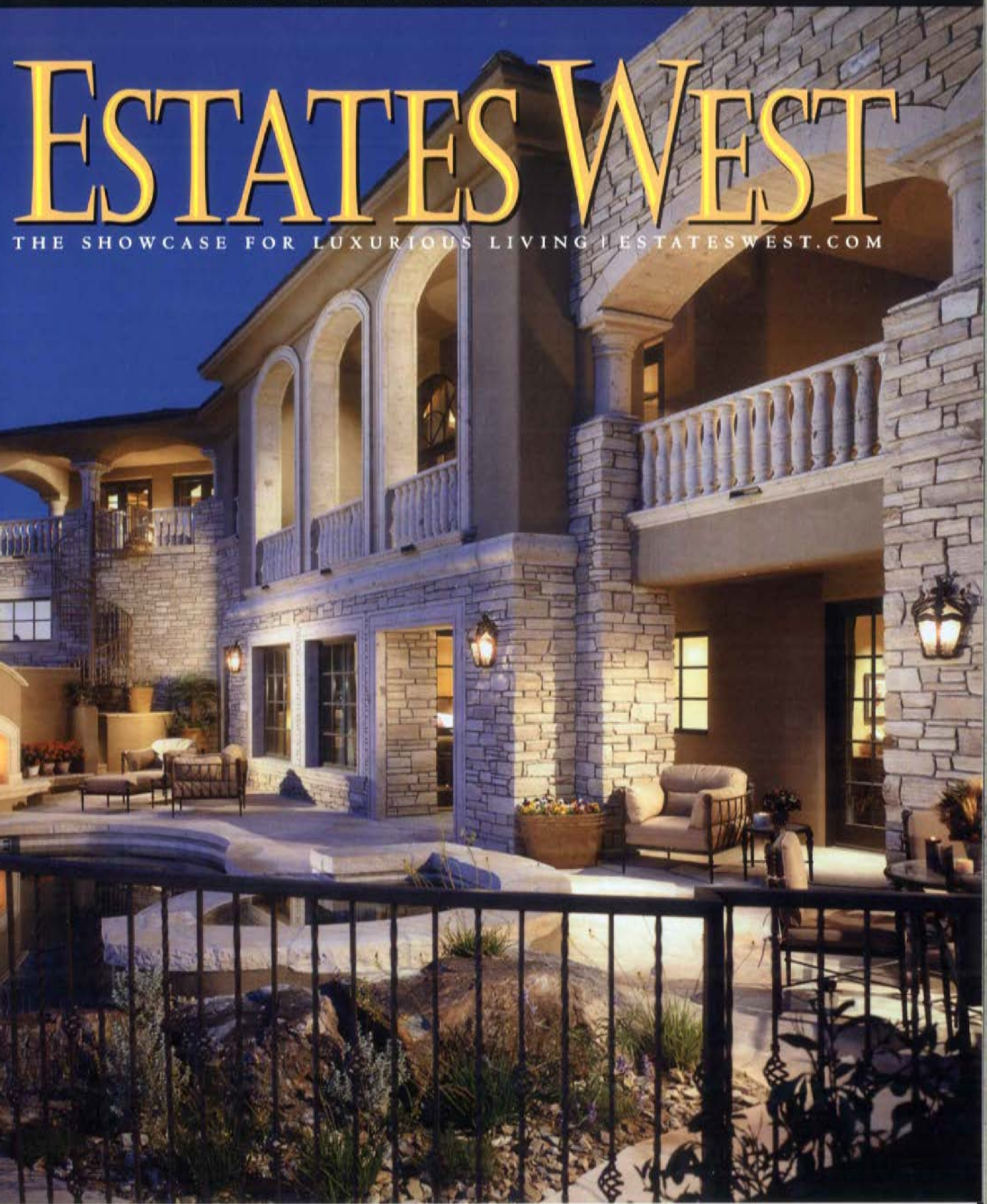


AS SEEN IN THE WINTER 2004 ISSUE OF

# ESTATES WEST

THE SHOWCASE FOR LUXURIOUS LIVING | [ESTATESWEST.COM](http://ESTATESWEST.COM)





# Maison FRANÇAISE



*By Amanda Fier*

TWO MOVES ACROSS THE POND NOT ONLY STRETCHED A COUPLE'S WORLD VIEWS, IT CHANGED THEIR IDEAS OF WHAT A HOME SHOULD BE. WHEN THE PAIR RETURNED TO ARIZONA, THEY BUILT A DECIDEDLY FRENCH-STYLE DWELLING, WHICH JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT SOMETIMES YOU CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU.

