



Adobe Masterpiece

ANTIQUES AND ARTISTRY ABOUND IN THIS MAGNIFICENT PUEBLO-STYLE HOME IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO.



By Allyn Calton
Photography by Daniel Nadelbach
Styling by Gilda Meyer-Niehof

MELDING INTO THE SURROUNDING DESERT, THE sand-colored Pueblo-style home appears to have existed for generations. In the front, a 400-year-old carved teak gate opens to a private courtyard with mature cottonwoods and native grasses. Rough stucco walls, wrought-iron gas lanterns, and a massive antique front door topped by vigas—enormous pine logs protruding from the wall—accentuate the sense of antiquity. In reality, this stunning residence is a combination of state-of-the-art materials and owner artistry.

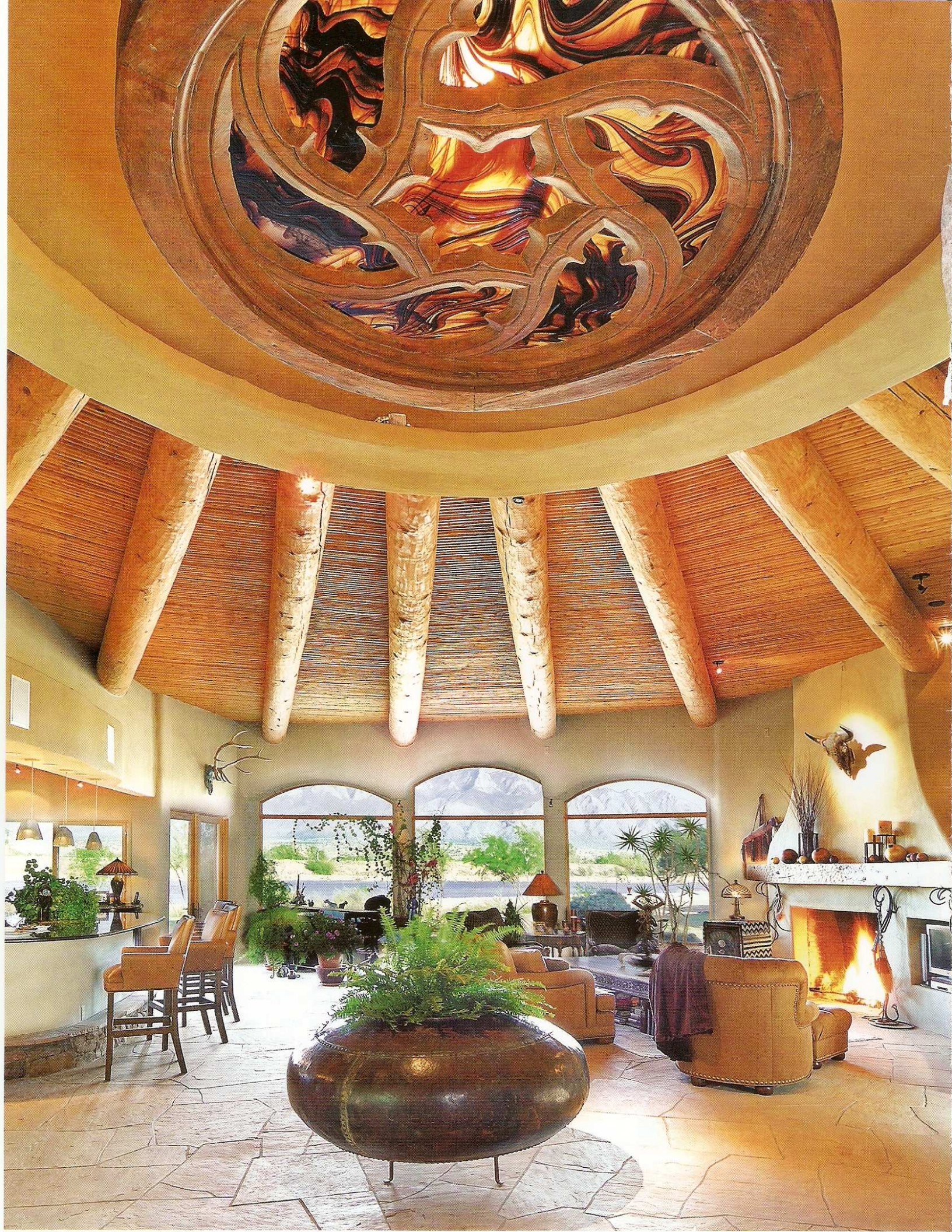
Adjacent to the Rio Grande River with spectacular views of the Sandia Mountains, the one-and-a-half-acre parcel is a natural gem. “My husband and I always wanted to return to the Albuquerque area,” homeowner Laraine Ely says. “We had the chance to acquire this incredible property and knew it was the perfect home site.”

