

THE ELEGANCE OF ADOBE

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Whether unfinished or covered, adobe bricks play a large role in a home's look and feel. In this living room, a thin coating of plaster brightens the area while preserving the bricks' undulating form. Heavy beams, though also decorative, are an essential part of the structure's frame. A corbeled archway leads to a small room where the family's piano is flanked by custom shelving. Reclaimed wood floors carry throughout the home.



AN EVOCATIVE MIX OF FINISHES, FURNISHINGS AND ART BRINGS TIMELESS SOPHISTICATION TO A CENTURIES-OLD BUILDING MATERIAL

Adobe is one of the earliest building materials, dating back thousands of years across many

cultures. Nowhere in this country is its use better illustrated than in the Southwest. While modern construction materials have given the sun-dried earthen element a run for its money, its popularity here continues to flourish. Perhaps it's adobe's deep-rooted ties to our region's Native American and Hispanic history that allow it to endure. Or maybe it's the material's ability to withstand the desert's harsh conditions. Whatever the reason, adobe remains a classic component of Arizona architecture.



Across the driveway and on axis with the front door, a seating node offers an area for taking in the views as well as the home's unique adobe architecture. Native landscaping on each side of the driveway is bordered by a random-cut flagstone edge.



The backyard, with its rectangular pool, embraces a minimal desert aesthetic, according to landscape architect Russ Greey.

So it's no wonder that when Julie and Jett Anderson decided to build their dream home in North Scottsdale, they were resolved that it would be an adobe structure. "I like that adobe is natural, that it's part of the earth," says Jett. "And we both love the feel of old Arizona, that 100-year-old, put-up-your-feet-and-relax Arizona." Julie concurs, adding, "It had always been in my mind that when we could hire an architect and design our own home, I wanted it to be made of adobe brick."

Enter architect Clint Miller. "When I first called Clint, I told him that we were looking for something that was built the same way they used to make lodges in national parks 100 years ago," says Jett. It just so happens that Miller, a 2010 Phoenix Home & Garden Masters of the Southwest award winner, specializes in historic Southwest design, with an emphasis on adobe brick construction.

"The adobe is really the essence of this house," states Miller. "The character of the design is similar to an early Arizona ranch,

so it really feels like an old home." The ageless quality is evident on first glimpse. The low, stretched facade is angled in the middle at 30 degrees, a shape typical of early 1950s California ranch homes, according to Miller—and fronted by an expansive Territorial-style porch. A patio wall, constructed of stone from northern Arizona, mimics the appearance of a foundation when viewed from the driveway. "For me, that was an important aesthetic," notes Miller, who incorporated the same stone on some of the home's chimneys. Double-stacked terra-cotta tiles, complete with oozing mortar, add "oomph," says Miller, while other elements create a subtle Arts and Crafts flavor. Among these are a substantial copper entrance door, art glass windows, elongated joist tails and a "copper bracelet"—a band of copper at the intersection of the joists and the walls that encircles the exterior of the home.

Inside, exposed adobe brick features prominently on several walls. On others, the bricks are covered with a thin layer of plaster, allowing their undulating shapes to come through. "The Andersons like the



The star of the dining room is a 19th-century iron and crystal chandelier that homeowner Julie Anderson purchased in Paris. "I like it because it's an elegant piece, but it also has the rustic iron," she says. "I saw a lot of chandeliers that were over-the-top." Adding a Southwest touch to the room is a landscape by Deladier Almeida.



Jett Anderson, seen here with his wife, Julie, is an avid motorcyclist. He stores his bikes in an auto court off the guest casita.

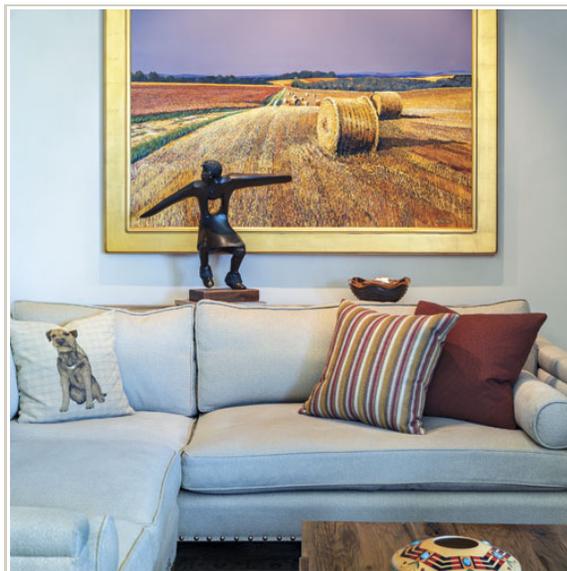
feel of the adobe, but a lot of it we plastered just to lighten it up," explains Miller. "When you see all of it exposed on the exterior, you only need to bring in about a third of that in order to feel it. Any more can be too much of a good thing." The foyer, kitchen, dining room, hallway, kids' bedrooms and Jett's office on the second level all feature exposed adobe walls.

