

# GROWING HOME

A TYPICAL RANCH HOUSE GETS A CUSTOM MAKE-OVER

TEXT BY TERESA O'NEIL

*"Every day we woke up* to banging and the sounds of saws, cranes and hammers," recalls Lisa Greguska. "I can laugh about it now, but living in a construction zone for 10 months was difficult."

The hard part behind them, Dan, Lisa and 3-year-old Cheney Greguska are happily settled in their remodeled home, a contemporary ranch-style house set on 1.8 lush desert acres in Paradise Valley.



*Before*

Architect Richard Doria and landscape designer Carrie Nimmer created a landscape that would complement the strong architecture of the remodeled house. Existing creosote bushes and ocotillo and saguaro cacti were left intact and enhanced with such plants as desert milkweed, domianita, blackfoot daisy and an ironwood tree.



*After*

In the main room, exposed beams support a soaring gabled ceiling. Architect Richard Doria calls the fireplace a "microcosm of all the materials used in the house," including stone, copper, and glue-laminated beams.



It was the land that attracted them some six years ago, far more than the 1959 dwelling that sat on it. With dreams of someday building a home that better suited their taste and lifestyle, the couple moved in, did some minor updating, then waited several years before plunging into a major makeover. "We took our time before doing anything," Greguska says. "We looked at a lot of homes and a lot of plans.

"It was a big decision," she continues. "We had a small child, we had to put all of our stuff in storage, and we had to find a place to live." With a "go for it" attitude, the Greguskas decided to build the guest house first, and then move into it

while the main house was torn down to its foundation.

"We got used to having the guys around, and we were able to get a routine down," she recalls. "We videotaped the house every other day for 10 months. And at the end of the day we would grab our Coronas and sit and envision what it would be like."

Architect Richard Doria designed the remodel with instructions from the homeowners to use the existing foundation, leave the driveway and the pool where they were, and maintain the sprawling, gabled look of the original house.

"The new house is a ghost image, an echo of the old



ALEX VERTIKOFF

Above: In another view of the main living space, lodge poles and stone walls cut through windows and continue outside. Colorful chairs add life to the bar area. Clerestory windows allow natural light but block views of a nearby housing development.

ALEX VERTIKOFF

building," says Doria. "It reflects the traditional Western concepts of natural light and rustic materials."

Doria's challenge was to squeeze 6,500 square feet of living space in between the pool and driveway, in essentially the same area the original 2,500-square-foot house occupied.

The light-filled great room sits on the existing foundation and is the heart of the new residence. It features stone walls and a soaring, gabled ceiling supported by a combination of rough-sawn glue-laminated beams, rusted metal beams and massive lodge poles that pierce through a wall of windows, establishing continuity between the interior and exterior. "This house is about materials," says Doria. "They give it character. Everything was left exposed to show how the house works, to let the structure come through."

From the great room, the additions—including a new bedroom wing, a kitchen/dining room wing, and an office/guest room wing—"pinwheel" off the main room. This design accommodated what proved to be an odd-shaped portion of the acreage, but brought the house closer to a new development going up next door. To block the view of nearby houses, Doria oriented rooms away from the new construction, used clerestory windows to bring in natural light, and directed views to the pool area and the family's private piece of desert. It works. Once inside the Greguskas' front door, the housing development ceases to exist.

Greguska worked with Valerie Borden of Chimera Interior Design to furnish the interiors. "We picked out everything together. I wanted to be involved in decorating my home," she says. "Cheney has been with us through everything, so even she can tell you about uba tuba granite and most of the other materials around here." Throughout, granite counters, slate floors and a smattering of soft carpeting set a casual tone.