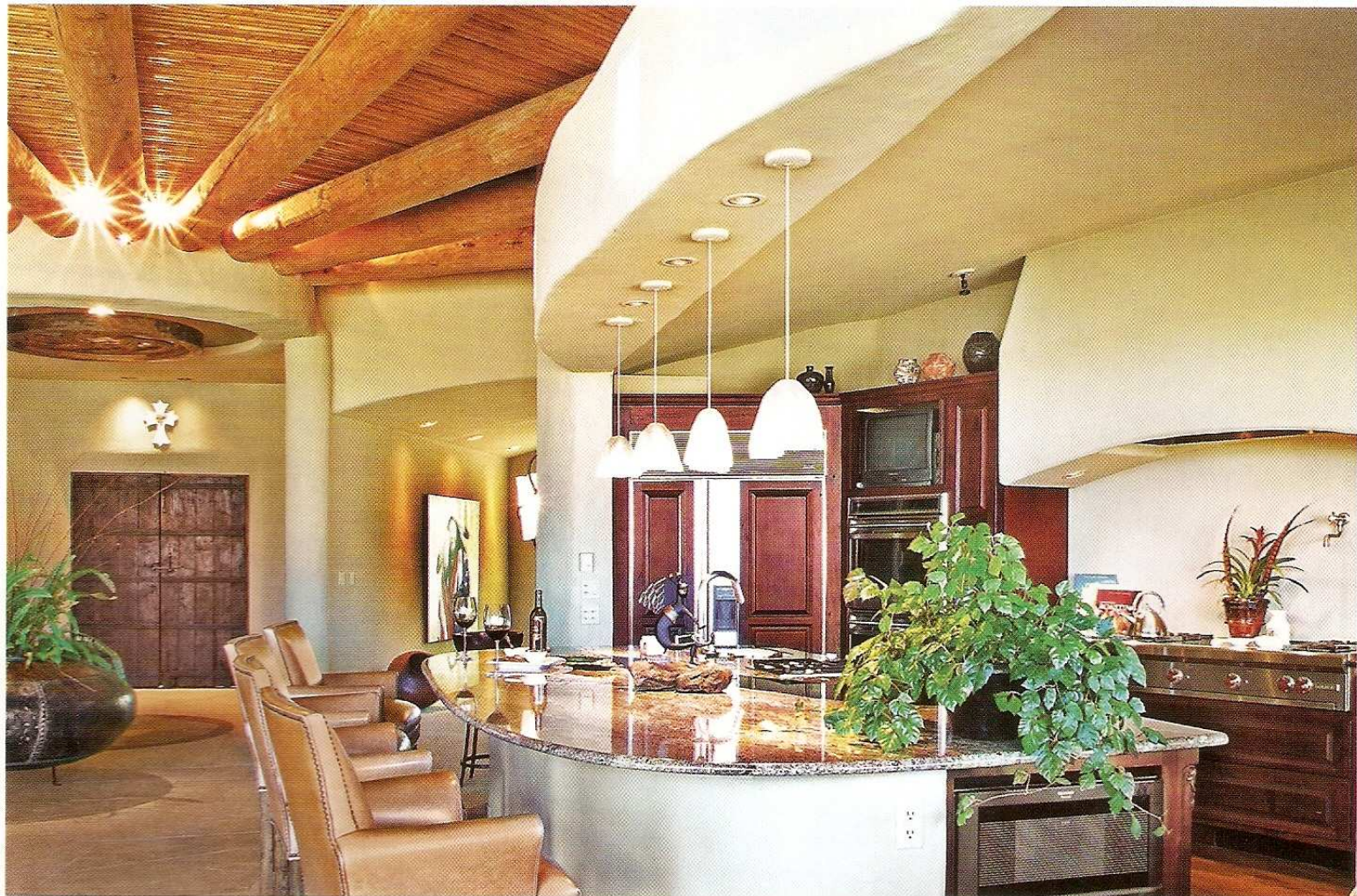
Ely, an interior designer and artist, took the lead in conceptualizing the home. “To help create a sense of timelessness, we included old, traditional adobe-style home elements,” she says. Plans called for no straight lines, only softly rounded walls. A single step up or step down serves as a transition between rooms. The couple even went so far as to integrate cracks in the walls as part of the finish work. An accomplished sculptor, Ely crafted a clay model of the home to scale. “We showed it to the builder and she took it from there,” she says.

