

HOMES & CONDO

LUXURY DESIGN GUIDE

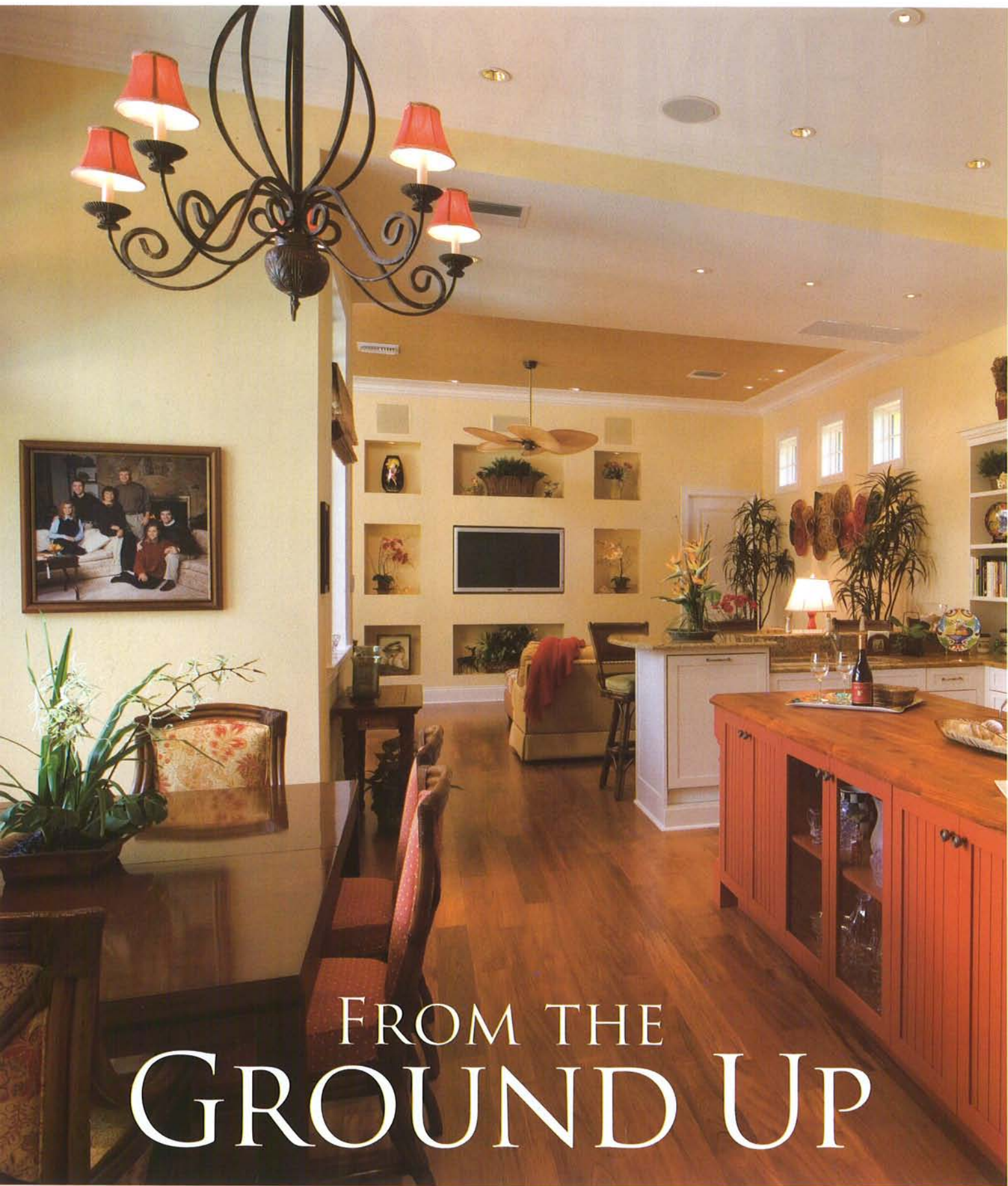


TIM STAMM


Easy, breezy style: Rich, contrasting rusts and golds enhance this outdoor sitting area in Gary and Janet Root's Old Naples home.

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FROM THE GROUND UP



Sunny-side up:
Gary and Janet
Root chose fresh,
summery colors for
their open kitchen
and family room.

GARY ROOT LOOKS AT HIS WIFE, Janet, sitting across from him at the dining table and declares, “We’re the happiest couple in Naples.” She doesn’t disagree.

The former Chester, N.J., residents are over the moon about the Old Naples dream house they built on the hem of the Gulf of Mexico. They made the decision 10 years after falling in love with the city during a weekend at the Ritz-Carlton, Naples.