"SOMEHOW HE MADE MAGIC," Francie says. The magic maker is Architect Lee Hutchison, AIA, and the magic he made—with the help of talented architects, designers and builders—is a dreamy French-style home set into the side of an Arizona mountain.

The minute you step into Francie and her husband Steve's residence, you're touched by the magic Francie talks about. Round and remarkable, the home's regal foyer is rife with beautifully sculptured stone balustrades and archways. Once you move beyond the foyer, which an abbreviated and curving staircase begs you to do, you find yourself among very livable—and stylistically lush—living spaces. "People tend to think this is a really formal house when they see

the entry," Steve says, "but we like to treat it like it's livable and comfortable and you can roam around anywhere."

In fact, no matter where you roam in this house, you find a perfect blend of warmth, welcome and European elegance. "The goal was to create a formal French house with areas that were casual—rooms you could lounge in "for hours," says Interior Designer Paula Den Boer. The stone that lines the public spaces partners with softer and varied surfaces, such as furniture, rugs and collectibles, to create a decorative mix that makes the house a place where you can, as Francie puts it, "take your shoes off."

But home didn't always feel like this. Between the couple's moves to Scotland and Switzerland, they resided

in a desert dwelling that Francie describes as "a very Southwestern and howling-coyote style of a home that was very pretty, echo-y and white." Before returning to the Old World a second time, the couple sold the Southwestern dwelling and bought a piece of land for the next home they would eventually build in Arizona. The home they built on that land is much different than their last, largely because the couple's six-year sojourn in Switzerland transformed their tastes and reshaped their ideas of home.

Shortly after arriving in the Geneva area, Francie discovered the beauty of fabrics, color and French décor. She realized that saturated hues—her favorites being

out oversize furniture, voluptuous draperies, fabrics, rugs and whatnots to build a high-style French look.

In addition to influencing their home's décor, Francie and Steve's overseas experiences nurtured its architecture. The archway theme, which graces the interior and exterior, was inspired by a former castle dungeon that is now a three-star Michelin restaurant in France's Burgundy region. "We took a picture [of the archway style] and asked the architect to find a way to integrate that into the house," Steve says. Hutchison did just that. In addition, he implemented stonework, window framing, carved columns and balustrades to underscore the European flavor. The heavy use of stone also gives the new home a solid feel and sense of history.

"THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT THIS **home**  
THAT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE US," SAYS THE HOMEOWNER.

plums, reds, golds and oranges—and a mélange of fabrics and textures are what make a home feel cozy and warm. Furthermore, she decided that the most wonderful kind of walls were those packed with pictures. "You can never have too many pictures on the wall," says Francie, who has more than 350 works of art displayed throughout her home.

As Francie developed a keen eye for the Franco-Swiss regional style, she and Steve began collecting antique treasures, pictures and other decorative must-haves for the home they live in today. To get the look you see here, Francie also collaborated with Den Boer, giving the designer a vision of the home she wanted by providing clippings and swatches and armloads of pictures she had acquired in Europe. Using Francie's purchases and input as a springboard, Den Boer, who is well-versed in European French décor, sought

A lower-level wine cellar is yet another example of how European locales shaped Steve and Francie's American residence. Steve frequented Denmark for business and liked staying in a hotel just across the water from Copenhagen. He fell in the love with the hotel's charming wine cellar, and today, he and Francie's own cellar pays homage to it. The chilled—and gorgeous—area features a dome-ceiling, faux stone painted walls, vrai stone flooring and a small balcony overlooking the storage area. Beyond an impressive wine collection, the space features a marble-top table, two chairs and two secret storage areas à la Scooby Doo.

On the main level, a library pays tribute to the couple's stint in Scotland. Like most libraries, the décor is dark and handsome, but this particular space expresses a bit of a brogue thanks to the linenfold cabinetry. The intricate





THE MAIN LIVING AREA in this Arizona residence exudes European elegance and exceptional comfort thanks to a balanced blend of stone archways, classic decorative elements and lush furnishings.