The builder, who has since retired, was impressed. “Laraine designed not only a house, but a work of art,” she says. The home was built using radiuses—curved walls, rounded corners, and circular spaces.

To create the look and feel of an old adobe exterior, the couple chose a material called Rastra—a mix of recycled cement and Styrofoam.

From the outside Laraine and Bernie Ely's Pueblo-style home appears to have existed for generations; inside, state-of-the-art amenities and open, airy living spaces that extend outdoors are perfect for entertaining.



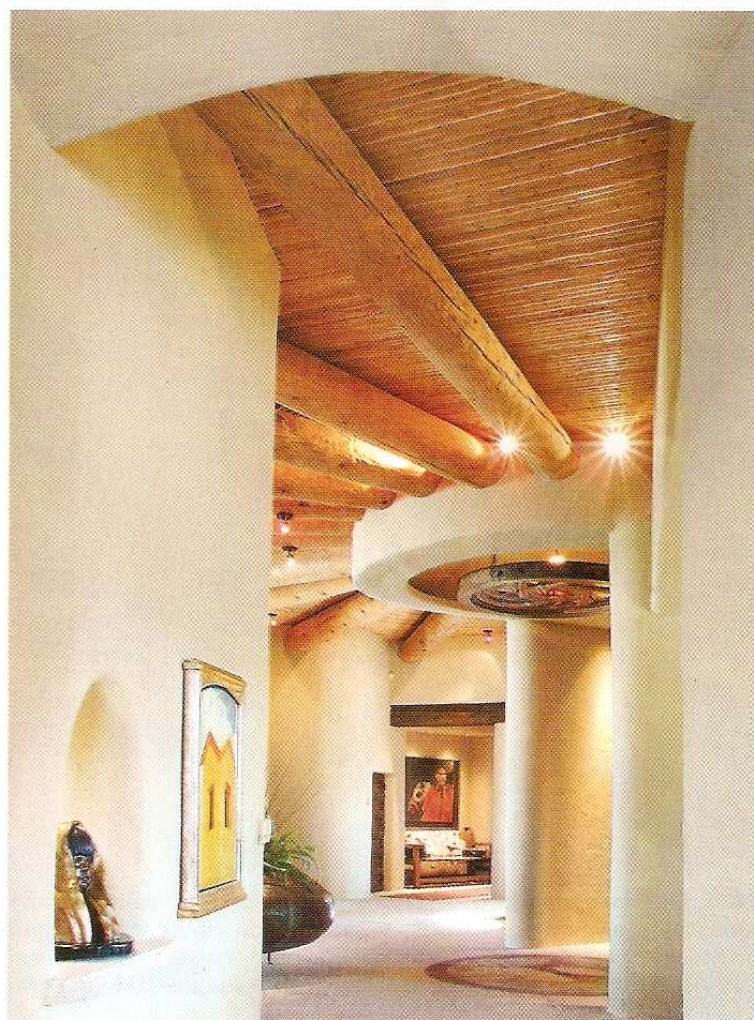


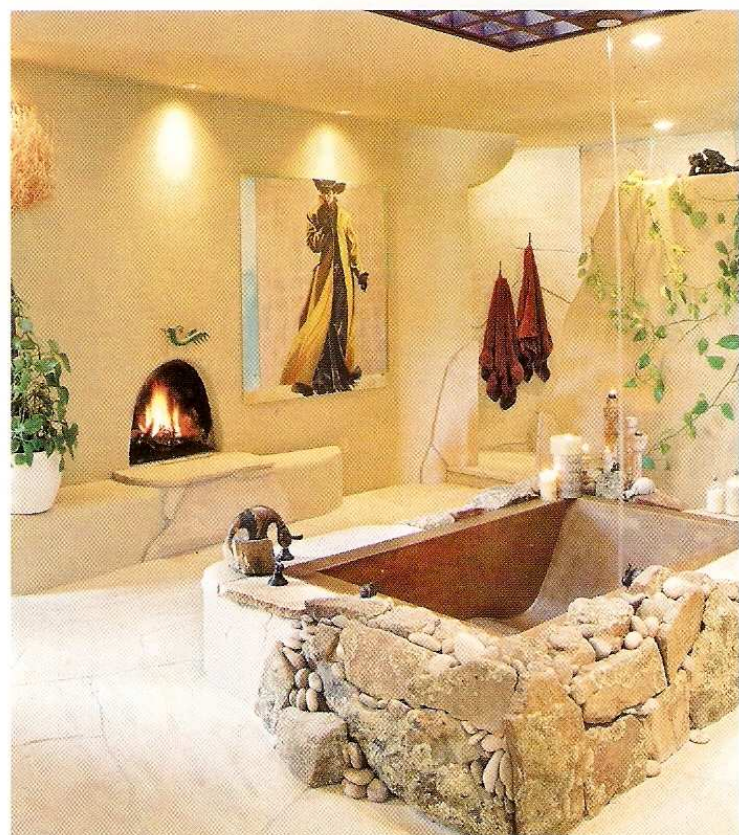
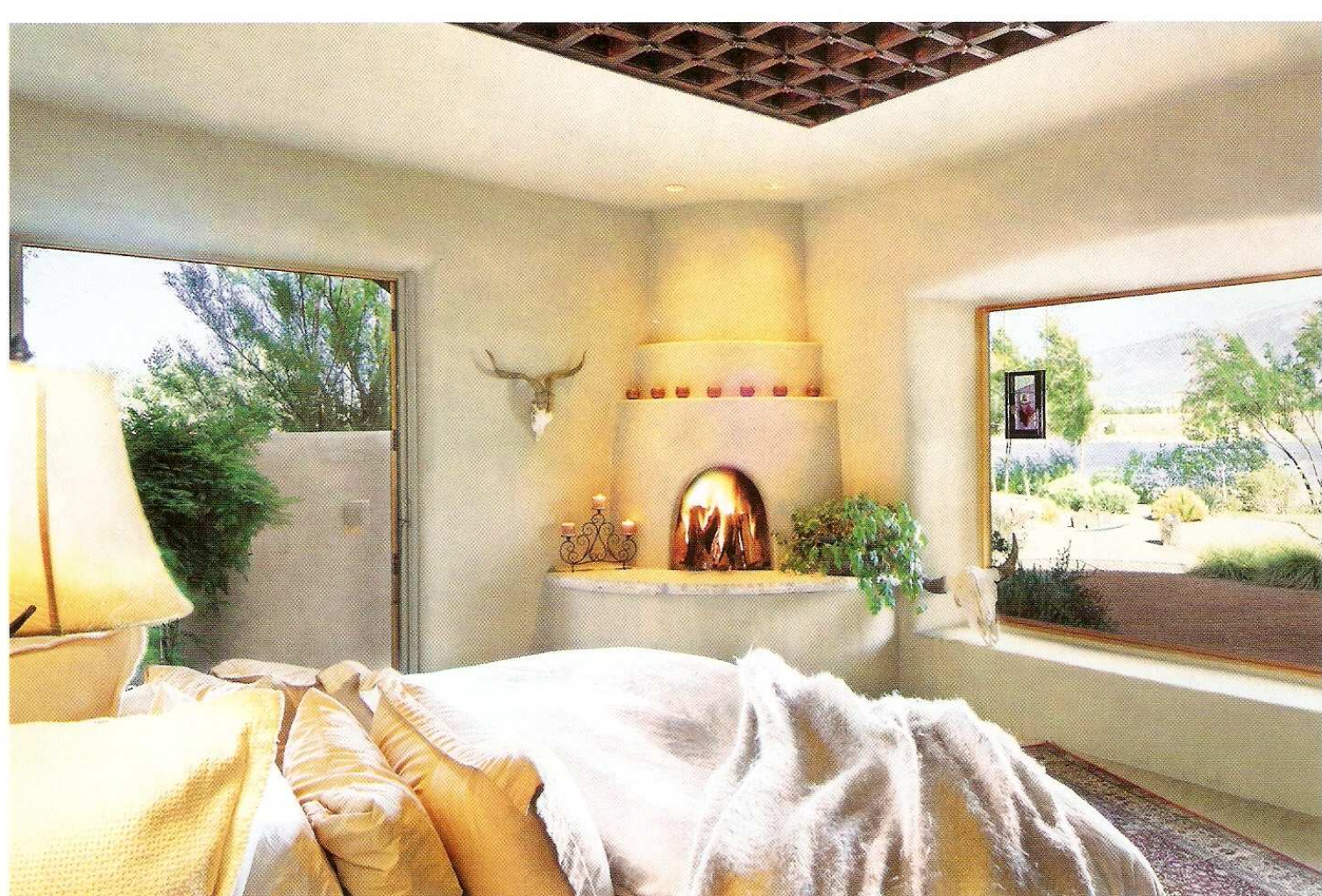
Structurally strong and impervious to the elements, the material was well-suited for the project. “The beauty was that the Rastra could be installed, then, using a chain saw, cut and curved as we directed. A final layer of stucco created the old adobe feeling we were looking for,” Bernie Ely says.

