


A photograph of a rustic living room. The room features a fireplace with a stone mantel, a wooden cabinet with intricate carvings, and a large wooden beam ceiling. The decor includes a large cross on the wall, a pair of wings, a star, and various vases. The furniture consists of a brown sofa with patterned pillows, a patterned armchair, and a round ottoman. A fire is burning in the fireplace, and there are glasses and a bottle on a tray in front of it.

# *Gathering Place*

A HOME INSPIRED BY TIMELESS INFLUENCES  
SERVES AS A CENTER OF ACTIVITY  
FOR AN ARIZONA FAMILY

TEXT BY ROBERTA LANDMAN



The living room of this Paradise Valley, Arizona, residence reflects Spanish Colonial Revival influences, including arches and ironwork. Interior designer Wendy Black Rodgers divided the space into "his-and-her" conversation areas. Lounge chairs for the women, near one of the room's two antique stone fireplaces, are covered in vintage kilim rugs. The men sit on plush sofas covered in mushroom-color velvet.



WITH THEIR LAVISH ornamental ironwork, red-tiled roofs and exotic Moorish influences, Spanish Colonial Revival homes were the grand dames of architecture in California and Florida of the 1920s and '30s.

The timeless appeal of those houses—designed by such famed architects as Addison Mizner, Wallace Neff and George Washington Smith—captured the imaginations of the owners of the two-story Paradise Valley, Arizona, home featured on these pages.

“My wife and I and our family have spent summers in Montecito, near Santa Barbara, and I loved the very simple, subtle elegance of the Spanish Colonial Revival homes in those areas,” he says. “I wanted to build a house like that in Arizona, and I wanted it to be a comfortable place where our two sons and their friends could hang out.” His inspiration: “I grew up in a big family in the Midwest, and our house was always the center of activity. And that’s what I pictured here.”

The design team that brought those wishes to fruition includes architect Catherine Hayes, builder Greg Hunt and interior designer Wendy Black Rodgers. They fashioned a gracious home that combines authentic elements of the past, such as copious ironwork and antique lighting, with up-to-date conveniences that meet the needs of an active family.

A cozy, well-appointed kitchen was one of the most important family needs, according to the husband. “That’s where everybody congregates. It’s the central nervous system of the house.” By day, its eating area has the flavor of a sun-splashed conservatory. Across the way, an outsize center island accommodates casual dining; and nearby, a hefty professional-style stove is ensconced in a stone-clad space dubbed “the cooking cave.”

This kitchen and the home’s baths as well are modern-day departures from the early-20th-century Spanish Colonial Revival genre, Hayes offers. “Kitchens were not the center of the home as they are now, and bathrooms were seemingly incidental,” she points out.

Bathrooms figure prominently in Rodgers’ design scheme, how-

ever. The powder room and master bath, for instance, are settings of exotic glamour, with walls decorated in Moroccan zellige tilework. An example of authentic Moorish influence in Spanish Colonial Revival style, this luxurious ornamentation speaks as well to the homeowners’ sensibilities, notes Rodgers. “They have a keen sense of personal style and an appreciation for good design,” she says.

In keeping with that, she created a mood of restrained elegance and sophistication in the living room. Antique French fireplaces command attention at either end of the large trestle-beamed space. While sofas are dressed in thick velvet, Rodgers chose a sisal rug to keep the room from looking too formal.

Most of all, the homeowners wanted a home that was comfortable—“family-friendly and large-dog-friendly,” Rodgers says. Toward that end, “hard-working” mohair and leather adorn the family room sofa, while a durable paisley velvet in rich jewel tones was chosen for chairs. “The wife wanted dark, rich colors, which also help to hide the flaws of everyday life,” the designer notes.

