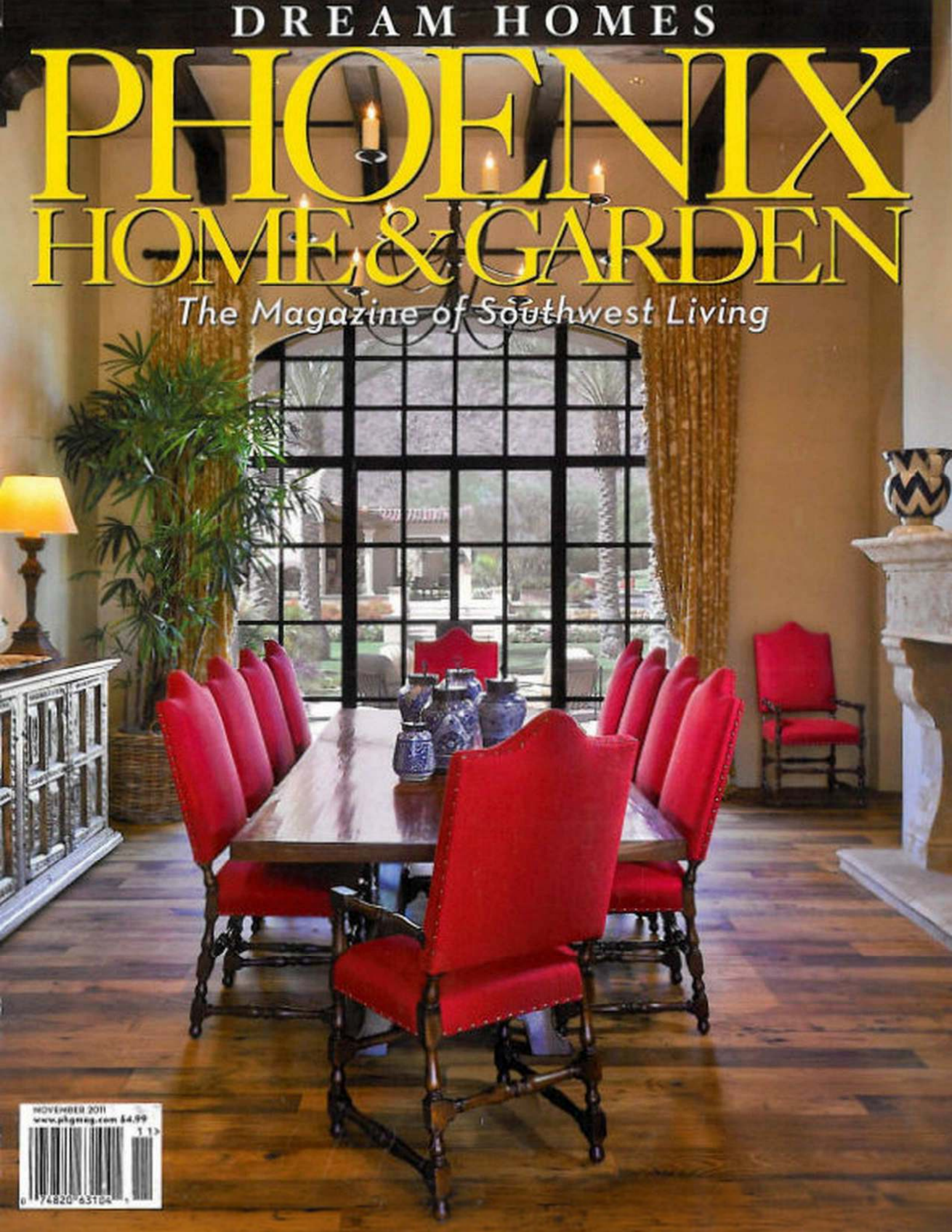


DREAM HOMES

# PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

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# DESERT

Now Open to Views, a Remodeled Home Celebrates Its Surroundings

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# GEM



In the family room, bright colors spring from the sofa upholstery onto armchairs gathered around a custom wood coffee table. "We brought in as large a table as the space would allow," says interior designer Linda Seeger. "That way, it can be used by everyone sitting in the area." Another pop of color comes from a commissioned painting by David Rothermel over the credenza. Throughout the house, Seeger mixed the homeowners' existing, more Traditional pieces with new furniture. "Antiques soften a room, and mixing old and new makes a space more interesting than if you just use one or the other," she remarks.









