

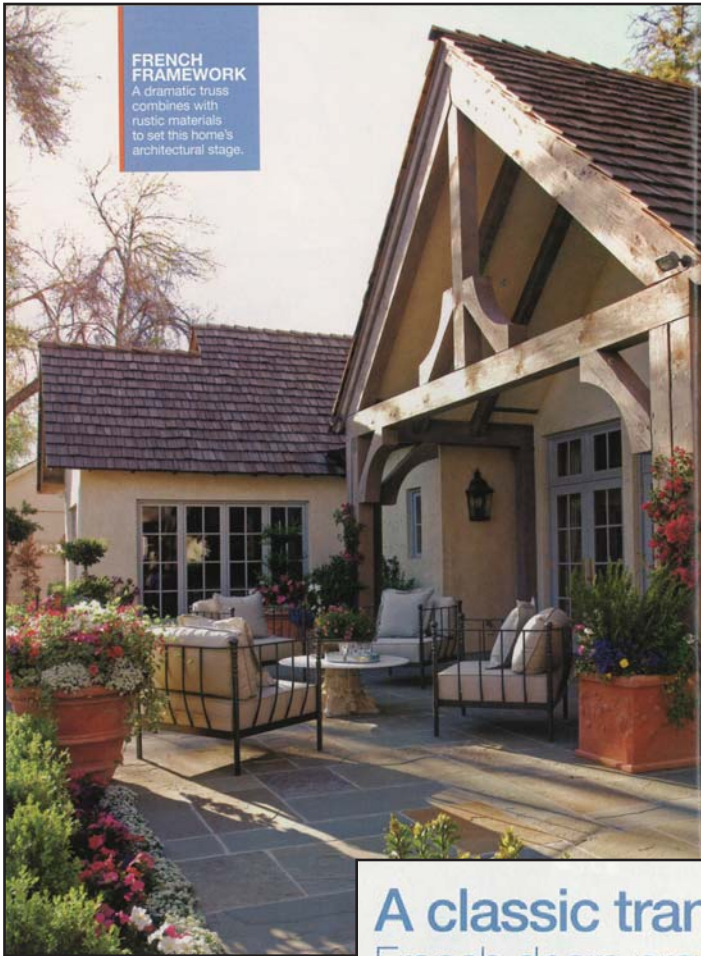
Beautiful Homes



VALLONE

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FRENCH FRAMEWORK
A dramatic truss combines with rustic materials to set this home's architectural stage.



A classic transition between indoors and out via French doors provides a light, highly livable quality.

The moment Kathi Fidel saw this rambling villa in her beloved Phoenix neighborhood, she knew it was a dream come true. Recalling the châteaux of Normandy or the Loire Valley, the house offered everything she was looking for, with one snag: It was being renovated for someone else.

Nancy Brunkhorst of Nance Construction worked closely with architect Mark Candelaria on the dramatic renovation of the house, a 1950s ranch. She had intended the property for her son, Brock, but Kathi stepped in just before the project was completed, making Brunkhorst an offer she couldn't refuse. "It was just so perfect for us," Kathi recalls. "We loved that it looked like an old European house, but it wasn't ostentatious or too big. And it was great that most of the construction was already done."

ranch home as much as possible. They kept the main-level layout largely intact, then constructed an upper-level master suite highlighted by pitched ceilings and dormer windows. "Our goal was to create as much square footage as we could without making the house too tall," Brunkhorst says. "We knew we wanted a rustic European look, and obviously something gracious, but it needed to fit the site and work within the context of Arcadia."

The lush neighborhood of Arcadia is filled with sprawling lawns, mature citrus trees, and a wealth of vintage ranch houses. It strongly shaped Candelaria's design,

OUTDOOR LIVING Plants soften the hardscape of the rear terrace, opposite, and create a relaxed atmosphere. **PRACTICAL**

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Indeed, Brunkhorst and her crew had spent months transforming the dwelling, using the footprint of the old

ranch home as much as possible. They kept the main-level layout largely intact, then constructed an upper-level master suite highlighted by pitched ceilings and dormer windows. "Our goal was to create as much square footage as we could without making the house too tall," Brunkhorst says. "We knew we wanted a rustic European look, and obviously something gracious, but it needed to fit the site and work within the context of Arcadia."

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ELEGANCE Niches beside the fireplace in the family room, above, are deep enough for armoires; the one on the left holds a TV.