“Our son, Mark, suggested we attend the Ledbetter golf school at Quail West,” Gary says. “We were both new to the game at the time, and excited at the idea of a father/son activity.”

Though the golf was men-only, the weekend was a family one, and Janet found the area an eye-opener.

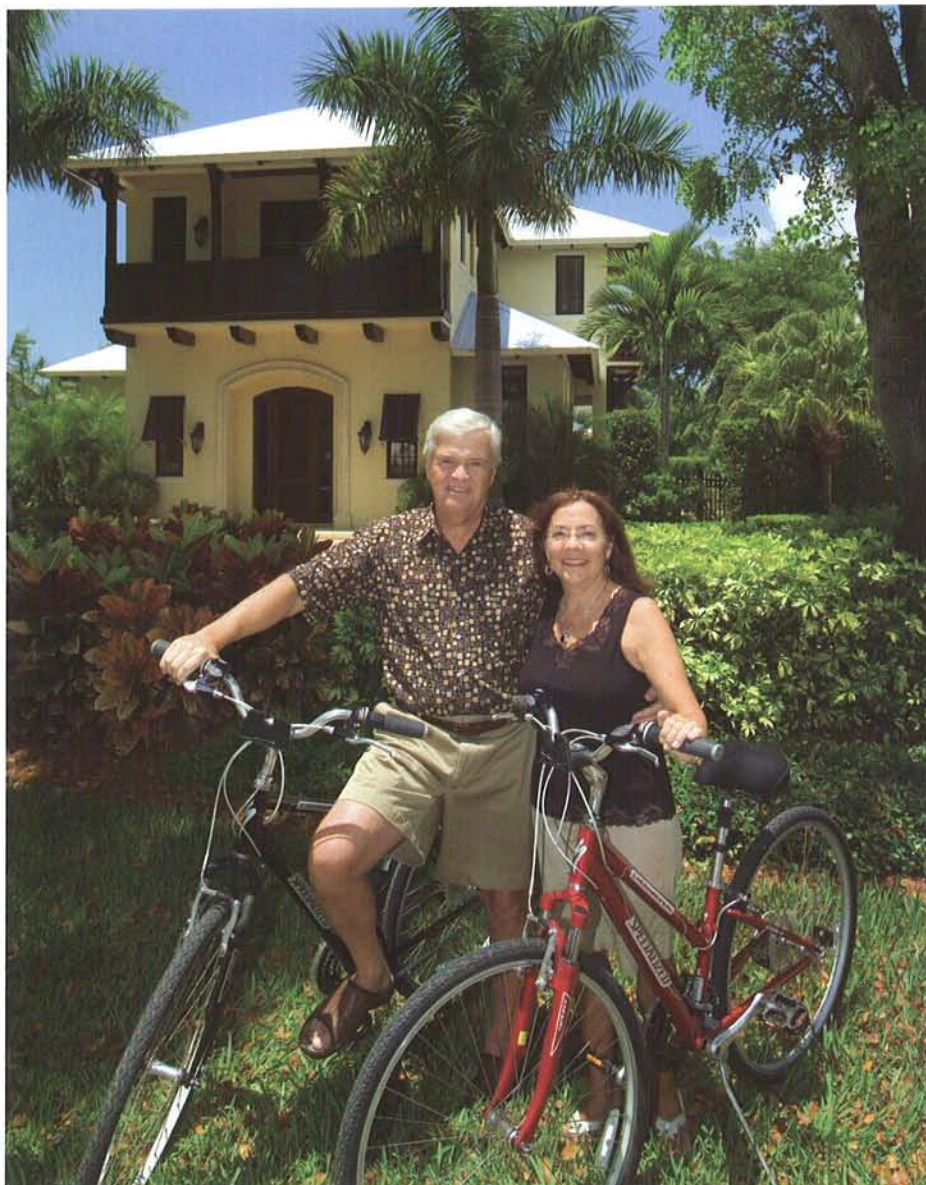
“Gary and I were impressed with how visually beautiful Naples was, and how available the beach and golf courses were,” she says. “We became frequent vacationers after that.”

The couple admits that when they started searching for a retirement destination, they checked many locations, but nothing matched Naples. The Roots zeroed in on a corner parcel close to the beach with a tear-down-ready home.

BY MAXINE GINSBERG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM STAMM

WITH A CHALLENGING LOT SIZE AND A DREAM TO CALL NAPLES HOME, GARY AND JANET ROOT RELIED ON LOCAL EXPERTS TO CREATE THEIR IDEAL HOME.