**Opposite:** A painting by Sacha Barette inspired colors in the dining room. Chairs in a mix of styles surround a table from the couple's previous home. "The settee helps make the area more comfortable, less formal and more multifunctional," Linda Seeger says. The blown-glass longhorns are a reminder of the "great" 10 years the homeowners spent in Austin, Texas.

*Dream homes* come in all shapes and sizes. This one, tucked away on a lot in the middle of the city with views of Camelback Mountain, was a perfect fit for Margie and Mike Summers. After living for a decade in Texas, the couple wanted to move back to the desert. So they traveled to Phoenix for a marathon house hunt. "We looked at 30 houses over a two-day period," Margie says. "We saw this one early on, and it just stuck with us. It feels good when you walk in."

Built in 1968 and originally designed by the late architect George Christensen, the house is expansive yet intimate, offering both the open-to-the-outdoors experience Margie wanted and the private "man cave" feel Mike hoped to find.

"We also liked that it had a history—the legacy of George Christensen," Mike recalls. "He put the house in exactly the right place on the property. There is a connection to the desert and the mountain, but it's also private because of how it's positioned."

Although just right in many ways, the house needed some tweaking to fit the family's needs. For this they brought in David Dick, an architect and Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest who already had completed two remodels on the home with its previous owners.

"It was a great house to begin with. The sense of connection to the outside was George's idea," Dick explains. "I just gave it a more open floor plan consistent with modern living. We freshened up everything a little. The house hasn't changed; it's just gotten better."

Remodeling the guest wing was the first order of business. The architect enlarged the existing bedrooms and gave them direct access to courtyards, in keeping with the original indoor/outdoor sensibility of Christensen's design.

Here and throughout the rest of the house, interior designer Linda Seeger took charge of selecting new finishes. She also flew to Texas to assess and measure the couple's existing furniture to determine what could be reused. Pieces that made the move were reupholstered with the bright colors and fanciful fabrics Margie favors. "The character of the

house is the character of the homeowners," Seeger remarks. "It's cheerful, energetic, happy and laid-back. It's also kid-friendly, pet-friendly and low-maintenance."

The remodel grew in scope along the way, and the house is now one that suits the family to a T—"a juxtaposition of contemporary and historic Arizona," says Mike.

"This is our dream house, both for the house itself and what it represents," Margie adds. "The move to Phoenix allowed us to simplify our lives a bit; the house itself represents us as a couple. It's the first home that is truly ours—we planned for it, shopped for it, selected it and then worked for the next 15 months to make it just right. Everything about this house is a dream for us. I love coming home every day." □

**Top right:** A patio near the entry remains shady all day. Seeger brought the home's vibrant punches of color outside by reupholstering cushions on existing iron seating.