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Comfortable scale in room dimensions and ceiling heights gives the interior a more European feel.

edging him toward a simple country French style that would seem natural in its surroundings. "We were always trying to create a house that looked like it had been there 50 years," he says. "So finding the appropriate scale and blending seamlessly into the neighborhood was really important."

For the new facade, Candelaria envisioned a modest European-style cottage with steep walls, high rooflines, and minimal trim. "Simple architecture can be the hardest thing to achieve, because people always want to add more," he says. "On this project, we purposely avoided that gingerbread look and allowed the small details and beautiful natural textures to shine through." Stucco walls set the backdrop for slate walkways, divided-light windows, and a shake roof, forging an authentic French look that teems with understated elegance.

Inside the home, Brunkhorst followed a similar strategy, designing clean, simple spaces that evoke the casual

ARCHITECTURAL DEFINITION A corbel-embellished opening original to the home defines the living and dining rooms, above, while maintaining openness. **FINE FINISH** A traditional two-coat plaster technique gives the dining room, right, a rich look.

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FRENCH FLAVOR

Ceiling

A shallow coffered ceiling differentiates the dining room from adjacent spaces. The plaster finish used on the walls also adds richness here.

Chandelier

A reconditioned antique chandelier provides the quintessential touch of elegance. Excellent reproduction choices are available from many manufacturers.

Mirror

This piece from the homeowners' collection boasts French flourishes that embody the room's luxurious style.

Mantel

The builder's in-house plaster crew, well-versed in traditional plaster-and-lathe techniques, handcrafted the home's fireplaces to look like limestone. Stone or concrete with a textured finish would achieve a similar look at a lower price, the builder says.

Flooring

Walnut floors provide a rich look hardly in need of a rug and are in keeping with the home's authentic French style.

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Custom cabinets with a lightly worn paint finish and rustic hardware imbue the kitchen with an air of low-key luxury.

warmth of a European farmhouse. Trading excessive embellishment for quality old-world craftsmanship, she chose walnut for much of the flooring and insisted on plaster for the walls. To create a sense of coziness, she kept most of the rooms at their prerenovation size and left ceilings at a modest height—no more than 10 feet. “You don’t really need all of that volume in a ceiling,” Candelaria says. “When you make a room too big, it loses its human scale and starts to feel very cold and unapproachable, especially for children.”

Because the Fidel house was always intended as a family home, the architect was ever mindful of how it would “live” on a daily basis and how it might foster a more European existence. “My goal is not so much creating houses, but creating a different way of living ... smelling the roses and taking time to savor simple pleasures,” he says. “Just like they do in Europe.”

One way Candelaria encouraged this lifestyle was to erase the line between indoor and outdoor spaces. Eager to take advantage of the mild weather and verdant landscape, he replaced many existing windows with French doors and tore down several walls to facilitate flow between rooms. And because similar materials are used inside and out, the sense of continuity is flawless. “It was really about creating an experience,” Candelaria says. “A more estate-like feeling, more openness, more seating areas and points of interest ... that’s what really drove the design. We were also very selective with our details.” In the living room, for example, a

CAFE STYLE The breakfast room’s antique wrought-iron light fixture, along with the kitchen’s custom cabinets and farmhouse-style sink, above, adds charm. **SERIOUS COOKING** An oversize range and convenient workstations, opposite, boost efficiency.

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COUNTER CHOICES

Varying countertop materials conveys a built-over-time look. Here, the mix is honed granite and butcher block.



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Building character

A thoughtful renovation transported this home from the 1950s to its more traditional state by adding an upper level and tasteful country French features throughout. The architect paid special attention to maintaining sensible scale and bridging indoor and outdoor spaces.



Breakfast room A bank of French doors keeps the space bright and means casual meals easily move outside.



Outdoor kitchen A built-in grill and big table transform the terrace next to the kitchen into an alfresco dining spot.



Front patio Its location adjacent to the dining room makes this spot perfect for relaxing with a drink.



First impression A higher roofline with dormers subtly reveals the home's new upper level.



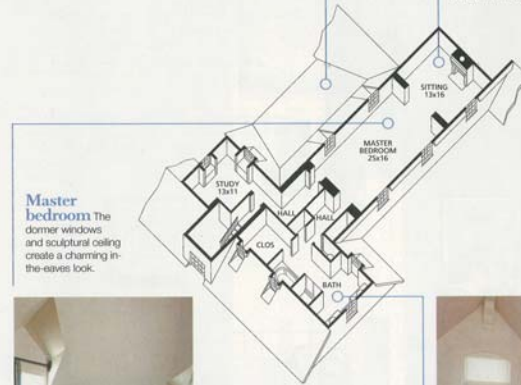
MAIN LEVEL
3,491 sq. ft.



