



# beautiful *and* smart

a Los Ranchos home designed for life,  
work, and technological fun

by Jessa Cast    photographs by Mark William

**Y**ou never know where your friends will take you. Some friends vacation together or enjoy hobbies together, but only a rare few would venture to build a house together. When Bobby and Jeri Martin decided to build the house of their dreams, golfing friends from the Albuquerque Country Club helped bring their ideas to fruition.

The Martins, home-based professional network marketers for the biotech company ASEA, loved their existing home, but realized that in practice, it wasn't functional for them. "We thought it would be so much fun to office together," Jeri recalls. "We even had a big partner desk built." But they discovered an unexpected deal breaker. "He can't work in noise, and I can't work in silence," she says with a laugh.

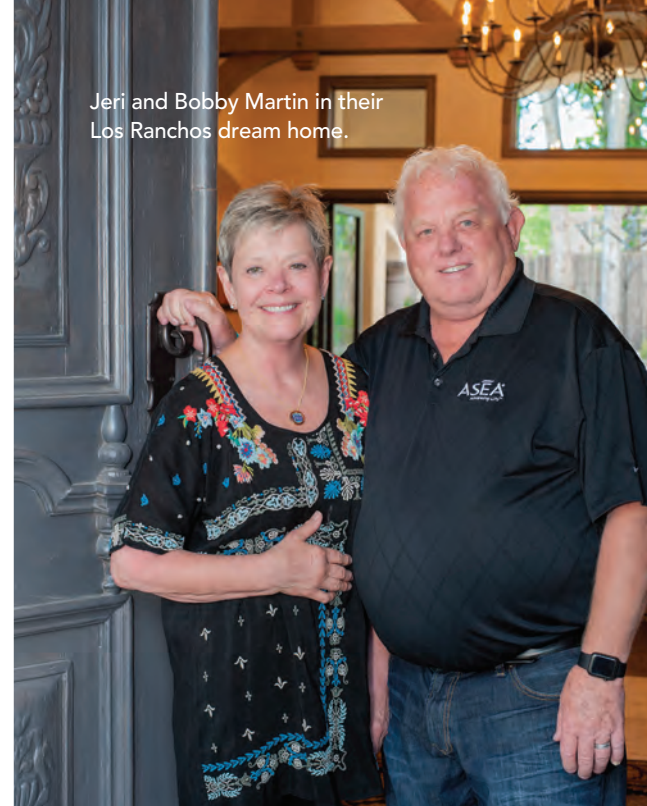


Previous pages: Mature cottonwood trees provide a majestic backdrop to Bobby and Jeri Martin's award-winning, old world-style home.

Notice something different about this dining room? Jeri wanted to be able to seat 16–20 people on occasion, but still be able to create an intimate atmosphere. Two dining tables offered the perfect solution.



Jeri and Bobby Martin in their Los Ranchos dream home.



A golfing buddy, Karen Lovelady, was in the process of finalizing the build of her own custom home, and when she learned Bobby and Jeri were thinking about building, she invited them over for a look-see. Her house would later grace the cover of the Spring 2016 issue of *Su Casa*.

*"You will be more in love with Tom [Cardenas] when he's done with your house than when he started,"*  
Karen Lovelady promised the Martins.

As the Martins oohed and ahed over their friend's home, they were surprised to learn it was being built by yet another golf club acquaintance, Tom Cardenas of TC Building & Realty Inc. "You will be more in love with Tom when he's done with your house than when he started," Lovelady promised the Martins. Buoyed by Lovelady's enthusiastic testimonial and her own finished home as evidence of his skill, Cardenas found himself engaged in a new project—this one with a squad of friends. A second-generation builder, as well as a fine art painter, Cardenas brings an artist's eye to homebuilding, specializing in a fusion of artistry, architecture, and landscape design.



A barrel arch, oversized chandeliers, and a massive rafter are perfectly to scale in the entryway and great room thanks to extra tall ceilings.



Above: Clay walls give the home its warm, old world essence, which is punctuated by antique pieces and carefully curated art.





“It’s my job to concentrate on the integrity of structure, keeping it fluent from start to finish,” he says.

The Martins purchased a comfortable lot in Los Ranchos de Albuquerque’s Prado subdivision, land once owned, as it turns out, by Lovelady’s father. Lovelady, living mere golf-cart distance away, consulted with the Martins on design, furnishings, and décor. Draftsman Mike Cabber, Cardenas’s regular go-to guy for architectural design and a local legend for his talented freehand design work, developed a plan for a roughly 5,300-square-foot residence with old world flair, some Mediterranean and Southwestern features, and over 2,000 square feet of covered patio space.

The Martins’ must-haves included live/work space where they could conduct meetings and give demonstrations, host gatherings, and blend the indoor living areas with the back patio.