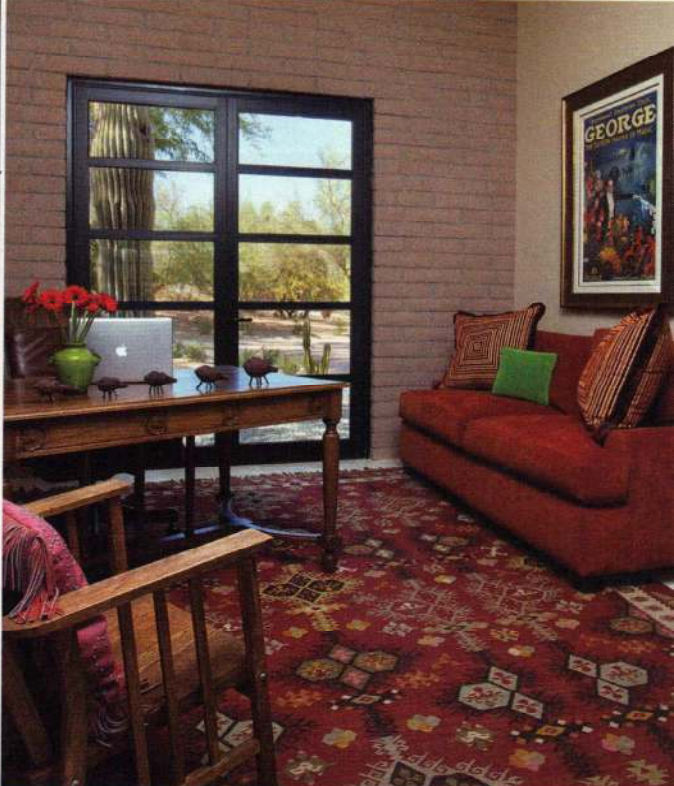
**Above:** "Building on the shoulders of giants" is how architect David Dick describes the task of twice-remodeling the original George Christensen-designed home. "We stayed consistent with the original bones," he says. "For example, the house was mortar-washed, which is a way to soften the look of a block exterior yet maintain a natural look."





**Above:** Corner windows in the living room frame a view of Camelback Mountain. “The living room is meant to be a calming area where the family can sit and enjoy the scenery,” designer Linda Seeger says. “It’s not a high-energy room like the family room, so the colors are more subdued, but with a pop of turquoise.” The slump-block walls originally were painted white. For this remodel, they were sandblasted and left in their raw state for a softer, warmer feel. The fireplace, once also slump block, was sandblasted, then plastered and painted to provide Contemporary, smooth contrast to the rough block. Artwork over the fireplace is by Karen Bezuidenhout.





*“There is a connection to the desert and the mountain, but it’s also private because of how it’s positioned”*

**Top:** *Blue Dogs* by Mark Chatterly keep an eye out for rabbits and other critters in the backyard.

**Above:** The window in the cozy office was removed to make way for French doors. Drywall also was removed to expose the raw block exterior wall. Seeger added the terra cotta-color loveseat to complement the homeowners’ existing desk, chair, rug and 1930s-era poster.





**Top:** The Italian ceramic-tile backsplash features real gold. Mica inserts were placed over the original cabinets' glass panels. "We're not the type to have glass cabinets," Margie Summers says. "We're not that organized. These are easy to clean, and the glass underneath offers support."

**Above:** Once a small galley, the kitchen is now spacious and Contemporary in style. "Lifestyles change over 50 years," David Dick says. "People today want bigger closets, bigger kitchens and an openness to how the rooms flow." Existing cabinets were retained, some were added to match, and all were treated to new hardware. For visual interest, and to mix old with new, the island is stained a darker color than the other woodwork, and its granite countertop is more rustic in appearance and cut. The perimeter granite countertops have a leather-like finish. The antique crystal chandelier made the move safely from Austin, Texas.





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**Opposite:** Behind the master bathroom's floating vanity, large windows slide open to welcome the desert indoors. David Dick remodeled this space the first time around, and the current homeowners were happy with the tub and vanity just as they were. Linda Seeger added a tall circular table in the center for extra counter space, and a tall stool so the lady of the house can sit while applying makeup.

**Left:** A door in the master bathroom's travertine shower swings open for an indoor-outdoor experience.

**Below:** In the master bedroom, carpeting was replaced with wood floors, and calm, cool colors were chosen to help create a peaceful ambience. "It's almost monochromatic," Seeger says. "The teal tones, white and black lend a spa feeling." Tall blown-glass lamps sit on iron nightstands with concrete shelves. Artwork over the bed is by David Rothermel; the large vintage poster is by Leonardo Cappiello, 1922.

*See Sources.*