“WE WANTED
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“I never dreamed I’d be tearing down a house and building a new one in its place,” Gary, a retired Johnson and Johnson executive, says with a smile, “especially one with this kind of challenge.”

The trouble was that the lot, at 150 feet long and 74 feet wide, was unusually narrow, and not conforming to current city codes. Once the setbacks were figured in, the footprint could only be 105 feet long and 40 feet wide, which was far from the typical builder floor plan.

“We wanted a house comfortable enough to accommodate our children, Mark and Mary, their spouses and our six grandchildren,” Gary says. “We wanted to live on the first floor, and have the house oriented to the outside as much as possible. And we wanted a pool that was bigger than a bathtub.”

AT ALL ORDER, THEY CONCEDE, BUT ONCE THEY selected John Cooney to design it, BCB Homes to build it, and secured official approval, they felt their dream could come true. That was in March 2005. Thirteen months later, they patted each other on the back and walked into a 3,850-square-foot home tailor-

made to their specifications and decorated to reflect their personal style.

“Even though I had a decorating business, I wanted to work with a professional on this project,” Janet confides. “We were going to include heirlooms from both sides of the family and bring some furniture from New Jersey. We also needed to buy some new things.

“I like traditional and Gary likes contemporary, so we had to have a professional to integrate all the different pieces and to facilitate our sometimes conflicting opinions. Lisa may have saved our marriage,” she adds with a laugh.

The couple says they selected Lisa Kahn, of Kahn Design Group, because they liked her work, and she understood their mission.

“We didn’t want formality,” Gary explains. “We were after an interior friendly to our grandchildren and easy to entertain in, because we do like to entertain. And we wanted the outside and inside to reflect the Old Naples spirit.”

Finishing touches:
The Roots, left, opted
for a stunning piece
of glass artwork by
a local artist in their
conversation area.





One step at a time: The Roots combined contemporary and traditional pieces throughout their home to create an eclectic look.

THOUGH GARY PUSHED FOR TILE, TEAK COVERS THE floors of all the downstairs rooms, except the master bedroom and baths. They used beadboard on the teak-top island in their kitchen and used louvered cabinet doors to accentuate the beach-house theme. There are antiques in the foyer, starting with a French game table and an art mirror they bought north of Nice for their New Jersey home.

"We wanted our family members who are gone to be with us here," Janet says. "There's an heirloom chest from my girlhood home in Michigan underneath the stairs and a Canadian end table that was my stepmother's opposite it. On the second floor, past the big French poster Gary bought me, a curio cabinet displays porcelain and glassware from Gary's family."

Gary admits he had a hard time securing contemporary features, but he does have modern fixtures in the lav

off his downstairs office, and the clean lines of the niche wall that serves as an entertainment center in the conversation area has mod attitude.

"I was not in favor of the conventional entertainment center or an armoire," he says, "so our team worked to create a set of wall niches that would house our flat-screen TV and a collection of art." The niche pieces aren't the only artworks in the room. On the right angle wall is a glass composition created by a St. Augustine artist the couple met at a local art show.

"He came to the house and sketched that piece while he was sitting here," Janet says. "We thought a painting would be too much, considering the busy pattern we chose for the ottoman. The glasswork picks up all the colors in the fabric without detracting from it."

That fabric was the starting point for the color palette. Shells and coral are depicted in tones of cream, gold, green and terra cotta. Butter yellow walls meet a grasscloth-covered ceiling, and the sofa and love seat are gold. The casual dining chairs are terra cotta and gold stripe, and the terra cotta tone has been used on the lanai furniture, clearly visible through tall, pocketing glass sliders that fuse the outside with the interior. The distressed dining table is surrounded by four chairs covered in a terra cotta/gold diamond pattern and two chairs that have all the palette colors represented in a Jacobean floral.

A terra cotta-walled hallway with a built-in wine cellar introduces the master suite, where garden green colors the walls and a garden print serves as the dust ruffle and sham covers. Past a terra cotta-colored, serpentine chaise is a bathroom with the garden print on the walls and a window that backs the clawfoot tub.

The two upstairs bedrooms are predominantly yellow, with one complemented by aqua and the other by blue. In the sitting area a green striped sofa converts to more sleeping space.

GARY SAYS HE'S STILL AMAZED AT HOW WELL everything turned out. "Early on, we made the decision to let our experts do their thing. We're glad we did," he says. "We have a bigger pool and patio than we dared hope for, and there's even garage space for my 1975 Triumph TR6. We bike to the beach, to golf, to NCH where I volunteer, and we're surrounded by wonderful neighbors. We couldn't ask for more." ♣