

LUXE

THE SAN DIEGO HOME REDEFINED™



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■ FARM FRESH ■

WRITTEN BY ANNA KASABIAN
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LIKE SO MANY OTHERS BEFORE THEM, RAY AND GINA ELLIS FELL IN LOVE WITH ITALY'S LUSH, ROLLING HILLS, WILDFLOWER-FILLED FIELDS, AND ANCIENT STUCCO AND STONE FARMHOUSES DOTTING THE COUNTRYSIDE LIKE SO MANY WINKING JEWELS. That vision stayed with the couple long after they returned to the states. But it wasn't until they saw a lot for sale in Del Mar Mesa, a place where the landscape brought back memories of their travels in a heady rush, that inspiration struck.

"We decided then and there that we would build a home that recalled those architectural elements," says Gina, whose family hails from

ARCHITECT Mark House	HOME BUILDER Bruce Mezan	
INTERIOR DESIGNER Shannon Felker-Frost		
BEDROOMS 5	BATHROOMS 10	SQUARE FEET 8,637

THE ARCHITECT AND BUILDER CREATED A RAMBLING
HOME THAT LOOKS AS IF IT WAS PLUCKED
FROM THE TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE



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Avellino, a province located in the Campania region of southern Italy. The couple called upon San Diego-based architect Mark House of House & Dodge Design and builder Bruce Mezan of Sharratt Construction in Rancho Santa Fe to create a rambling stucco and stone home that looks as if it was plucked from the Tuscan countryside. Sharing the same pleasant weather as its European counterpart, all of the home's public rooms open to outdoor areas year round—perfect for alfresco dining, taking in the views, or lazing by the pool.

"One of the main design features we implemented is the availability of natural light," says House. "For outdoor cooking and entertaining we created a courtyard with a four-foot-high stucco wall, planted olive



STYLE SELECTION

The everyday table lamp gets a dose of modernity with a leather base and polished-nickel nailhead trim. *Stud Lamp, \$350; mgandbw.com*



HALL MONITOR

In the hallway, a barreled ceiling—punctuated with simple Oggetti pendant lights—soars gracefully over columns of antique brick.



GRACIOUS HOST

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SPLASH ART

Stone floors and plaster walls soften and warm the master bath, where a deep porcelain Balneo tub rests beneath a Niermann Weeks chandelier.

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When you merge styles, you run the risk of awkward transitions; rooms can feel out of place or inappropriate. But it all came together.”

“Architecturally, we made it appear as though the living room, dining room and kitchen were the original building, and that we added onto the house from there,” says Gina. “In the living room and dining room we have Venetian plaster on the walls, and we changed materials as we moved away from those rooms. Having the other spaces come off from this core gave us the freedom to be really creative inside,” she explains. For the soft furnishings and finishes, Rancho Santa Fe-based interior designer and friend Shannon Felker-Frost came on board to consult.





MAIN INGREDIENTS

A reclaimed terra cotta floor and limestone countertops carry the Tuscan theme through the kitchen, providing a warm and relaxing environment.



CENTER COURT

Olive trees announce arrivals at the front courtyard, where the homeowners often sit and dine with family and friends.



MUSICAL CHAIRS

The seating in the dining room—from Hickory Chair and Mitchell Gold—invites guests to choose what moves them. A painting commissioned by Ray Ellis' family adds a dash of color.

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"Ray and Gina are into the space they live in," says Felker-Frost. "When she described this house to me, she used the word organic a lot when talking about the different textures and surfaces."

Felker-Frost and Gina kept the main living areas neutral and informal to maintain the casual farmhouse theme. Punctures of color enliven the bedrooms and baths. "Gina said, 'Let's do something wild and crazy in here,' and we did it with a mix of Old World style alongside pops of contemporary color and fabric in the private spaces," says Felker-Frost. "This house is very warm, very eclectic, and very much like Ray and Gina." **L**