The home the husband dreamed his boys would love inviting their friends to is exactly as he imagined. Their teammates from various sports are often there, hanging out in the kitchen and nearby family room, he says. And the house hums with the same kind of activity he happily recalls experiencing in his own boyhood home. □

**Above:** Architect Catherine Hayes found inspiration for this residence in homes she has visited over many years in Florida and California. “Traveling through Spain’s cities and countryside further heightened my appreciation for the vast palette that makes up this style,” she adds. **Opposite:** The architect came up with the idea for this “cooking cave.” Outfitted with a Wolf range, pizza oven, wok cooking area and warming drawer, the nook has an opening to the entry hall, so one can see guests arriving, she says. Wendy Black Rodgers embellished the setting with a backsplash of colorful hand-painted Italian tiles with Renaissance-style figures and other designs.





**Left:** As was common in the 1920s and '30s in homes of this genre, a sweeping stairway with an elaborate iron railing ascends to the second story. The railing was designed by Wendy Black Rodgers, who also clad stair risers in concrete tiles. **Above:** "The kitchen's 8-foot by 12-foot island provides a gathering point for family meals, cooking, entertaining and work," says Rodgers. Its thick top is liptis wood in a walnut finish. Flooring is made of limestone tiles that were aged and antiqued in France. "I used a large-scale flooring pattern to complement the room's dimensions and because less grout means less maintenance," she adds. **Opposite:** Reminded of lovely light-filled rooms in old Spanish Colonial Revival homes, architect Catherine Hayes planned the kitchen's windowed eating area as a type of conservatory. The ceiling has a Moorish-inspired element. The heavily carved furniture is Jacobean in style.

PHOTOGRAPHY THIS PAGE BY THOMPSON PHOTOGRAPHIC; OPPOSITE PAGE BY MICHAEL WOODALL





**This page, clockwise from bottom:** A food pantry lies behind the arched and paneled wood doors. On this side of the doors is the butler's pantry. Brick shelves here keep wine at the ready, and a glass-doored cabinet stores crystal glassware. ■ Pizza is baked the old-fashioned Italian way in the "cooking cave's" wood-burning oven. On the side of the stone wall hangs an iron *espeteza*, which holds cooking utensils. ■ Wendy Black Rodgers designed the kitchen's furniture-like cabinetry in collaboration with Greg Peters of Rysso-Peters Inc. Cabinets here hide a microwave and toaster. Adjacent to them is the wood-clad refrigerator. Decorative pilasters have carved Spanish crosses, a motif seen as well on cabinet fronts (opposite). **Opposite:** The kitchen's countertops and this deep sink are made of green marble from China. Rodgers looked to the past to design the window above the counter. Fitted with replicas of old Spanish hardware, the windows open by pushing them out.



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**Left:** “The master bathroom was designed as an elegant Moroccan retreat,” says Wendy Black Rodgers. Set in a Moorish-style arch covered in Moroccan zellige tiles, the bathtub was carved from a single piece of marble. Wainscoting, too, is lavishly clad in the zellige tiles, and the earthy-looking border at its top is made of the tiles’ undersides. The nearby table has Moroccan flair; the decorative window was sandblasted for privacy. **Above:** Hints of Spain and North Africa add spice to this bedroom. The carved poster bed is Spanish Colonial in style and is topped with a striped bedspread. Rodgers designed the window seat, with its African-print cushion, to be more than a place for sitting. “It looks like those are drawers at the bottom, but it’s a trundle bed that pulls out,” she notes. **Opposite, clockwise from top:** A place to kick back and relax, the family room often is filled with friends of the homeowners’ two sons. Rodgers provided ample seating in this casual setting, including two cushioned window seats and zebra-skin stools. ■ Defined by a tile border, a wall of black-and-white zellige tiles creates a look of Moroccan splendor in the formal powder room. The centuries-old stone sink is thought to be from Malta. Rodgers designed the iron sink stand, where pretty towels hide plumbing. ■ The mood is exotic in this upstairs guest bathroom. A teak Damachiya chest from India has been converted into a vanity. Inside the shower, the circular window, crafted by Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest T. Kevin Douds, is composed of melted bottle bottoms. Antique concrete tiles are used for both shower walls and flooring.

See Sources.

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