

PEAK Perfection

A Picturesque Arizona Landscape
Is Revamped to Maximize Views

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The owners of this Paradise Valley property not only enjoy elevated seating on their rooftop deck, but also an exquisite view of Camelback Mountain. Cushions are brightly colored, as are tiled side tables. Upside-down Saltillo flooring covers much of the space, while a sculptural concrete fire pit filled with rusted-metal spheres sits atop a “rug” of travertine and Mexican beach pebbles.







Standing more than 2,000 feet high, Camelback Mountain has a distinct shape and coloration that give it landmark status. And the Paradise Valley, Arizona, landscape pictured on these pages offers ample vantage points from which to take in its beauty.

“When we bought the home, we liked the fact that the lot was beautiful and in a great location, with views of the mountain,” recalls the homeowner. Unfortunately, many of the vistas were blocked by trees, and the grounds were not well-suited for a family with children.

To create a property that was more in line with the family’s needs, a team consisting of landscape architect and Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest Chad Robert, architect Jon Poetzl, and interior designer Wendy Black Rodgers overhauled the residence and its landscape.

Robert and Poetzl explain that working together from the project’s inception allowed the design team to maximize its potential and establish a unified look that connects indoors and out. Poetzl notes, “The indoor/outdoor concept is very appropriate and popular in this region. With that in mind, the interiors needed to blend with the exteriors and landscaping to create a cohesive journey throughout. Outdoor spaces are meant to feel warm and inviting, just like the ones inside.”

Gardens, courtyards and patios blend seamlessly with the revamped residence. Robert says that the site already had a plethora of mature plants and cacti, but many needed to be moved or enhanced with other vegetation. “I wanted to create a garden that carried the home’s Spanish Mediterranean theme and style, but also make it a regional garden with a feel of Arizona,” he states. Bringing in such plants as date palms and trumpet vines, as well as containers filled with seasonal color, helped produce a cohesive look. Robert also expanded and renovated courtyards, added walkways and reconfigured the motor court to make it more accessible.

The backyard’s pool and adjoining ramada are the centerpiece of the exterior redo. “We removed several large eucalyptus trees and moved date palms to frame the view. The whole layout of the pool and upper deck were placed to allow Camelback Mountain to serve as a backdrop to the home and outdoor spaces,” notes Robert.

Now, the area is outfitted with such amenities as Moroccan-inspired living and dining rooms, two fireplaces and a barbecue. A winding staircase with tile-clad risers leads to a rooftop deck with a fire pit and plenty of seating.

“We love the new pool pavilion, and especially the roof terrace above it,” a perfect spot for sunbathing in summer, comments the lady of the house. And, when temperatures drop, “We sit around the fire pit and watch the beautiful sunsets on the mountain.” □

Opposite and top: An arbor draped with star jasmine leads to a terrace off the master bedroom. Landscape architect Chad Robert added a colored-concrete walkway under the existing structure and scored it to resemble tile. A stand of Mexican organ pipe and golden barrel cacti, coupled with agaves and a kumquat tree, fill a garden area near the spa.

Left: Zellij tiles from Morocco clad risers of stairs leading to the rooftop deck.

Below: The unusual yesterday-today-and-tomorrow plant (*Brunfelsia pauciflora*) produces white (yesterday), lavender (today) and purple (tomorrow) flowers. It requires shade when grown in the desert.

Bottom: Chad Robert paired an Argentine giant cactus (*Echinopsis candicans*)—which shows off large fragrant white flowers—with dainty golden dysodia.

Right: The home's entry was renovated by adding flooring composed of French limestone laid in a basket-weave pattern and bordered by brick and Mexican beach pebbles. Robert further accentuated the area with a pair of shade-providing Canary Island date palms and flowering annuals in beds and containers.





Right: “The overall goal was to expand the living spaces,” says architect Jon Poetzl of the redo. “Arizona’s weather is extremely pleasant nine months out of the year, and we gave the family reason to venture outside. Around every turn there is a new feature to maximize the lot.” The pool, adjoining ramada and water features are just a few of the yard’s amenities.

Below: The ramada offers spacious living and dining areas decorated with colorful fabrics and oversized furnishings. “We wanted the outdoor living spaces to be an exotic extension of the eclectic interiors,” explains designer Wendy Black Rodgers.

Opposite: Chad Robert revamped an existing arbor, planted trumpet vine and climbing roses, and installed arabesque-shaped terra-cotta flooring to create this quaint dining spot at the front of the house. He also designed the cantera fountain. The homeowner purchased the chandelier in Morocco.

See Sources.



