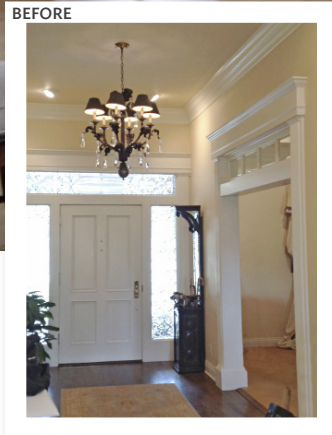


DESERT MAGIC

A RENOVATION
AWAKENS NEW
ELEGANCE IN A
HOME ROOTED
IN HISTORIC
SOUTHWEST
STYLE



WRITTEN BY SALLY FINDER WEEPIE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WERNER STRAUBE
PRODUCED BY ELEANOR ROPER



ROMANCE OF THE WEST

resonates with Sam and Diane Bodman. Like desert sunlight, it shines in the art they've collected through the years and in their shared affinity for an architect as integral to the West as steers and Stetsons.

"We admire the work of John Gaw Meem [a 1930s icon known for his Pueblo Revival and Territorial Revival designs]," Diane says. "When we bought this house, we wanted that approach—in an updated way."

They turned to Washington, D.C., designers José Solís Betancourt and Paul Sherrill to transform the El Paso house, which they felt already had good bones, into a place that truly reflects their aesthetic. "We referenced Meem in the overall architectural style," Sherrill says. "The essence is there. But we took creative license to contemporize it."

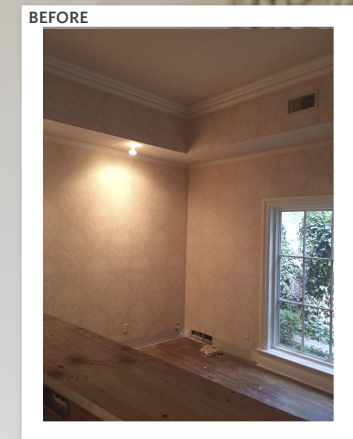
Rustic beams, forged iron, textural masonry, and plank floors speak to Territorial Revival architecture. The palette, however, eschews the Southwest's stereotypical terra-cotta hues in favor of a light and airy look that features generous swaths of warm white complemented by soft blues, grays, beiges, and a big-as-Texas abundance of natural light.

"Light is magical," Diane says. "Spanish houses often had high ceilings and let in a lot of light. We really wanted that here."

So the design team replaced all the windows and doors, taking openings down to the floor to admit much more light. Soffits that hid old heating, air-conditioning, and lighting systems also were removed, along with interior door headers and transoms, clearing the way to raise ceilings through much of the house.

Existing flooring was swapped for white-oak planks that were wire-brushed to bring out the grain, then gray-washed and finished with a coat of wax. Along with divided-light doors and windows, character-rich reclaimed beams added to ceilings augment architectural interest.

Family Homeowner Diane Bodman cherishes time spent with her grandchildren at the family-friendly El Paso home. The kids have a soft spot for toy trucks—and Chico the rescue dog. **Front entry** Hand-carved doors—white oak with gray stain—were inspired by architect John Gaw Meem. "The shutters let in great light during the day and ensure privacy at night," designer Paul Sherrill says. Pilasters feature Territorial-style proportions. **Preceding pages** Collected art and furniture pieces—like the blue-and-white chairs from Russia—infuse character into the living room, as does the unique stone fireplace. "It's from Phyllis Diller's house—the Bob Hope room," Sherrill says. "Imagine if it could talk."



Dining room New French doors let light spill into the dining area, an enchanted forest of wood tones including American curly maple chairs, a pine cabinet, and gray-washed beams—presided over by a venerable oak tree painting.

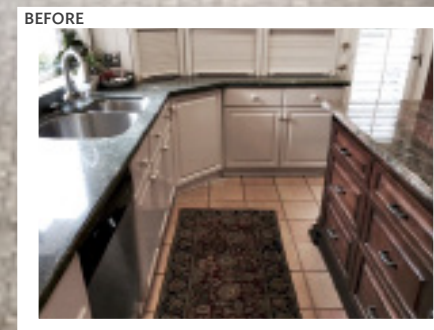




Family room The renovation ushered in a more pronounced bay window to admit light and views. American Indian prints mesh with a Giacometti-style table.



Kitchen Windows flanking the cooktop and custom hood were added to bring in more light. Sun rays now shimmer off the Raku tile backsplash and travertine floor. **Breakfast room** A reclaimed Spanish-style door dates to the 1840–1890 era. New indoor-outdoor wicker chairs can easily be pulled out for a seat on the veranda. **Exterior** Covered porches, or portals as they're called in the Southwest, are a hallmark of Territorial Revival style.





“THIS HOUSE IS SPECIAL BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS SOME OF THE LIFE WE’VE HAD.” —homeowner Diane Bodman

The beams, like many pieces in the Bodman home, tell a story of the couple’s world travels. “I found these amazing carved beams in a shop in Mumbai,” Diane says. “They had been taken out of an old house there. My husband thought I had lost my mind when I bought them and sent them home. But like a lot of the pieces we’ve collected, they ended up working out great in this house.”

Nineteenth-century Chinese carvings mounted on columns decorate the living room. Seventeenth-century Burmese sandstone monks top a vestry cabinet in the dining area. A 20th-century painting from Russia sits atop a bedside table. “This house is special because it represents the life we’ve had,” says Diane, who did some of that globe-trotting while Sam was serving as Secretary of Energy in President George W. Bush’s administration.

“Although the collected pieces come from around the world, they mesh with the Spanish architecture because of a shared sense of romance,” Sherrill says. The designer also brought in some intriguing finds, including a vintage drafting table that functions as the kitchen island. The top tips up, and it has a long pencil ledge that’s crayon-friendly for the Bodmans’ grandchildren. Iridescent Raku glazed tiles behind the range introduce a hint of blue.

“Faint blue wafts through the whole house,” says Sherrill, who used the hue, drawn from the sky and from the Bodmans’ art, in draperies and on upholstery that covers refined furnishings—their silhouettes another twist on Southwest style.

Sherrill’s picks for furniture and accents—and his intuitive grasp of Diane’s aesthetic—at times approached the uncanny. “One day Paul called to ask if I liked the bird sconces he had found. I said, ‘Paul, I already have four of these,’” Diane says with a laugh. “That was the tone for this project. Paul and I were on the same page.”

Their shared vision for the El Paso home is sophisticated yet easy, made for a couple who embrace modern life, complete with a resident rescue dog and a trio of energetic grandchildren.

“The kids will come into the kitchen with their little aprons and help us cook, then go through the breakfast room to fool around outside in the sandbox,” Diane says. “I love that this house is able to handle real life—kids pushing trucks across the floor, using the kitchen island base as monkey bars. But at the same time it’s light and pretty. It’s the simple, classical setting that I really wanted.”

Interior designers: José Solís Betancourt and Paul Sherrill

For more information, see sources on page 125



Gallery hall Glorious light fills the grand hall that connects the home’s gathering areas with the wing housing the master bedroom and bath spaces. **Master bedroom** Sherrill relocated windows to create symmetry. “Structural harmony brings a sense of peace,” he says. **Powder room** Tile echoes the carvings on an antique Indonesian chest that was repurposed as a vanity.