

MEDITERRANEAN MARVEL

AN ESTATE CELEBRATES HOMEOWNER'S ITALIAN HERITAGE

BY JESSICA ELLIOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AARON DOUGHERTY



The hues of Positano, Italy—vibrant yellow homes and sapphire waters—inspired the estate's exterior design. The negative-edge resort-style pool features a 12-foot-high, negative-edge waterfall into the lower pool area. Picturesque vistas of the Vaquero Club golf course are seen from every archway.

The great room holds reclaimed wood beams, 8-inch-wide European white oak floors and a custom-designed double-sided fireplace with antique terra-cotta firebox bricks in a herringbone pattern. Chandeliers are by Fine Art Lamps. The coffee table was custom made with a polished Italian white oyster marble and a laser-cut base.

A legacy home: That's what a prominent CEO and his wife wanted to create for their four sons and extended family. Three sons had left the nest; only one remained at home. So, the couple envisioned a place where they could return often with spouses and, someday, grandchildren. "They wanted to have a resort-style house they could enjoy," says established luxury homebuilder Scott Simmons of Simmons Estate Homes. "A long-term, family legacy home."

The couple found a 2-acre swath of land backing up to the Vaquero Club golf course and turned to Simmons, who has built more than 30 homes in Vaquero—more than any other builder in the neighborhood.

They requested a transitional, Mediterranean-style home that paid homage to the husband's Italian heritage. The home's inspiration was drawn from the Italian homes located on the Amalfi Coast, around Positano, where the homes undulate elegantly down natural sloped homesites.

"They wanted some classic elements, but also some that were a little more fresh and modern than you would see in a rustic house," Simmons says. "They also frequently entertain





The bespoke kitchen vent hood by Francois & Co. is made of marble with polished nickel bands, "to add just the right amount of sparkle," DeLeo says. The stone mosaic backsplash is by New Ravenna. "We loved the more complex water jet pattern when paired with the crisp white marble hood," she says.

and wanted numerous entertainment areas, with living spaces both indoors and outdoors."

Simmons, who is a former architect and founded his company more than 25 years ago, managed the home design process in tandem with well-known Dallas architect Clay Nelson. They chose to nestle the three-story estate at the top of a hill, with a walkout basement on the backside, so that the home meanders beautifully down the property, taking advantage of the topography. "We tried to create views from every space in the house—to the backyard, to the entry courtyard with a water feature, to the golf course," Simmons says. "There is an incredible vista from every room."

Classic elements came by way of archways, an abundance of custom-selected stone and an Italian tile roof. There is natural limestone throughout the house, including exquisite and intricately detailed hand-carved fireplaces. But there are modern elements as well, from steel doors and reclaimed wood beams to sliding barn doors, soft LED lighting, and expansive pocket doors in the great room that open to the loggia, complete with remote-control screens for climate control. "The homeowners knew what they wanted, but they relied on us for ideas on newer trends," Simmons says.

To remain true to the request for a unique home, Simmons also built a sprawling basement with a full wine cellar that includes a lounge area with a cigar humidor. He constructed two master suites on the main level and a third in the basement for guests. The owners'



