

Arizona Foothills

STYLE
SUBSTANCE
SOPHISTICATION



THE ART OF
romance
UNDERNEATH
IT ALL:
SEXY
LINGERIE

THE GOLF ISSUE

PRO TOURS TEE UP IN ARIZONA

WEISKOPF ON THE TPC
STADIUM COURSE

GREAT GREENS FROM
SCOTTSDALE TO SCOTLAND

COOL WEATHER, HOT COFFEE: **12** SPOTS TO SIP & SAVOR



SIGNATURE STYLE: By purchasing their lot at the beginning of Silverleaf's development, these homeowners were able to select one of the "signature" properties.

more than just retirees. That's when they found Silverleaf in the foothills of the McDowell Mountains. Then in its infancy, the community was both of these things and more—it promised a strong sense of community and minimal latitude in architectural styling. "The best lots are available early in a development," the husband says, "so you take a gamble about whether or not it will really work out and thrive, but you get your choice of lots."

The lot these homeowners selected was a

"signature" one, even by Silverleaf's standards. Long and almost triangular in shape, it is firmly planted on the sixth fairway of the community's Tom Weiskopf-designed course. Before the homeowners decided what to do with it, they each sketched out their ideas and presented the eerily similar results to architect Dale R. Gardon, principal of Dale Gardon Design, and builder Anthony J. Salcito Jr., vice president and C.O.O. of Salcito Custom Homes.

For Gardon, whose firm authored Silverleaf's



SILVERLEAF'S SANTA BARBARA: Precise architectural details are dressed with lavish furnishings inside Casa Girasol.



PLANNED DESIGN: For architect Dale R. Gardon, designing Casa Girasol was a chance to put the design guidelines he created for Silverleaf into practice.

design guidelines, this home was a golden opportunity to put the vision he'd codified into practice thanks to its prominent location in the community. And though he's since worked on other homes in Silverleaf, Casa Girasol retains a special status. "It was truly one of the first [projects] in Silverleaf to say, 'We're going to take what we wrote as guidelines and really try to bring it to life in a very specific example,'" Gardon says.

He began by assessing the home's single liability: a potentially busy street that abutted one side of the lot. Gardon oriented the house away from the road and positioned it on an east-west axis that lends a stately, formal air to the structure. "The idea is you drive around," Gardon explains, "and all of a sudden... the entire foyer becomes an announcement of this home's special presence in the community." Gardon also, at the couple's request, made the house just one-room wide. This effectively lets the home "live both sides of its house," Gardon says, which means the views

of the golf course and the city to the west aren't the only vistas the homeowners get. To the east lie spectacular mountains that, in the hands of another architect, might have been ignored.

Committed to authenticity in the homeowners' chosen Spanish Colonial design (and he had to be—Silverleaf doesn't tolerate eclecticism), Gardon used an arcade to unify the main house with the guesthouse and, at the westernmost edge of the property, a fire pit. Although the estate is large enough to require an armature, it doesn't ramble. In fact, it is so tightly placed on its axis that, on the fall solstice, a solid band of light beams through the back windows and out the front door—a testament to Gardon's drafting precision.

Reaching the finish line with this project, however, took time—it wasn't completed until 2005—and due diligence on the part of the homeowners. The couple traveled to Santa Barbara to familiarize themselves with the architectural style, and they pored over the



COMPLETE HOME: Casa Girasol is the culmination of the homeowners' travels and plans, the architect's design and the builder's craftsmanship.

shortcomings of their previous home to figure out what they wanted in their new one. They decided, for instance, to cluster the exercise room with the master suite so they'd use it, and so it would be out of the way of the house's main footprint. They wanted a clear separation between rooms, which Gardon obliged by way of interior windows made from stained glass in places like the family room and master bath. Additionally, the wife wanted her office to be near the kitchen and the laundry room so she could multitask. (Her previous workspace had been a lonely outpost on the second floor.) Then the husband demanded views of the entire sixth hole and its green from his office, going so far as to climb a 20-foot ladder during construction to the height where his office would be. He even made Salcito and Gardon stake the location of the guesthouse to ensure that he could see

over its roof.

But many of the dwelling's most intriguing features resulted from Gardon's design process, and not a wish list. The spa court, for example, is a secluded spot off the exercise room where the water is shaded by vigas and plantings and utterly separate from the pool in the backyard. It's also something the homeowners would never have come up with on their own. "If [Gardon] had said, 'spa court,' I wouldn't have known what he was talking about," the husband admits. Similarly, the wife wanted groin vault ceilings along the arcade until the estimate came in. Then, they considered both flat ceilings and rafters, but the wife insisted on having some sort of arch, which inspired Gardon to devise the barrel vault ceiling that crowns the arcade today.

The powder room is another area shaped by circumstance. The wife had

planned to upholster its walls in a particular botanical print and specifically ordered tiles and a chandelier that would match. When it turned out the fabric had been discontinued, her interior designer, Carol Minchew of Carol Minchew Interiors, suggested they hire an artist to paint the pattern on the walls instead. (The same artist also stenciled the living room's ceil-

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ing beams and painted the master bath's striped walls.) The result is a powder room so enchanting that one grandchild mistook it for a play space.

"I have seen a lot of houses around that are this size," Salcito says, "but what you don't see is a house that has every inch of its 15,000 square feet designed with the care and details and the ornamentation that this house has. Throughout the entire home there are arches, arcades, railings, art glass, custom lights and beautiful ceiling details. And when you walk from room to room, there's a design connectivity that's absolutely cohesive."

The fluidity, the features, the details—all of these things are embraced by a cape of warm, golden paint. The color may not exactly blend into the mountain setting, but it does give it a welcoming, Mediterranean-like handshake. "The first color that we picked was virtually exactly like [that of] our next-door neighbor," the husband says, "and that's verboten here. So we moved it a little bit. In fact, they're still quite close."

"It depends," the wife notes appropriately, "on the light." □

SUNFLOWER

CASA GIRASOL PROVES THAT WHEN A HOME IS KISSED BY THE GOLDEN SUN, LUXURY IS SUFFUSED WITH WARMTH.

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ew people seem to name their houses anymore. Indeed, the act seems as out-dated as top hats and crinolines. So when you pull up to Casa Girasol, it's hard not to do a double-take at the emblem that quietly, resolutely identifies this home as something special.

Spanish for "sunflower," girasol was an appropriate appellation for this Spanish Colonial residence whose owners followed the sun out of Minnesota and into Arizona. In 2002, they had been searching for a place in North Scottsdale where the fairways were green and the neighborhood included



ARCHITECT: Dale R. Gardon, Dale Gardon Design.

BUILDER: Anthony J. Salcito Jr., Salcito Custom Homes.

INTERIOR DESIGNERS: Carol Minchew and Debbie Samartzis, Carol Minchew Interiors.

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 10,000 (air-conditioned); 15,000 (under roof).