Rear exterior A dramatic truss conveys the home's country French charm, as do the shake roof and a trio of chimneys.



Private retreat The sitting room features a fireplace and a higher ceiling than those on the main level.



Master bedroom The dormer windows and sculptural ceiling create a charming in-the-eaves look.



UPPER LEVEL
1,291 sq. ft.

Master bath Three windows and a glass shower enclosure maintain a bright, airy look.

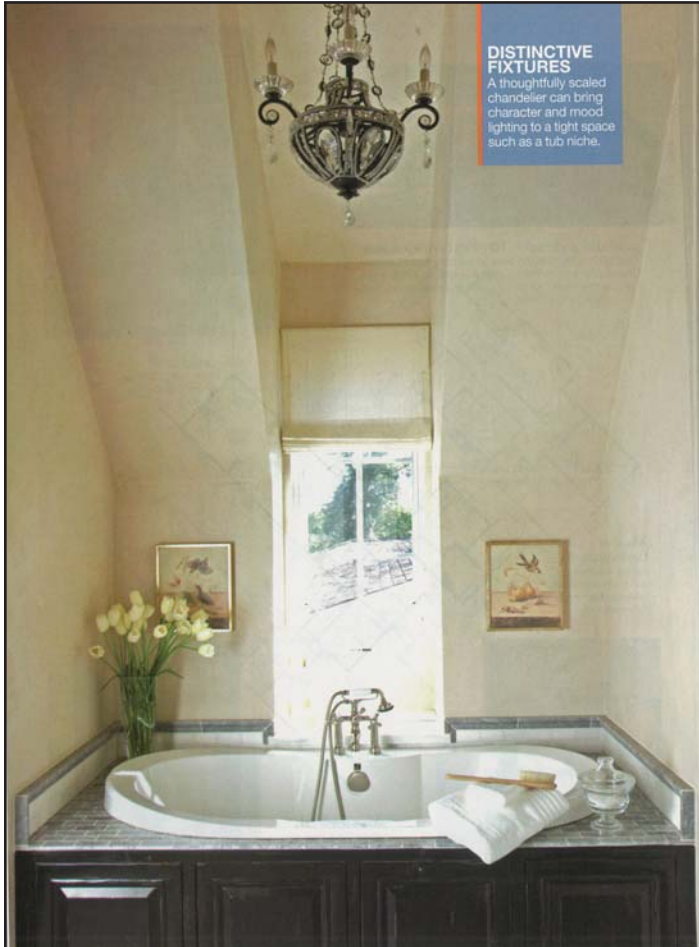


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DISTINCTIVE FIXTURES

A thoughtfully scaled chandelier can bring character and mood lighting to a tight space such as a tub niche.

framed opening articulates the space with rustic but elegant corbels. The dining room also has quiet accents, such as a plaster-finished coffered ceiling and a humble mantel.

Interior designer Berkley Vallone, who helped put the final touches on the decor, allowed the home's breezy palette and casual style to guide her. "In choosing fabrics and furnishings, I was very focused on maintaining the integrity of the architecture," she says. "It was so strong that I wanted to add a layer of comfort without drawing too much attention away from it." The architect applauds that approach. "The common thread in this home is simplicity and quality," Candelaria says. "We kept the architecture simple and clean, and the decor just serves to fill in any plainness."

Kathi says she couldn't ask for more. "This house is peaceful and beautiful," she says. "It definitely makes you feel like you're a world away."

Architect **Mark B. Candelaria, AIA** Interior designer **Berkley Vallone**
Builder **Nancy Brunkhorst**

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RELAXING NOOK The master bathroom's tub, *opposite*, nestles perfectly into a tight space under the eaves and between the shower and a closet. **SMART PLACEMENT** A pair of vanities, *right*, takes advantage of the gable end of the master bath, where ceilings are high enough to allow plenty of headroom.



Steep pitches in ceiling height add architectural charm but also require thoughtful planning for comfortable use.

LUXURY TUBS

No matter yet whirlpool jet or a simple tub can be as beneficial. In this renovation, opposite, ne dormer window a custom suit freestanding make drama well. Here an

framed opening articulates the space with rustic but elegant corbels. The dining room also has quiet accents, such as a plaster-finished coffered ceiling and a humble mantel.

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