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EUROPEAN AMBIANCE

When her client called interior designer Laurie Walter of Cardamon Design and asked her opinion of Talis Park, the answer was an easy one, as Walter herself lives in the community. “I told him that Talis Park was spectacular, with its picturesque bridges, authentic Tuscan feel, and fabulous waterways, and that building a home there was truly taking a step towards living out loud.”

When chosen for the job, Walter, and associate designer Kelly Sereghy, got to know the client and listened carefully. He proved to be very discerning and full of ideas. With Walter’s recommendation, he even provided his own wishbook of furnishings, paint, and textures for his new home. ▶

Above: Tall ceiling height and an elegant stairway are details architect John Cooney of Stofft Cooney Architects points to when explaining how he designed a villa with the amenities of a single-family home. Tiny chips of mica in the wallcovering by Romo provide a glittering backdrop for glass art plates from Wilson Lighting. Parentheses-curved railings add a contemporary feel to the traditional wrought iron stair railing. A surprising touch is added by the colorful painting of Ray Charles by Michael Israel that the homeowner won in a charity auction, set on a wall painted with Sherwin-Williams Agreeable Gray. The villa’s main flooring is wide plank oak in a tobacco finish.

Right: Always looking to add detail, Walter designed the great room’s coffered ceiling to have a square element at the base of each coffer. A contemporary Netto chrome and glass chandelier from Wilson Lighting lights the Vanguard Furniture seating group from International Design Source. The focal wall behind the television is coffered to tie into the ceiling detail and painted darker than the rest of the room in Benjamin Moore’s Rhine River. A hand-knotted wool rug with a watercolor design is from Hadinger Flooring.



“The homeowner wanted something rooted in a traditional lifestyle, but with a contemporary spin,” says Walter. “As a designer, it would be very easy to create just a set modern look. But, combining my ideas with his into a design aesthetic that is both sophisticated and very livable takes skill and experience.”

Using a service Walter and Sereghy refer to as concierge care, they selected all background materials and designed all the wall details and cabinetry throughout the home, as well as deciding upon the master bathroom configuration. The pair was even integral in the design of the pool. They also specified all furnishings, fabrics, art, area rugs, window treatments, or, as Walter calls it, “everything the eye can see.” Walter also designed the home’s unique ceilings and other architectural features, providing the builder with field drawings to carry out her vision. ▶

Right: Walter worked with a cabinetmaker to create a tone-on-tone kitchen with great visual interest. Warm white cabinets with nickel handles line the perimeter underneath a ceiling detail of floating beams designed by Walter. Wine storage is provided by an extension of the kitchen perimeter and open shelving has dedicated drawers for glasses and other bar implements. The client loved the modified corbel of the island’s base with its custom driftwood finish, a detail that is echoed in the ceiling design. The designers chose Leathered Ocean Beige granite for the countertop, and a trio of Vanguard Wrenn barstools offers seating for conversations with the chef.





Above: A curated mix of textures defines the study. A cornice of camouflage material by Kasmir tops a woven grass shade by Hartmann&Forbes in Sterling Weave. The American Leather sleeper sofa and storage ottoman sit atop a checkered wool sisal rug from Hadinger Flooring, and above the cerused oak desk is a native landscape photo by Jim Freeman from Aldecor Custom Framing & Gallery.

Left: Walter changed the window configuration on the original plan to create a centered window. This complements the colors of the John-Richard painting, to emulate another window in this lovely dining room. A globe chandelier by Solaris from Wilson Lighting has an old silver finish and LED candelabra bulbs shining on a custom Old Biscayne dining table with Spanish Pearl finish from International Design Source.

Builder Ken Wells, president of Artisan Associates, worked from modified plans originally created by architect John Cooney of Stofft Cooney Architects. Cooney designed the villa to “live like a larger home,” with many of the amenities of a single-family house including a two-story foyer entry with a focal point stairway, and a layout taking advantage of a large outdoor area. He also took special care to set the home perfectly on the property.

“I staggered the property lines to ensure the home has privacy from neighboring homes,” Cooney says, “yet still have wonderful views from many rooms of the house.”

“This home was on the biggest lot so we were able to include a large pool and many outdoor amenities, like a fire pit and water features, all while making the most of views of the water and the spectacular bridge,” Wells says.

Wells’ team of in-house artisans also made some magic inside the home, crafting the incredible ceiling details, dramatic box beams in the living room, and beautiful trim on the staircase — all under the discerning eye of Wells himself. ▶



A stunning stone and glass mosaic of Eclipse with Schluter tile runs through large format Scabos Tata porcelain — also used on the floor — stopping the show in the master bath. An MTI Bath egg sculpture stone tub is freestanding and has polished nickel hardware by Delta from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery.



The master bedroom has a transom window with southern exposure, bringing in lovely natural light to shine on the specialty moulding details introduced by Walter. Textured individual pieces of glass in the chandelier from Wilson Lighting reflect softly on the tufted cotton headboard of the Vanguard Furniture bed from International Design Source. Vanguard nightstands, from the "Make-It-Yours" bedroom collection, have acrylic and brushed nickel hardware.



Wells built all 29 villas in the community using his expertise as a lifelong carpenter and builder of luxury homes. Partial to a coaching-management style, he is more than happy to fasten his own tool belt to demonstrate and complete a task.

“I’m always very hands-on, very involved in every aspect of the construction,” says Wells. “I also involved the homeowner, working very closely with him to make sure he was getting exactly what he wanted and was having a very pleasant experience. Together we created a home that everyone is very proud of.”

In the end, Walter was able to deliver, “the most amazing end result to our client, who not only thanked us profusely, but even stays in touch and recommends us.” Walter adds, “When our work is recognized and appreciated, that’s the greatest reward.” ■



Above: Benjamin Moore Blue Jean provides a punch of color on the walls of this guest room. The Wesley Allen upholstered bed is banded in pewter and the bed itself is dressed in Lili Alessandra organic cotton batting in Stone from International Design Source. The room’s carpeting is Broadloom from Hadinger Flooring.

Left: The wall-mounted custom Angora gray finish vanity is under lit with a sensor that conveniently turns the light on automatically with any movement in this powder bath. A Mystery White marble counter contains a trough sink and Kohler brushed nickel faucet from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery. The mirror, from Wilson Lighting, is flanked by a bubble art glass and brushed nickel light. Tesoro porcelain faux marble covers the floor and continues up the walls, where it is interspersed with a Tesoro Fusion Silver Pearl mosaic of chocolate, pewter, and ivory.

Right: The south side of the villa has a very large outdoor space that Walter conceived as an inclusive destination area. “We wanted to do away with strictly delineated areas and use the whole space as a place to relax,” says Walter. A clever glass railing allows an unobstructed view of the the bridge. Adirondack chairs by Summer Classics from International Design Source are set around the fire pit. Stepping stones connect the pool and spa and run in front of a lighted waterfall wall, designed by Walter and landscape architect Christian Andrea of Architectural Land Design.





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Left: The designers took the soft clay and charcoal pavers on-site to check how they'd look in the natural light before choosing them for the outdoor living area. Painted wooden beams support a Zonix satin nickel fan, perfect for creating a light breeze above the powder aluminum and Sunbrella Idol Cloud cushioned seating group and live edge cocktail table from Castelle's Park Place Collection.