Joining Miller on the build, beginning with the initial planning stages, was interior designer Janet Brooks, also a 2010 Phoenix Home & Garden Masters of the Southwest award winner. "My favorite part [of a project] is designing the shapes and the surfaces and the feeling of the inside of the house, because if you don't create a wonderful structure that feels good, you can put all the furniture you want into it, and it's not going to be a wonderful space," she says. "The furniture and art are just a natural extension of the construction."

Brooks worked closely with Julie to fill the home with elegant yet approachable pieces, including many European antiques that feel as though they could have been plucked from an old Southwest hacienda. "I pictured the pioneers who came across the country in the covered wagons," says Brooks. "They always had one or two pieces of their precious furniture that they managed to get over here from Europe."

Understated, comfortable seating pieces rest on antique rugs. "Rugs are a big part of this house," says Brooks. "We used rugs to set the stage for the colors in each room." Eye-catching chandeliers—19th century Italian iron and crystal in the dining room and 1950s Murano glass in the master bath—add glam; and a variety of rustic and natural elements, including a mesquite wood kitchen island countertop inlaid with bits of turquoise, an immense zinc range hood, reclaimed wood and limestone floors, a carved limestone fireplace in the master bedroom, and smooth plaster walls in the master shower, keep the rooms warm and inviting.

While the adobe may be the structure's essence, the Andersons' collection of art "really brings the house to life," says Miller. Museum worthy pieces line the walls and shelves. Most, except for a few family pieces, are by local artists. Works by Jacqueline Rochester and Ed Mell, among others, hang in the master bed-room. A Colin Chillag canvas decorates the hallway,



A textured 3-D oil painting by Jean-Luc Messin is the focal point of the family room. In front is "Eagle Dancer" by the late Allan Houser.



A reclaimed wood and limestone floor adds visual drama to the serene master bathroom. Hanging above the freestanding tub is a 1950s Murano glass chandelier that Julie picked up at an antique store in Paris.

while a colorful Linda Carter Holman creation overlooks Jett's office desk. Three Allan Houser sculptures punctuate the living spaces.

The pièce de résistance is the large, golden-hued oil painting by Jean-Luc Messin that dominates the family room. The pastoral scene of a hayfield in France appears simple. But look closer. Each straw, including those that make up a large 3-D bale, is an individual layer of paint that Messin created off-canvas before placing on the image. "To me, this painting makes the room," says Miller.

Completing the design team were landscape architects Russ Greey and Donna Winters. "Clint did such an interesting job on the home and the copper details. It's an adobe, but it has some really clean, contemporary detailing," says Greey, who worked with Miller and the homeowners to create the landscape and outdoor amenities, which include a succulent garden organized within three steel rings,

a sleek rectangular pool and decomposed granite walkways edged in steel. "We didn't want to take it to 'old-world adobe home.' We wanted to contemporize it," Greey adds. Winters, another Phoenix Home & Garden Masters of the Southwest award winner, installed the desert vegetation.

From adobe to art to structured outdoor space, it all combines to create a home that's quint-essential Arizona with European touches and modern-day flair. A home that's both eclectic and natural. A home for all ages. "I think this house is totally timeless," says Brooks. "There isn't anything trendy about it." And that's just what the homeowners wanted. As both Julie and Jett say, this is their "100-year-old brand-new home."



A mix of materials and textures gives the kitchen a refined yet rustic charm. The clay-bodied tile backsplash, typical of Arts and Crafts design, says interior designer Janet Brooks, is highlighted by a large custom-made zinc range hood. The island counter is mesquite inlaid with bits of turquoise. Its steel frame is mirrored in the leather bar stools.



Raw adobe brick dominates a hallway, giving the home the look and feel of an early park lodge. Architect Clint Miller's attention to detail is evident in such subtle touches as the exposed structural beams and the plaster clad staircase soffit.



"Everything is scaled so that it's not cavernous," says Julie. "We did not want a huge home." Miller created entrances between rooms, such as the one leading from the master bedroom to the master bath, that offer a bit of compression before opening. This Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced technique, "makes the rooms feel bigger than they are. It frames the space rather than exposing it all," he says. Coved ceilings add a restful touch, while an antique rug serves as the room's color inspiration. A raised hearth, which extends from a carved limestone fireplace, hides a pop-up TV. Artworks by Ed Mell and Jacqueline Rochester decorate the far wall.



Elongated joist tails and a covered walkway leading from the main house to a guest casita and auto court add an Arts and Crafts feel to the backyard. Opposite the home's back patio, a fire pit is flanked by comfortable seating, while concrete planters by Phoenix Home & Garden Masters of the Southwest award winner Larry Kornegay lend a contemporary touch. The homeowners added two small chairs near the outdoor kitchen. "We ended up turning them around, and we sit there a lot," says Jett.