

Tucson Lifestyle HOME & GARDEN



Thoroughly Modern Makeover

— SAHBA Home & Garden Show Preview

Glowing With the Flow

For one famous local physician, the perfect prescription for a happy home was a makeover that improved the layout, aesthetic and function of a 1990s house.

BY ROMI CARRELL WITTMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROSS COOPER THWAITE



Andrew Weil, M.D., famed health writer and director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona, was looking for a house that reflected his minimalist taste while remaining a warm, inviting space. With the help of architect Rob Paulus and the design team of Scott Baker and Mary Ann Hesseldenz, Weil created a home that exudes a “now and Zen” feel.

For many years, Dr. Weil lived on the X9 Ranch in Vail east of Tucson, but he grew tired of the commute, among other things. “It was too far away, too big for me, too old a place with too-high maintenance costs,” he says. ▶



OPPOSITE PAGE Transparency and reflectivity enhance the indoor/outdoor quality of the home.

ABOVE An existing porch was transformed into an outdoor living room and kitchen with a new raised canopy. The 20- x 40-foot rectangle of wood and steel covers large sections of the outdoor spaces.



The home has received glowing reviews from the design community, and it was named the 2013 Home of the Year by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) of Southern Arizona.

The trio says they enjoyed the process and working with Dr. Weil, who gave them latitude throughout the project. "Andy had very clear ideas that we could easily work with but a lot of times the client doesn't know what to expect during the design and build of a project," Paulus explains. "Like with sausage, you know it's going to taste good at the end of the day, but some people aren't prepared for the process."

Of collaborating with Dr. Weil, Hesseldenz says, "He was easy to work with. And it's really nice when a project ends and you make a life-long friend. He's a really great guy."

Dr. Weil is very pleased with the home because it speaks to his passions: cooking, swimming and watching movies. "The house is simple, functional and reflects my personality and taste. In the more than 40 years I've lived in Tucson I've never had a great kitchen until now," he says. **HG**

Sources:

Architect: Rob Paulus Architects Ltd.,
www.robpaulus.com

Interior Designer: Baker+Hesseldenz Design Inc.,
www.bakerhesseldenz.com

LEFT Clean lines, smooth wood and sleek stone form a restful bathroom with Asian flair.
BELOW An unused outdoor patio was enclosed and transformed into a media room.



an avid film buff. And, along the back of the house, a dreary low-slung porch overhang was removed and replaced with a tall, "floating" canopy.

"You can't see the canopy from inside the house," Paulus says. "This was to ensure a clear view of the landscape, pool and big blue sky while still providing shade for the outdoor living space."

Baker and Hesseldenz attended to the finer points of the design, determining everything from the stonework and Douglas fir cabinetry in the kitchen and baths, to the home's lighting, to the wood finishes used in the outdoor settings and guesthouse.

"The current design is a clean and modern space that fulfills the client's desire for a quiet retreat and draws its design inspiration from an Asian aesthetic," Hesseldenz says.

Baker designed all of the wood pieces in the home and handcrafted many of them himself, including the custom dining room table.

In all, the project took a little over two years from start until completion. The first year was spent on the home's interior and the second year was dedicated to the outdoor spaces.

"There is flow and context between the indoors and outdoors," says Baker. "We focused on stripping out things and sticking to a natural materials palette."



After searching for the perfect spot, he found a 3,000-square-foot home in the Santa Catalina foothills. "The house was the only one I found that I could imagine myself living in," he says. But there was one not-so-small problem. "The interior design was all broken up into quirky spaces. I wanted a big open living-dining-kitchen space with a view of the mountains," he says. "And because I love to cook, I wanted a great kitchen."

Dr. Weil knew that the home needed a top-to-bottom makeover. That was when, on the recommendation of friend and colleague Dr. Victoria Maizes, he reached out to architect Rob Paulus.

Dr. Weil met with Paulus to discuss his ideas and concepts for the project. After they agreed on a central aesthetic, Paulus brought in the Baker+Hesselden design team of Scott Baker and Mary Ann Hesselden, and the three of them set to work.

"The house was built in the mid-1990s," Paulus says. "It was in what we like to call the 'Santa-Fake' style — very vanilla."

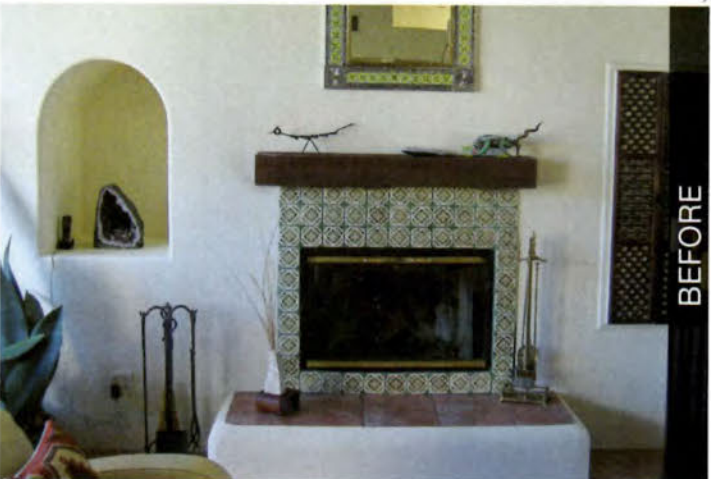
The home had been a standard builder's plan, but had been added to over the years, resulting in a patchwork of rooms that didn't flow well. Using a subtractive approach, the three designers re-envisioned the home as an open concept, with a large kitchen expanding into a Great Room. Keeping things natural and simple was key.

"Dr. Weil is all about authenticity," Paulus says. "It's all about simplicity and functionality. In a way, we were un-frosting the cake. We got rid of more stuff than we put in."

Paulus knocked out the walls that blocked the kitchen from the rest of the home and adjusted the overall flow of the house without altering its original footprint. One bedroom was eliminated in order to create a luxurious guest bath as well as a spacious laundry room. An unused outdoor patio was enclosed and transformed into a media room, something that was very important to Dr. Weil, ▶



ON THE COVER



BEFORE



BEFORE

OPPOSITE PAGE The living room fireplace, surround and accompanying niches were redesigned for a more modern aesthetic.

ABOVE The open kitchen design creates a new centerpiece in the house for entertaining. Kitchen and dining room walls were eliminated to create a Great Room.