

Storybook Ending

A family of four builds a fairy-tale forever home in Arcadia.

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Architecture: Vivian Ayala, Candelaria Design Associates Interior Design: Caroline Tyler DeCesare and Nicole Grkovic, DeCesare Design Group
Home Builder: Ron Barney, RD Enterprises Landscape Architecture: Jeremy McVicar, Refined Gardens



Dunn-Edwards' Whisper paint and a pitched roof ensure an ample flow of light in the great room of this Arcadia home. Interior designers Caroline Tyler DeCesare and Nicole Grkovic installed a sophisticated Hester & Cook chandelier, balancing the more casual vibe of the Cisco Home sofas and jute rug from The Floor Collection.

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ot everyone's dream house is an expansive mansion. For a couple who had already lived in Arcadia for years, a timeless, cozy cottage was more what they had in mind for their forever home. "There are some beautiful, stunning, bigger

homes out there, and that just didn't fit with us," the wife says. Rather, they found the perfect lot at the end of a cul-de-sac set against the backdrop of Camelback Mountain. To fit in with the surrounding residences—and their vision—they kept the structure's overall massing small.

"The scale of the neighborhood is somehow petite," says architectural principal Vivian Ayala, who worked with builder Ron Barney. "So we wanted it to be a glimpse of a small house that didn't reveal the entire architecture of the back." She designed the home with a steeper pitch so that it occupied less of the lot. "The owners' main focus was to keep it under 5,000 square feet. They wanted a smaller footprint to get more out of their landscape," says Ayala.

To evoke that quaint, storybook charm of a cottage, Ayala—with the input of interior designers Caroline Tyler DeCesare and Nicole Grkovic—designed a façade with plenty of gables, eaves, chimneys and a shake roof complete with a cupola. "They wanted a light, bright and comfortable home that fit in with the classic Arcadia ranch homes, but a fresh interpretation that leaned a little English cottage," says Tyler DeCesare, adding that they went more contemporary for the indoor spaces. "On the interiors, they have a little bit more modern casual taste in art and furnishings, so nothing becomes too cute."

Grkovic adds that the architectural bones of the house—like the reclaimed beams and Chicago brick—are what bring the "cottage-y feel" to the interiors. "Then with the fabrics and furniture, we went a little more eclectic, using pieces that had more pattern and texture," she says. "The client likes things with character—nothing that looks brand new—so there was a warm, tactile, worn feeling to everything." To add sophistication, the interior designers combined

multiple finishes rather than using one uniform metal throughout. "If you pick a nickel faucet, it doesn't mean you have to do nickel hardware and nickel lighting," Grkovic says. "For the kitchen, for example, we did nickel plumbing, nickel hardware on the perimeter, brass on the island, and then the lighting is brass and bronze. The client was super open to that."

Most important, layout-wise, was that the homeowners' two growing sons had space to themselves where they could explore their interests, like music and art. "We were able to create a separate wing for them, with their lounge area and their bedrooms," the wife says. "They have their own area, but there's still a connection to the main interiors. We didn't want roped-off rooms that we never used." The home's central headquarters, so to speak, are the combined kitchen, breakfast nook and great room spaces. The open layout allows the family members to engage in their different activities—cooking, reading, drawing, homework—while still enjoying each other's company. "That's where we do the majority of our living," the wife says. "So it needed to be really functional, but we wanted it to look nice for when we had guests over and entertain."

Of equal interest to a family with young boys was having ample outdoor space, which is one of the reasons why the owners opted to keep the home's footprint small. Several small courtyards, terraces and outdoor lounges extend from the interiors, while a custom bocce court offers added fun. Again, the goal was laid-back elegance. "Having the pool set in the lawn has a very timeless Martha's Vineyard vibe," says landscape designer Jeremy McVicars. "A mix of linear formal hedges with tossed wispy plantings gives it formality without being overly structured, while the bocce court and herb gardens provide playful, useful spaces for all ages."

That variety of space, both indoors and out, is what the family loves best. "The biggest compliment to the design team," the husband says, "is that we've lived here a year and I wouldn't change anything. We'd never done this before, and I went into this assuming you could never do it perfectly—but this has been pretty close to perfect." ■



Right: In the pantry, cabinetry by Desert Cove Woodworks coated in Dunn-Edwards' Porous Stone and a lantern from Hudson Valley Lighting Group add cottage charm.

Opposite: The airy kitchen continues the soothing white aesthetic, punctuated by island cabinets painted in Dunn-Edwards' Taliesin Blue with Buster + Punch brass hardware. A pair of Visual Comfort & Co. pendants hang above the island.



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Comfort is guaranteed in the breakfast nook with an abundance of pillows atop Ralph Lauren-upholstered cushions. The Made Goods table and Bungalow 5 dining chairs sit below a Troy Lighting pendant.



Right: The wife's desk nook features the same Dunn-Edwards' Taliesin Blue as the kitchen island cabinetry, accenting the sleek Calacatta Caldia-topped built-in desk and Katie Leede & Company wallcovering.

Opposite: Perched beneath the window in the laundry room, the Kohler farmhouse sink offers the prettiest of views framed by a Zak + Fox Roman shade. On the floor, geometric cement tile by Villa Lagoon Tile injects a bit of flair.





Left: In the powder room, the striking motif of the Abnormals Anonymous wallpaper contrasts with the simple shape of the Mirror Image Home mirror and elegant Waterworks sconces.

Opposite: Raw exposed beams in the main bedroom bring warmth to the cozy space, where a Hollywood At Home bed holds court. The Dash & Albert rug adds texture underfoot.



Mr. Brown London armchairs, Lee Industries upholstered chairs and a Hollywood At Home coffee table create a relaxing outdoor living space under the ramada, which shares the same shake roof as the main home.