One step inside the foyer tells another story altogether. “The great room exudes an open, airy, contemporary Pueblo style,” Laraine says. “Bernie loves the sunburst pattern, so I incorporated that design into the ceiling.” In the center of the ceiling, a large, antique round wooden window from India was transformed into a light fixture. Fiery-colored stained glass by artist Duane Dahl, whose works include several pieces on display in the Smithsonian, adds beauty and drama to the piece. Vigas fan out from the light fixture with *latillas*—small pieces of peeled aspen poles—in between. On the floor below, reflecting the circular pattern, sits a large, one-of-a-kind, museum-quality bronze pot from India.

As art enthusiasts, the Elys incorporated a mix of mediums and artists into their décor. They also used a variety of antiques from India and Pakistan. “East Indian and Pakistani designs

OPPOSITE: A large, round, antique wooden window from India was retrofitted into a stunning light fixture in the great room. The fiery-colored stained glass inserts were custom-made. **TOP:** The kitchen was designed to flow as part of the great room. To maintain clean lines, cabinets were installed below the countertops. **RIGHT:** Softly curving hallways, rounded corners, and arched ceilings are indicative of the home’s radius design.



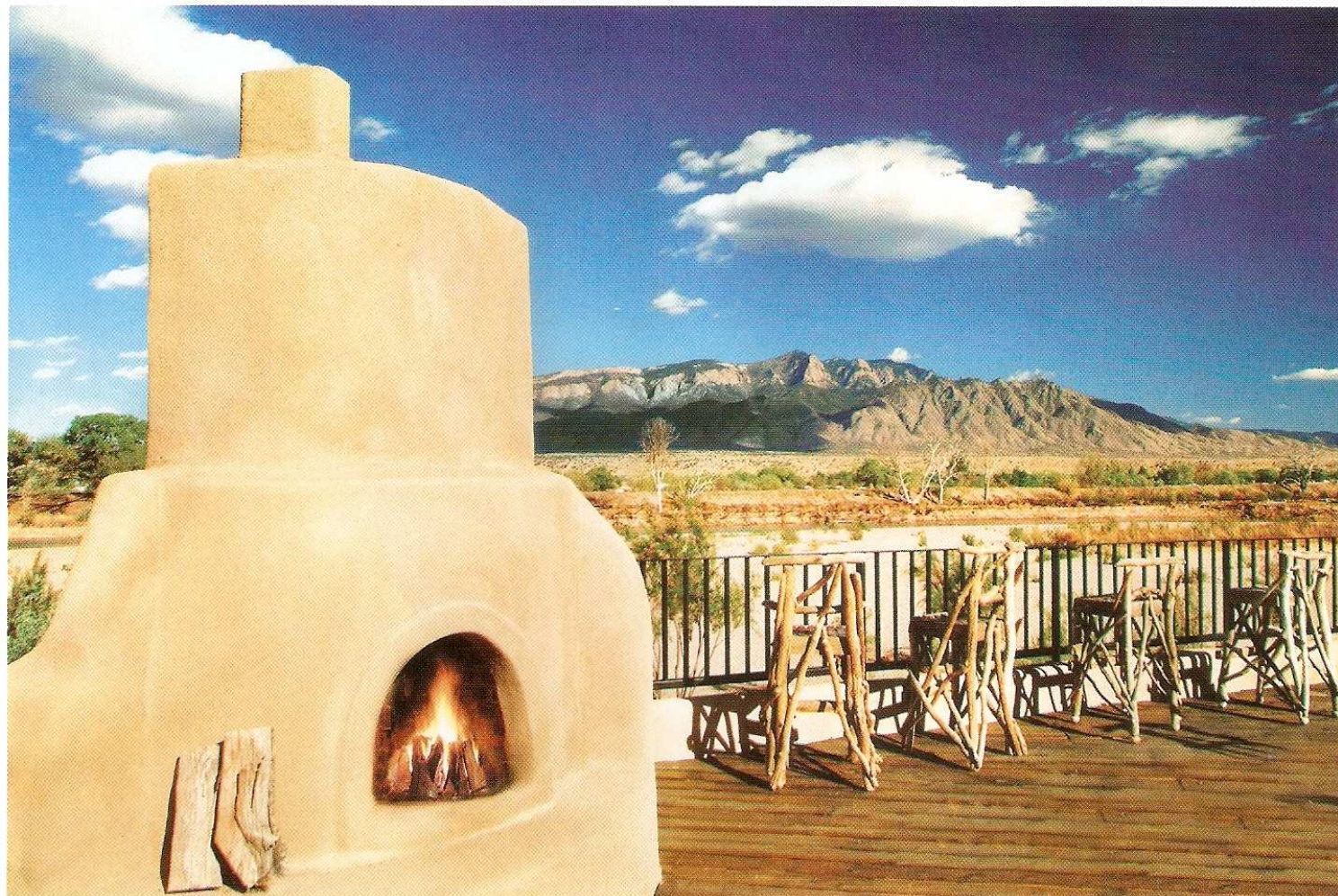


TOP: The master bedroom offers picture-perfect views of the mountains and river. **ABOVE:** A hidden faucet in the skylight provides a waterfall-like feature into the copper tub below. **OPPOSITE:** Atop the second floor is a 1,500-square-foot veranda.

merge quite well with Southwestern-style elements,” Laraine says.

