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ON THE COVER:  
Interiors: David Michael Miller Associates  
Architecture: Candelaria Design, Builder: Schultz Development  
(See full story on pages 38-49.)  
Photography: Werner Segarra



# a CLASSIC CALIFORNIA Colonial in the Desert

Written by Michele Perillo  
Photographed by Werner Segarra

A quiet elegance suitably describes the entrance of this Paradise Valley estate. Simple and singular, this classic though stately hand-carved door bearing a resemblance to Moorish detailing, is a symbolic indication of the sense of calm and collectiveness that exists within this home.

Cast bronze bench with sueded leather from Paul Ferrante, console is Jean de Merry, both are available through John Brooks, Inc. The central light fixture is from Charles Edwards of London. The rugs are available at David E. Adler. The artwork is from the owner's private collection.

Less can be more, much more, as designer **David Michael Miller** poignantly demonstrates with precision and in detail throughout this Spanish Revival estate.

Known for his innate abilities to create interiors which are clean, sensible and well-serving, interior designer **David Michael Miller**, along with a hand-picked, elite team of industry members, recently embarked on a creative journey together to construct one of the most authentic and well-executed examples of Spanish Revival here in the Valley.







The end result, reminiscent of a Wallace Neff or George Washington Smith historical property, was no less than a labor of love brought to life by the homeowners' passion and their extensive knowledge of this romantic, Mediterranean-based architecture. Their commitment on many levels to see its construction through in a manner in keeping with a time gone by, raised the bar to heights rarely seen in modern-day renditions of yester-years marvels. But bound by the same high level of expectation for good design, superior craftsmanship and flawless execution, builder **John Schultz**, architect **Mark Candelaria**, interior designer **David Michael Miller** and landscape architect **Jeff Berghoff** came together with their respective craftsmen, craftsmen and artisans. Like a fine musical instrument, the performance was, as David Miller describes: "a symphony in 3-D".

Giving enormous credit to the amount of patience exhibited by **Schultz** and his crew, and the brilliant contributions made by **Candelaria** in terms of shape, form and the overall flow of the entire composition, **David Miller** fondly recalls the process as one that was both meaningful and respectful; further attributing its success to the clients' unrelenting and focused vision of this property.

Prior to the initial design phase, multiple trips were made to the Santa Ynez Mountain regions, then south to Montecito and coastal Santa Barbara to study and collaborate on even the smallest details of this chosen style. Creamy white expansive stucco walls with the occasional scalloped edge, pitched red tile roofs and terra cotta relief work were hallmark signs and significant elements to consider. Staggered brickwork with generous amounts of mortar-wash which had been layered year after year in fresh, heavy coats of paint were as well noted. On the interior, a simple, hand-formed, perfectly imperfect winding stairwell is not unnoticed, nor are the plentitude of hand-formed fireplaces most likely seen at the time in multiples both inside and out for warmth as well to create a welcoming ambience.

A series of dual-centered, equilateral Gothic archways give depth and perspective to the central corridor of this home. Originating from the churches of the time, this somewhat Moorish detail lends itself more to the Mission-style Spanish Revival which was far less ornate, more orderly and clean-lined. Throughout the home, **David Miller's** subtle—often almost subliminal repetition of pattern and geometry can be seen in everything from floor coverings to textiles, making his well-executed work no less than genius on many levels.







A dramatic layering of textures, patterns, materials and finishes lend further credence to the statement: "It is impossible to categorize David Michael Miller's style." Although simple, yet harmonious blends of the old and the new, the modern and traditional are often seen throughout much of his work, this particular project, by Miller's own admittance, seems to have taken on such a puristic approach that it is difficult to know where architecture and construction end, and the interior design begins.



Even material usage, some decided in advance by the homeowner, lends itself to the light, airy openness throughout. Here the kitchen, with its clean lines and highly-functional features, was the collaboration of the homeowner, David Michael Miller and Robert Moric of Bulthaup in Scottsdale.



With the owners own private collection of antiques and art being grandfathered into the project, coupled by their seemingly contradictory draw to Hollywood-style Art Deco design with its bold, streamlined and distinctly geometric, cubistic forms, David Miller knew straight off that the interiors were going to be somewhat of a challenge in terms of blending it with the architecture. Although he understood exactly what the client envisioned, and very much appreciated its uniqueness, laying the groundwork for a cohesive design which would meld the elements of two entirely different disciplines would not be an easy task. As Miller recalls after an initial meeting: "I remember thinking how I need to walk a very fine line in finding the match within the mix in order to create a successful, harmonious plan." As the research began, the commonality of course was that both styles originated in virtually the same era. Hence, finding the cross-overs became key. And in his typical rare form, David Miller set out to do just that.

(Opposite page)

Family room chairs are from Therian in Los Angeles, tables from the Magni Collection at Thomas Lavin, rugs throughout home are from David E. Adler in Scottsdale, Mattaliano console table, lighting and fabrics are from John Brooks Inc.





In keeping with old Hollywood glamour, the owner, an avid swimmer since childhood, had Schultz Development install a 1940's diving board, complete with walkout handrails. Even Ava Gardner would find herself at home here.