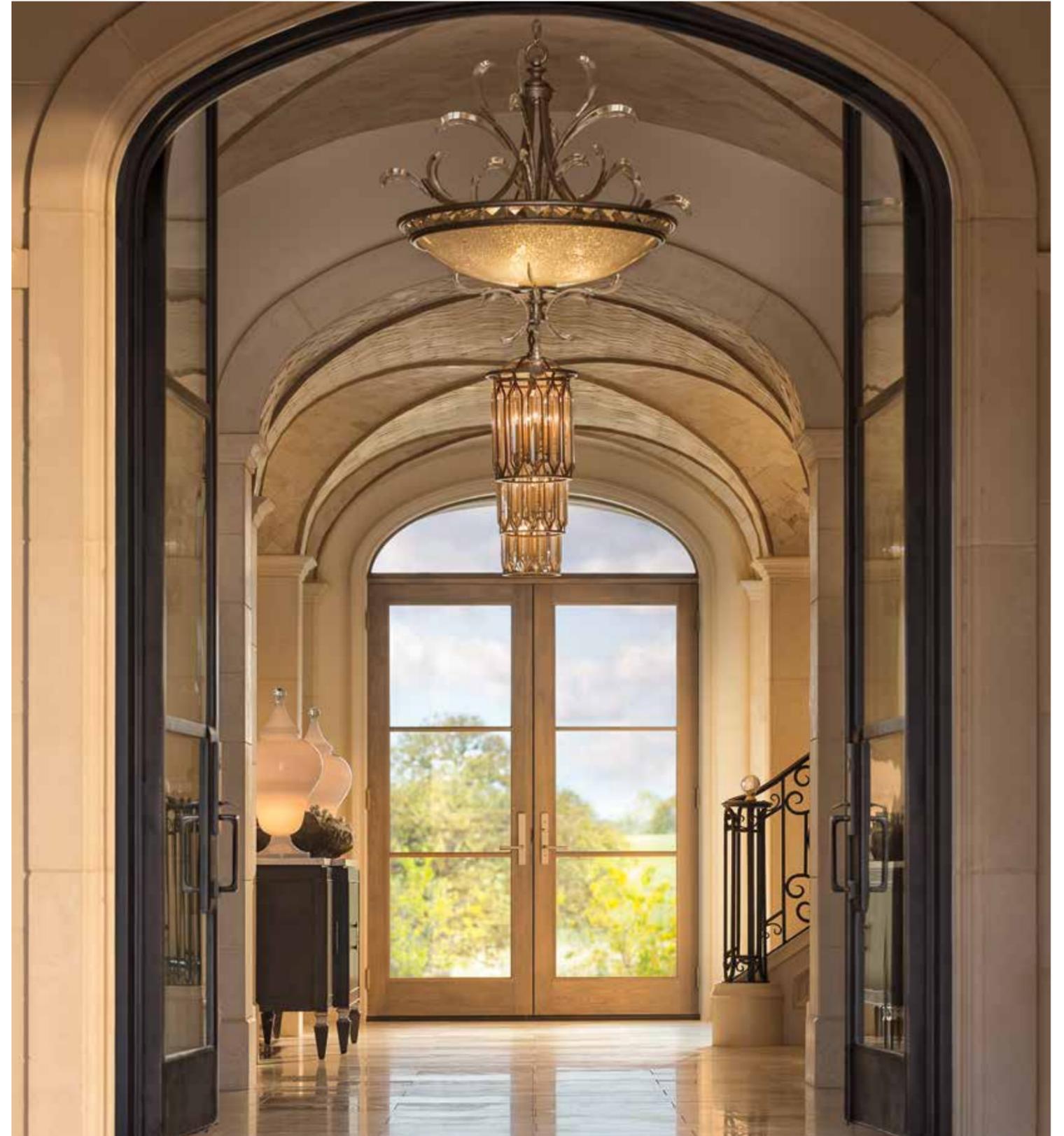
Above: A sculptural trio of hand-blown glass and bronze metallic orbs are suspended over the pool table. Custom barn doors open from the game room to media room. The bar is one of five in the house. The handmade Tamarian rug was inspired by the natural shapes and colors of the bar top's semiprecious agate clusters. The paint-splattered chairs are Bernhard's Callie chairs, upholstered in a Knoll velvet fabric. **Opposite:** The foyer holds steel elliptical doors and a series of custom groin vaults hand tiled with honed, natural stone, a concept designed by DeLeo. The columns are limestone. Chandeliers are from the Fine Art Lamps collection.

master suite, which has a balcony overlooking the golf course, holds his-and-her bathrooms and amazing his-and-her closets. Tucked inside the husband's closet is a fun addition: Simmons incorporated a secret passageway that connects to the study and down to the basement.

Perhaps the most impressive space is the study. "I call it the oval office—it's probably better than the president's," Simmons says, laughing. Crafted on an oval radius with an impressive dome—which is hand tiled with mosaics on the exterior and made of floor-to-ceiling walnut—it is a handsome backdrop

for the homeowners' numerous treasured items. The home was created by numerous craftsmen, including several who have worked for Simmons for more than 20 years. "They took their time ensuring each element was articulate," he says.

When it came to the interior furnishings, the couple wanted thoughtful pieces that would also be comfortable for guests and durable for everyday living—with no worry over pet stains or spilling food or a glass of wine. "They are well traveled and wanted to make sure they had some signature items and appointments, but they wanted it to feel casual at the same





Above: In the master bedroom, Fletcher had the custom-designed king bed upholstered in luxurious chenille. The accent wall holds luminous, handmade mother-of-pearl wallpaper. The sofas are by Century Furniture. **Opposite:** The study is crafted of walnut, from floor to ceiling, and overlooks the entry courtyard. Custom built-ins are full of personal items collected over the years, including pictures with celebrities and memorabilia. The railing is hand forged and the domed ceiling was hand painted with a pewter glaze and charcoal striae. The light fixture is Ralph Lauren's Westbury Triple Tier chandelier. The mahogany Westminster desk is by Theodore Alexander.

time," Simmons says. He connected them with Fran DeLeo and Mark Fletcher of design firm DeLeo & Fletcher, who helped he couple transition from the darker-toned finishes of their previous home to "lighter, brighter, crisper, fresher," fabrics, furnishings, art and accessories.

The designers worked directly with Simmons to highlight his work and the quality of materials, and to capitalize on the estate's resort feel. "This truly is the couple's dream home, and

they trusted us to bring their vision to fruition," Simmons says. Though it took much dedication—every detail, down to the size and design of the exterior lanterns, was considered—the end result is a truly original, one-of-a-kind home.

"So far, in my opinion, this home is the jewel of Vaquero," Simmons says. ➔

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