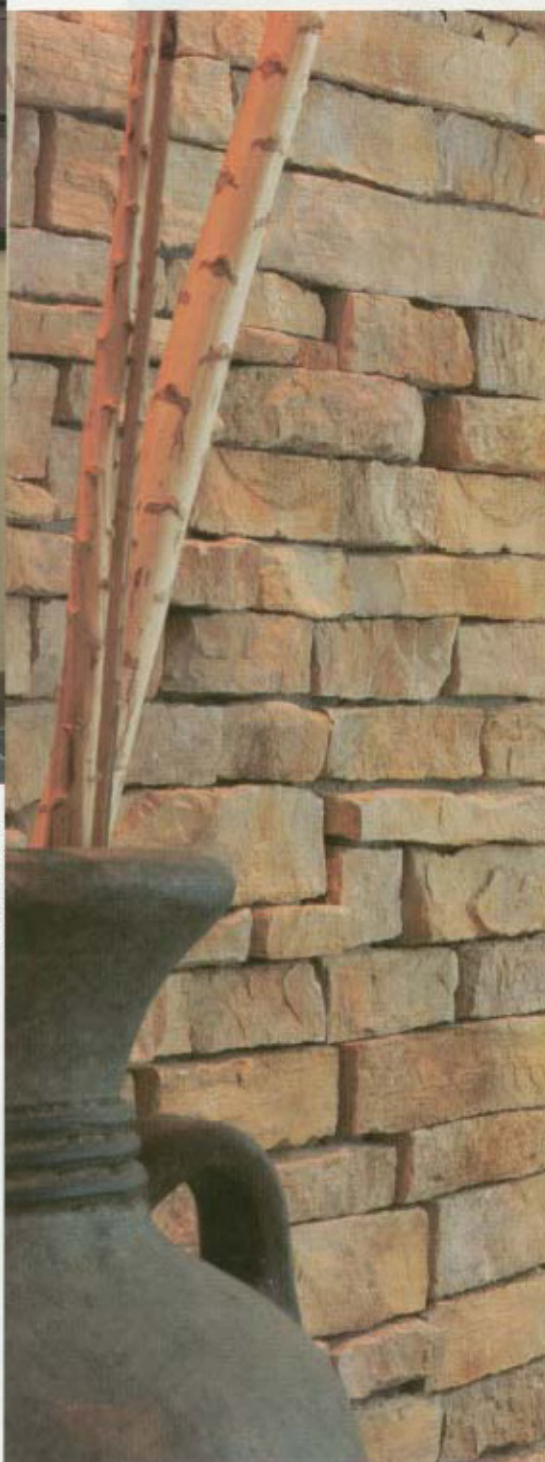
Left: A trio of paintings in the foyer faces a stone wall with niches for more artwork. The paintings were hung to visually bring down the height of the space. Dan Greguska's office (at the end of the hallway) has cherry floors, a sandstone fireplace and a Texas theme, carried out with a distressed leather sofa, mesquite coffee table and desk, and cowboy-style accessories.



ALEX VERTIKOFF

Left: Streamlined maple laminate cupboards, sleek uba tuba granite countertops and contemporary high-wire lighting in the kitchen contrast with rustic lodge poles on the ceiling and stone walls nearby.

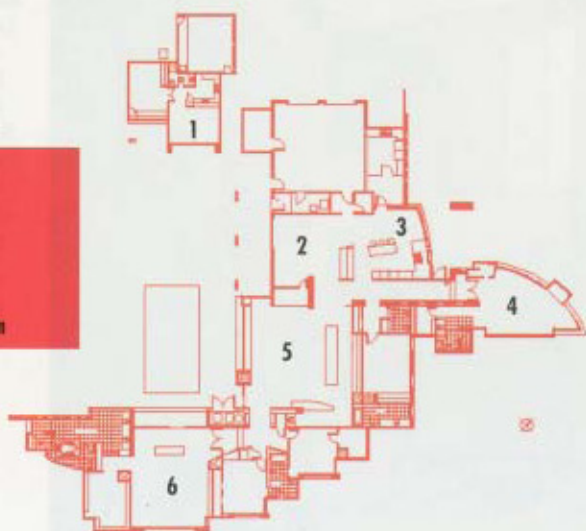
Below: Upholstered chairs in the dining room encourage guests to stay and chit-chat, says designer Valerie Borden.



ALEX VERTIKOFF

### Floor Plan

1. Guest house
2. Dining room
3. Kitchen
4. Dan's office
5. Great room
6. Master bedroom



"The architecture is so strong that we kept the furniture basic," says Borden. "We used earth tones to continue the feeling of the home, and punched it up with accents." The result is a comforting continuity.

"This house screams Lisa and Dan," Lisa Greguska says. "It's a place where we can live together and a place where our family can grow up. I can't picture us living anywhere else." 🌻

*See Resource Guide for details.*

#### HELPFUL HINTS FROM SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE:

1. "I would remodel again, but I would not stay on site again."
2. "There are endless details to deal with. Have fun with them. Somehow they all fall together in the end."
3. "If you're married, make sure your marriage is good and healthy or it won't survive a remodel."



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