The leather tufted bed is from Nancy Corzine through Palavela Home. Linens are Anichini and available through Valerianne's and Del Adora Fine Linens. Custom TV lift at the foot of the bed was brilliantly designed by David Miller to retract into the floor. It was built by Matteliano. This along with the dressers from John De Merry are available at John Brooks Inc. Rugs are from David E. Adler, antique lighting: Charles Edwards of London.



On perhaps a bit of an esoteric level, when given the opportunity to push the limits beyond what has been commonly set forth, one can potentially give rise to a new level of aesthetics. Clearly, such was the case here on this property. As the job progressed and transformed, **David Michael Miller** became increasingly more fascinated with the varying dynamics involved in narrowing the range between two sets of design principles—and how their respective effect on art and architecture, construction and composition would develop.

The very essence of Art Deco design is elegant, functional, and modern. Not too dissimilar, a variant of Spanish Colonial born out of a mix of the Mediterranean, and Moorish colonies is as well very straightforward, less accentuated—and without flamboyancy. Although classical Art Deco, also known as "Style Moderne" is displayed in many contemporary settings with very bold, pronounced elements in keeping perhaps with the more Spanish Baroque-style of architecture, both **David Miller** and **Mark Candelaria** held a strong reign on keeping the lines of this home, both inside and out clean, smooth and defined which resulted in an uncommonly pure and refined environment throughout.

As the interview continues, you can feel the well-earned pride he has in his part. **Miller** concedes, however, that the site plan is where it all really started for all of us. In many ways the balancing act of shapes and forms came somewhat natural to this project. Even the light and the way it directs itself, the very positioning of the structure on the property, and the property's position to the surrounding terrain—it all comes together almost as if it was predisposed to be this way. "It's quite rare, though remarkable when that happens", he reflects.





**FUN FACT:** In regards to the elements which are commonly seen in Spanish Colonial Revival Architecture, "the use of geometry in decor was a nod to the Moors' talent in structural design and mathematics. Since the Koran forbids the copying of natural forms, the craftsmen instead used stars, crescents, crosses, hexagons and octagons."



(Above) To the right of the entrance, a formal porte-cochère which leads to an interior auto court and garage area is lined with old brick pavers, its entrance bordered by raised floral beds which are tastefully tailored with perennials. Patio furniture is from **The Amalfi Collection**.

No less important to the overall authenticity of this residence are the magnificent grounds surrounding this sizable estate. With several acres which consist of numerous gardens, both floral and herbal, formal and relaxed, an interior courtyard, hidden side yards, terraces on varying levels, patios and a glorious two-sided, covered veranda—the outdoor environment in its parts and as a whole is every bit as captivating as is the interior of this residence.

Taking center stage in the back quadrant is a traditional Catalina-style pool. (See following 2 pages.) Its classic, rectangular shape is simple and elegant. The waters edge is met by honed limestone coping which is then bordered with green lawns. The pool with its main water feature located proud north, and adjoining small waterways strategically placed dead center with the master suite facing southwest, capture the brilliant Arizona sunsets and their reflections cast upon the mountainside. In contrast, the front gardens and adjoining lawns are facing northeast greeting the morning sun, all courtesy of architect **Mark Candelaria**. The intimate seating areas therein are decked with masterful brickwork, rich foliage and reclaimed fountains. Off in the not-so-distant acreage is a neighboring horse ranch adding a wonderful, somber peacefulness to this unique setting.

Transitioning from the front to the back, where paths and walkways have each been nonconformably designed are an experience to meander through. Some laden in decomposed granite or loose gravel add a rural flavor, while others, more formally executed, can serve as a bit more "occasion-specific" when needed.



Throughout the property, a classic mix of Mediterranean landscaping which is rich in drought-tolerant plants and hearty greenery is perfectly manicured and displays perhaps some of the lushest vegetation ever seen in the Southwest. As well, many highlighted areas are richly interwoven with romantic sweeps of European-style garden plant life such as lavender, white roses and creeping vines, a common mix in many of **Berghoff's** dreamier and more memorable installations.

From start to finish, even the smallest design element reflects an obvious amount of consideration. A simple hand-forged iron gate or balcony surround, deep inset windows with smooth-plastered edges, or uncomplicated stonework may all at first glance seem insignificant and therefore go unnoticed. But in fact, it is the undiscovered, the unseen, and the inconspicuous detail that is the true, unfeigned essence of classic Spanish Colonial architecture. Each element regardless of its prominence *matters*. To this end, this special property, with all components however replicated or newly found, is in itself a pure, elegant form of visual greatness — a creation whose existence is deservedly owed to all talents involved.

**CREDITS:** Builder: **Schultz Development**; Architecture: **Candelaria Design Associates**; Interior Design: **David Michael Miller**; Landscape: **Berghoff Design Group**; Steel Windows and Doors: **Riviera Bronze**; Kitchen: **Bulthaup**; All Other Cabinetry: **Finely Designed**; Ironwork: **Billy Daschbach, Manfred Design**; Motorized Window Shades: **AZ Custom Designs**; Plumbing and Hardware: **Clyde Hardware**; Hardwood Installation: **Premier Wood Floors, Inc.**; Pool and Water Features: **Mossman Brothers Pools**

