

One of Classic New Mexico Homes' expertly and individually designed and constructed adobe-style residences.



# CLASSIC NEW MEXICO HOMES

BY SANDRA GUY

BY ADDING HIGH-END DETAILS TO TRADITIONAL ABODES, BUILDERS CREATE A UNIQUE SOUTHWESTERN AESTHETIC

**SHORTLY AFTER WAYNE AND KIKI SUGGS** decided to turn their long years of detailed work in designing, building, and outfitting adobe-style homes into a business, the residential real-estate market tanked. Yet their company, Classic New Mexico Homes, has thrived as its expertly detailed homes win attention from passersby, businesspeople, high-end customers, and architecture publications alike. “A lot of our business is word of mouth,” says Kiki Suggs, manager of the company, which is co-owned by her husband, Wayne, and his brother, silent partner Dan Suggs. “Many bankers and other builders speak highly of us because they know how hard we work to provide a quality product.”

One of the firm’s notable projects is a 3,900-square-foot home built for former Super Bowl-winning football player Bob Talamini and his wife, artist Mary Talamini. The home, which features a breathtaking view of the Rio Grande River Valley and the Organ Mountains, was Classic New Mexico Homes’ first house built using dead-stand wildfire pine, which had been curing for four years after a wildfire swept through northern New Mexico. “This is a very sustainable project,” Kiki says. “We used the dry, already-dead lumber, and the homeowners don’t have to worry about it shrinking. It has a lot of character, too.” The home features a stained-concrete pathway, Saltillo tile, turquoise trim, four adobe kiva fireplaces, and an attached private area—a casita for guests. Mary’s art studio is designed around artist Virginia Maria Romero’s piece “Mary Walks in Harmony” and is set off by a stone swirl, known as a circle of life, as a floor decoration. The art studio opens onto a courtyard filled with natural light.

This home and many others feature design elements unique to Classic New Mexico Homes. One of the company’s distinctive features for

## AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: LAS CRUCES, NM	AREA OF SPECIALTY: PLANNING, DESIGNING, AND BUILDING
FOUNDED: 1986	ADOBE-STYLE HOMES
EMPLOYEES: 5	AVERAGE ANNUAL REVENUE: \$1.5–2 MILLION





WE ONLY BUILD TWO TO THREE HOMES A YEAR BECAUSE OUR HOMES ARE HIGH QUALITY AND HANDCRAFTED... WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WHAT WE PUT OUT THERE IS SOMETHING WE CAN REALLY BE PROUD OF.

—Kiki Suggs, Manager



its buildings is 18-inch-thick walls with double-frame construction, which are blown full of insulation. Kiki draws inspiration from her childhood in Kingston, New Mexico, to give a historic look to the homes, much like the 1890s-era adobes that were built during the Silver Boom in that area. “These homes are so comfortable because they are so well insulated, and we can make everything curvy with the room we have to play with,” she says. “These homes have so much character — each room is different.”

Yet another standout project, in the Picacho Mountains, is 2,900 square feet of unique Pueblo style that sits on a dramatic slope in the surrounding landscape. The home features a magnificent sweeping view and leverages the location by utilizing distinctly designed floor plans on four separate levels. This house features Wayne’s unique, handcrafted wooden arches, as do most of the homes designed by the firm. He also does much of the beam work and uses his expert eye on elevations to take advantage of the area’s sloping and multileveled geography. “We are intimately involved in every aspect of the work,” Kiki says. “We tell our clients to cut out pictures from magazines and books to give us direction. We try to get into their heads when we design.”



The home’s kitchen features a stunning Cobalt-blue Viking range with Cobalt-blue accent tile, and a Cobalt-blue kitchen island with a bead-board backing topped by a four-inch-thick slab of Douglas-fir wood, held together with walnut bow-tie joints. The kitchen cabinets are

**TOP:** Classic New Mexico Homes designs multilevel pueblo-style residences, which are built to fit perfectly into their native Southwestern settings.

**MIDDLE:** This vintage kitchen (left) features an Aga range with a hand-plastered rangehood that sits on beams interlocked with dovetail joints, while this slipper tub (right) sits below a dead-stand pine and latilla ceiling.

**BOTTOM:** This home’s living room features hand-carved doors that hide a 52” TV, as well as an adobe kiva fireplace.