

CHATEAU GRAND

CREATIVE FORCES WORK MAGIC ON ONE COUPLE'S DREAM HOME

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Some extraordinary talent went into the gracious Preston Hollow home the Andersons built. The affable and outgoing homeowners, Mike and Linda, are well-traveled collectors of art and antiques, who, after raising two sons, had reached the point in life where they knew what they truly wanted in a custom home.

After finding the perfect lot, the couple partnered with legendary architect Richard Drummond Davis, master craftsman and builder Chuck Shaw, and landscape architect Tom Pritchett. From there, philosophies intertwined, plans meshed, and five independent spirits fell into step with one another, culminating in the achievement of a grand vision. Although the Andersons have been in the home for more than three years now, they are still enamored with the gracious space as well as the classic design.

"It's a Normandy French manor house style," according to Davis, alluding to the pitched roof and other characteristics he describes as chateau-esque. "I've traveled a couple of times, touring medieval manor houses in Normandy where they have Renaissance chateaus, some with country-style additions."

The joy of building a custom home is that it can be perfectly adapted to suit the personal preferences of its owners. For example, the Anderson home features a three-car garage accessible to a carport, cleverly designed to make it easy to drop off groceries right at the kitchen. (A separate fourth-car garage accommodates guests' vehicles).

The homeowners requested the library be a more private space—removed from

OPPOSITE PAGE: In the kitchen, the homeowner went for a subtle approach, and wanted the vent-a-hood to be a focal point. Attention to detail is evident in the abundant cabinetry and stonework surrounding the kitchen's functional features. The limestone tiles are arranged on the diagonal, with bronze strips connecting it together.





the main circular flow of the public rooms—and down a side gallery from the living room.

"The entry porch is sort of pulled out and extended out on the side of the dining room, forming a nicely choreographed area," says Davis. "The entry hall is a gallery that goes all the way through, from front door to the rear covered porch, without one having to walk through another room. And we made the family room quite large," he adds, laughing. "It's a pretty unique plan."

The homeowners would agree. "He can draw upside down," Linda Anderson says of Davis. "He melded it all together."

BELOW: Now serving as a writing desk is the couple's old dining room table, a sentimental favorite. It was discovered a number of years ago in an antiques store in California, just off the boat from Europe. With self-contained leaves, it folds nicely to fit in the nook of the great room.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Barrel-vaulted ceilings, courtesy of master builder Chuck Shaw, help give the kitchen its French country look. The French-looking barstools are old, and as they are popular with the couple's grandchildren, have already been recovered twice.





ABOVE: In the dining room, an antique bronze chandelier with teardrop accents hangs over the reproduction French-like table. The host and hostess chairs coordinate with, rather than match, the rest of the set, and an antique armoire holds dishes.

OPPOSITE PAGE: For dining al fresco on the covered stone patio, the couple wanted something unobtrusive, with the fireplace as the main attraction.

METICULOUS CRAFTSMANSHIP

The barrel-vaulted ceilings in the kitchen and adjoining family room are part of the painstaking artistry of building artisan Chuck Shaw. Shaw, who has been a custom homebuilder for 50 years, spent countless days on site engrossed in the detailed trim work, cutting the crown molding and hand-touching the curved laminated arches for the tall ceilings. He makes it his policy to focus exclusively on one site at a time, since he fills the roles of both foreman and builder. He says he "really enjoyed building this home, because it was such a pleasure working with the Andersons."

Linda, who worked as an interior decorator for more than 20 years, is responsible for the décor and exquisite furnishings. She now limits her consulting to a select few clients and friends, and says, "It's a passion, I suppose."

The large lot that the Andersons fell in love with once anchored a home designed by the romantic-yet-eccentric Charles Dilbeck; thus this dream team had a tough act to follow, and the nature of the property itself posed a challenge. Fortunately landscape





The bath's ceiling mural was painted by artist Mary Esposito, creating a glass-roofed English conservatory look. The idea was to have the tree look like as if it's coming over the top and visible through a skylight. Esposito first did the sky, then painted the boards to look like beams of wood. The dark green vein marble countertops and the soaking tub complement the space.



architect Tom Pritchett was in on things from the ground up, starting with the site planning.

In this case, his work involved lighting, drainage, getting the sun on the correct side for natural light, moving things to fit among the trees, and designing the walks around the walls. He designed a pavilion and, most importantly, accommodated the natural slopes of the land, ensuring that the home blended in perfectly with its surrounding terrain.

"We stepped up the interior of the house at one spot to fit the sloped site," Pritchett says. "I worked with Richard to do that. Out back is a small pool that serves as more of a reflecting fountain, and a pavilion that was a bit of an afterthought, though it ended up being one of many favorite features." "So many people don't think about seeing their homes from the outside looking in," says Linda.

"I do a lot of formal gardens, higher-end estates, so you have to make the circulation work, the arrival sequence flow," Pritchett adds. "The hierarchy of elements that you have on an estate is what you need to work with."

Before establishing his credentials at Harvard Graduate School of Design, Pritchett studied at Texas A&M, and says, "Mike [Anderson] is an Aggie as well, he loves plants, and he's also an architect so we really got along." When planning a project, Pritchett likes to keep his options open to fuel the creative process. "I never give a client just one design," Pritchett adds, speaking from 30 years of experience. "I give them several to study, pick parts they like, and then they embrace it as their idea."

Says Linda of the home: "I never want to leave. It's just me." **DND**

The great room burgeoned as the home began to take shape, ending up large enough to accommodate more than a few of the homeowners' favorite things. The coffee table was custom-made from the wood saved from one massive tree on the lot that had to be cut down to accommodate the home's blueprint.

RESOURCES:

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