Stepping into the great room, visitors are treated to a breathtaking view of the Sandia Mountains and Rio Grande through a wall of windows. To the right, a comfortable seating area beckons guests to enjoy an array of local art. On the coffee table a multi-patina bronze by Arizona artist Craig Dan Goseyun is displayed. Above the fireplace hangs a buffalo skull ornately covered in “seed beads” by Ali Launer. The mantle, a single, massive piece of wood, is supported by iron sculptures forged by local artist Phil Martinez. To the left is a state-of-the-art kitchen. Open to the great room, the kitchen was designed to complement the spacious feel. Not wanting to obstruct the views to the outside, the couple had cabinets installed below the countertops. A deep red- and sage-colored granite countertop extends the length of the breakfast bar to the outdoor patio. “We added the dark, chocolate-colored vein that runs the length of the granite to mirror the riverbed of the Rio Grande,” Laraine says.

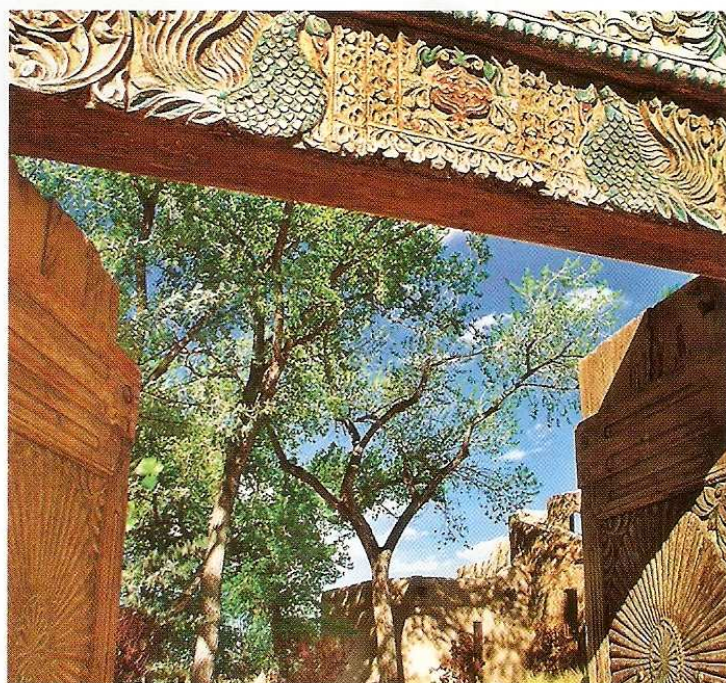
Off the entry a gently curved hallway leads to the master suite. Inside the *nicho*—a small, arched recess in the wall—is one of Laraine’s bronzes—an armadillo with a deer mask inspired by pottery shards from an ancient New Mexico Indian civilization. Hanging next to it is a painting of a church by renowned New Mexico artist Tal Walton. The master suite features a large window looking across the river toward the mountains and slid-



ing glass doors leading to a private patio with a fountain. In the corner is a kiva, one of nine fireplaces in the home. Imbedded in the ceiling is a 200-year-old decorative wood ceiling from a castle in India. Small iron rings used to hang firepots or candles dangle from each wooden compartment.

The Elys' master bath is stunning in simplicity and design. A giant copper soaking tub faced with flagstone and moss rock is the focal point. Natural light pours in from the skylight above, which is fitted with a custom wood covering matching that of the master bedroom. From one of the wooden compartments, a hidden faucet creates a water feature flowing from the ceiling to the tub below. Along the far wall a wood-burning fireplace warms the space. Hanging next to the fireplace is a large painting by local artist David DeVary.

The home has two outdoor living spaces that allow the couple to take full advantage of the climate and entertain year-round. The largest is a 1,500-square-foot deck built atop the home's second story. From here, guests can enjoy fabulous views of the river and mountains. A traditional kiva fireplace makes being outdoors comfortable even when temperatures cool, and a dumbwaiter between the kitchen and deck makes serving guests a breeze. "Our home is a combination of everything we love—traditional Pueblo elements, East Indian antiques, local art, natural stone and wood, and modern materials all within a frame that flows," Laraine says.



Resources

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