ground the home and foster an air of elegance. "We used a sophisticated palette of metallics and neutral tones in the formal areas," DeCesare says. "In the casual areas of the kitchen and the family room, we opted for more color and warm wood tones."

Throughout the interiors, the designer used a mix of fine antiques, tapestries, finely detailed furniture, and glamorous chandeliers. "The flow of the house is formal, but it works well for entertaining and enjoying Arizona's warm indoor-outdoor lifestyle," DeCesare says. "From the inside out, the design immediately draws you out to the exterior landscape." The back of the house showcases a two-story tower of windows that soaks in majestic views of Camelback Mountain. Upper-level terraces overlook a pool flanked by an allée of towering palms, a pool house, an alfresco kitchen and bar area, and a fireplace that offers comfort on cool evenings.

True to their mission, the design team gave their clients exactly what they wished for: a home that is elegant yet embraces the way they prefer to live indoors and out.

Custom armoires flank an antique limestone mantel in the formal living room. The matching pieces, though new, sport a hand-rubbed gesso finish embellished with gold-leaf accents. A pair of contemporary sofas keep the room from feeling too fussy while rich velvet upholstery ensures the pieces feel in tune with the room's old-world Oushak rug and an antique Russian oil portrait resting on the mantel.





ABOVE: Custom alder bookcases, brass detailing, and a sliding ladder imbue the library with vintage character. A bergère offers a cozy perch for reading. **OPPOSITE:** The kitchen taps into the rustic side of Tuscan style with an exposed-beam ceiling, wrought-iron fixtures, a limestone hood, and a mix of dark and light cabinetry. A variety of countertop surfaces—black granite, concrete, and polished zinc—engage the eye.





"Multiple outdoor spaces allow for a lot of different types of gatherings—from family barbecues to formal events on the lawn."

—INTERIOR DESIGNER CAROLINE TYLER DECESARE

ABOVE: Separate vanities and custom mirrors with shapely silhouettes add a dash of romance to the master bath. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Austin limestone columns support dark-stained wood pergolas that cast shade over an outdoor kitchen and seating area at one of the ends of the pool. **RIGHT:** A chair and ottoman covered in a Fortuny fabric draw the eye to a stone mantel in the master bedroom. **OPPOSITE:** The master bedroom nods to the Continental influences that are part of Italian style by showcasing classic French designs, such as a silver-leaf headboard and a French Directoire-style settee.