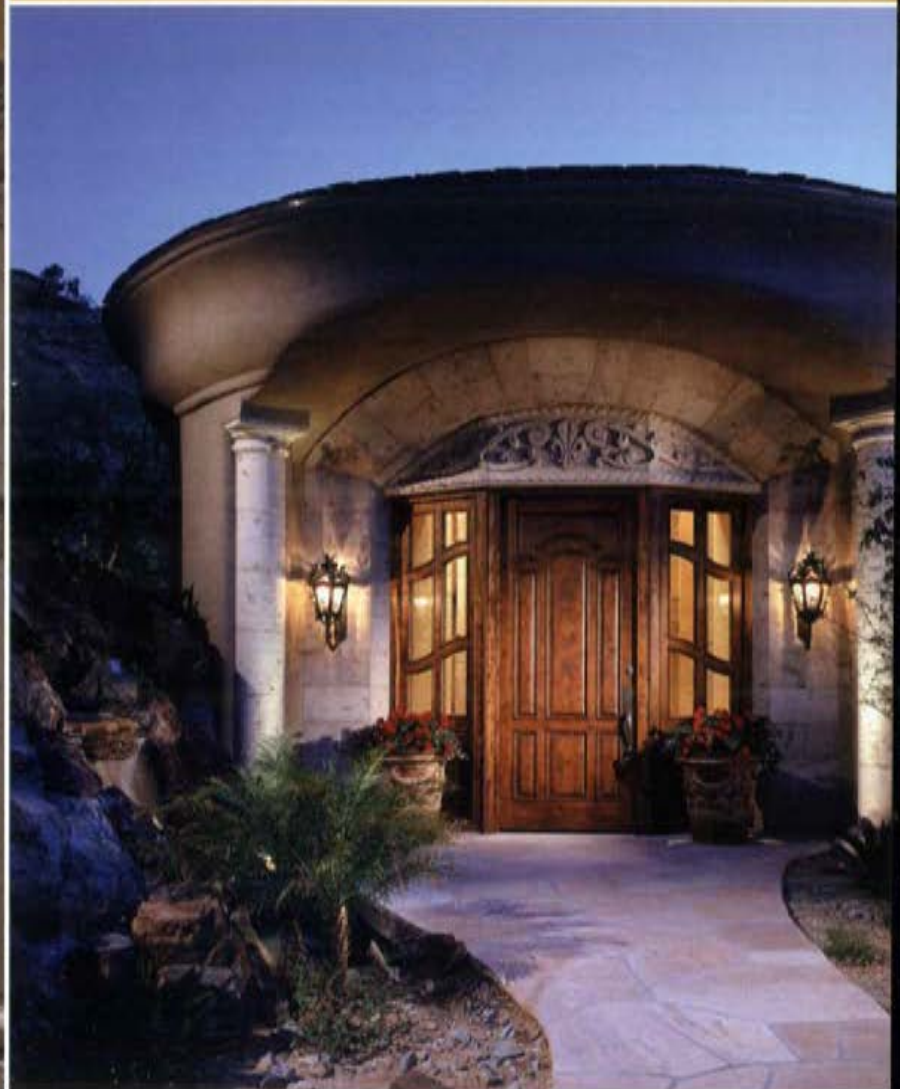




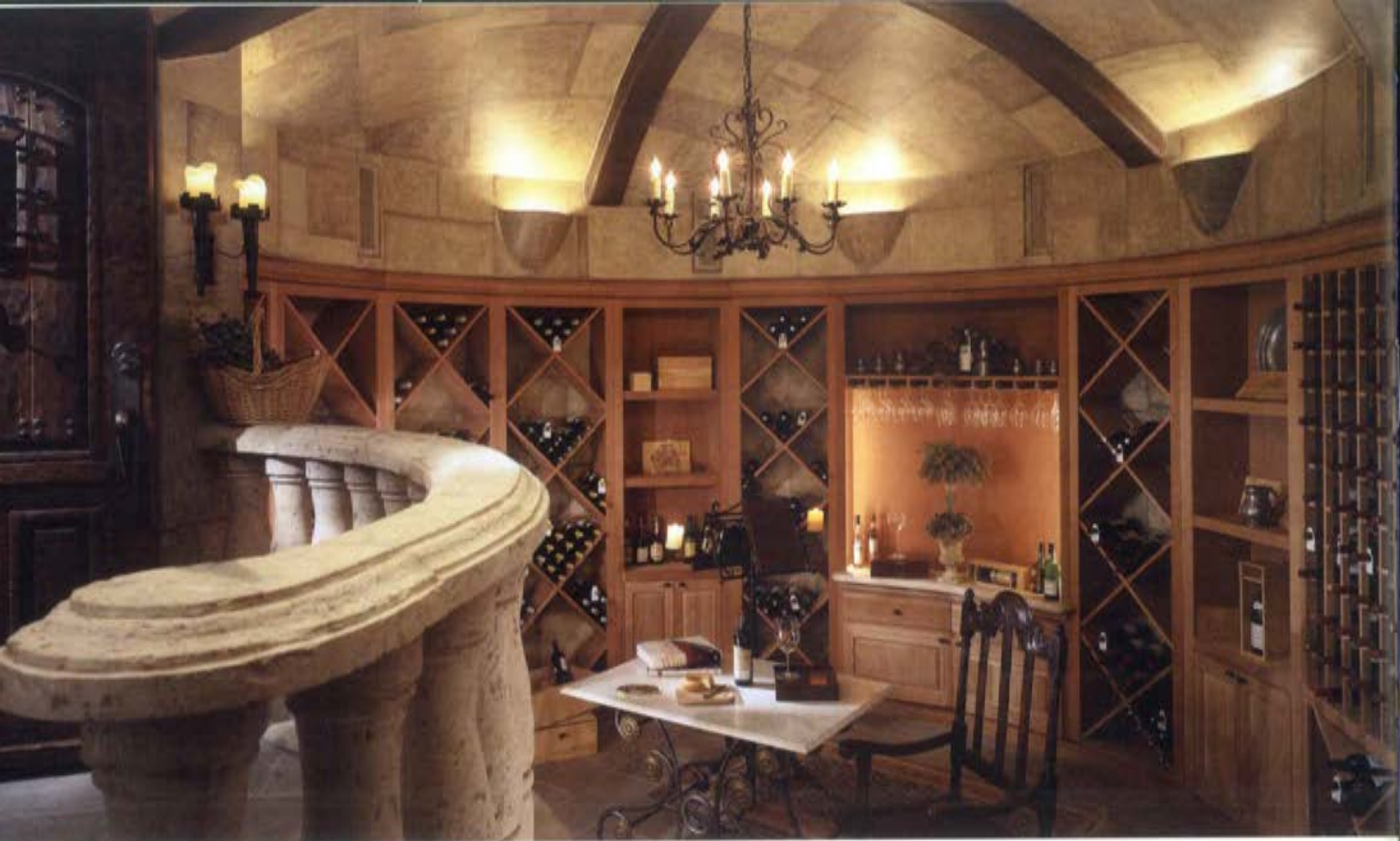




LINENFOLD CABINETRY, STONE ARCHWAYS  
AND THE USE OF THE FLEUR DE LIS MOTIF ARE  
EVIDENCE OF THE HOMEOWNERS' LOVE FOR  
OLD WORLD STYLE AND ARCHITECTURE.







INSPIRED BY a wine cellar in a Danish hotel, this space is teeming with Old World style and wine.

linenfold motif was something Steve fancied greatly while in Scotland, and to his delight, Francie worked with the professional team to integrate this superior craftsmanship into his work space.

In addition to European-bred rooms that serve as souvenirs as well as living spaces, the homeowners enjoy a spacious yet cozy master suite, roomy closets, big tiled showers—sans curtains and doors—and a workshop in the garage where Steve says he likes “to tinker.” The home also includes a large laundry room, which doubles as an art studio for Francie, and on the lower level, there are several ultra-fashionable guest suites and a billiard room.

Not to be forgotten is the home’s two-level outdoor patio with a grill, whirlpool, fireplace and negative edge pool, all of which are accessible from multiple areas in the home. The gathering area with the upper patio, grill and fireplace is located just off the kitchen and eating nook, making terrace dining an appealing option on temperate Arizona evenings. Stone arches stretch the length of

the upper patio, each of them framing a different and picturesque portion of the home’s mountainous views.

It could be said that the combination of European styling and desert setting make Steve and Francie’s home the incarnation of everything they have loved about their life together. Steve says, “There’s not a thing about the home that doesn’t feel like us.” Francie adds, “This home is a happy home from beginning to end.” ✨

#### PROJECT PROS

**ARCHITECT:**

Lee Hutchison,  
Urban Design Associates LTD.  
866.908.3169; [www.udatld.com](http://www.udatld.com)

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:**

Paula Den Boer, Ashley R Design  
480.367.1136

**BUILDER:**

Shiloh Custom Homes; 480.961.0585  
[www.shilohcustomhomes.com](http://www.shilohcustomhomes.com)