As professional marketers working from home, the Martins wanted a live/work space where they could effectively conduct meetings and give demonstrations, comfortably host gatherings of up to 20 people, and blend the indoor living areas with the back patio. For two skilled cooks who love wining and dining guests, fully outfitted kitchens—indoors and out—also ranked high on their list. His-and-hers offices would solve that pesky noise/no noise issue. Additionally, intending to make this their last house, the Martins asked Cabber and Cardenas to incorporate aging in place considerations into its design, specifically requesting a separately accessible caretaker’s quarters.

Through a set of century-old front doors, a series of visual novelties awaits, beginning with a vaulted brick ceiling that establishes straightaway the old world elegance of which Cardenas is so fond. As an artist, Cardenas’s signature is incorporating authentic antique architectural pieces into his homes, such as the handsome old yellow doors with wide wire screens, which, cleverly embedded in the patio walls, serve as accents and open-air “windows.” Distressed knotty alder cabinets throughout the home complement the aged materials and hand-finished clay walls. Ulibarri Construction blew Parade visitors (and the home-



The award-winning and highly functional kitchen was designed by cooks, for cooks. The enormous island provides ample seating for guests as Jeri and Bobby demonstrate their culinary prowess on the kitchen’s many Wolf appliances, which include a steam oven and a restaurant-quality salamander.

Above: Chosen and placed by the Martins, Karen Lovelady, and Tom Cardenas, the home’s elegant furnishings, décor, and artwork earned it a Best Interior Decorating Award.

The exquisite details and finishes carry through to even the smallest areas of the house. A powder room (right) adorned with classic brickwork, granite, and custom woodwork mixes it up with a contemporary metallic mirror and a simple white vessel sink.



With views to the pool and outdoor living areas, the cozy kitchen nook is a lovely spot to enjoy morning coffee or a pre-dinner drink.

owners themselves) away with that cabinetry. The under-counter cabinets in the kitchen arc. Even the cabinet doors are impeccably curved to match the lines of the counter. The attention to detail deserves a close look; only consummate craftsmen can carve trim to flawlessly fit compound curvatures like this.

In meeting the Martins’ request for seamless indoor-outdoor living, two sets of NanaWalls angled toward one another open to a huge covered patio with abundant seating, doubling the sociable living area in good weather. The pool is surrounded by multiple seating areas, while tucked just outside the master bedroom, a hot tub affords some privacy for nighttime dips under the stars. Between the promise of gourmet home cooking, the allure of a night-lit pool, and the relaxing trickle of fountains, it’s a wonder guests ever leave.

Visitors to the home during the Spring 2017 Homes of Enchantment Parade didn’t want to leave, either. Bobby, Jeri, Lovelady, and Cardenas were all on hand to greet Parade-goers and give mini tours of the home that would win several well-deserved awards in its category, including the Premier Award, Best Kitchen, Best Interior Decorating, Best Outdoor Living Space, and Most Innovative.

Bobby whips out his smartphone to show off the invisible magic of his house—and the reason for the Most Innovative award. “Watch this,” he says excitedly, and promptly reveals how this gorgeous residence is also






With a fully stocked bookshelf and a TV just steps away, the bedroom's seating area is the perfect place to put up one's feet and relax.



Fully appointed with a Cantera stone fireplace, a TV, and a sitting area and located in its own wing of the house, the spacious and luxurious master suite (above and left) is truly a private retreat for Jeri and Bobby.

a smart home (a.k.a. "a giant electronic toy"). Bobby wanders from room to room, opening blinds, checking security cameras, playing music; it's all connected, thanks to Blayne Hare of HD Systems, who expertly equipped the entire home to operate by the touch of a cell phone button. Even the thermostats are hidden. Tiny sensors embedded in a wall of each room relays the temperature back to a control room, eliminating the need for bulky gear on the walls.

It's easy to see in their eyes that the Martins, Cardenas, and their friend-slash-design-consultant Karen Lovelady are so gratified with the home and its accolades. The quartet (a perfect golf foursome!) is *still* happily discussing design choices and project highlights. "We had a great team," says Bobby. "We are not unhappy with a single subcontractor; not one. Everybody did a super job." 



The master bath is like a spa, with separate his-and-hers vanities, a walk-in shower, and a sculptural, freestanding tub. We love this fabulous art deco chandelier!





Above: Bobby and Jeri wanted space enough outdoors to comfortably accommodate large networking gatherings. Their stunning pool area, with its deep covered patio, ample covered seating, outdoor kitchen, and sliding pocket doors, is everything they had hoped.



Above: Over the course of construction, Cardenas gets a feel for what the landscaping should look like and how it should flow. The approach at the Martins' home is subtle and natural, an elegant blending of the house with its surroundings.

Right: The covered outdoor kitchen brings the fun outside—and keeps grill smoke out there, too. Though the kitchen is 100 percent modern, Cardenas incorporated a pair of yellow antique doors with wide screens into its walls to continue the old world feeling found indoors.



## resources

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TC Building & Realty Inc.  
tcbuilding.com

**Architectural Designer**  
Mike Cabber

**Antique Gates & Indoor Grilles**  
Doors on 4th

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