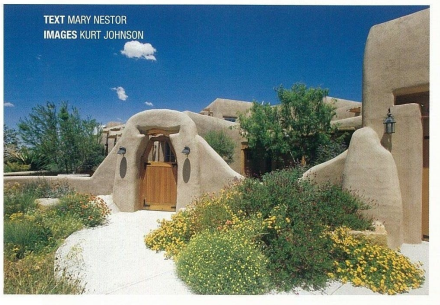


# Living Simply

Kiki and Wayne Suggs drew inspiration from the past to create their high desert home

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Las Cruces homeowners Kiki and Wayne Suggs think it is important to walk lightly on the land. Their home honors the pueblo styling that was popularized here in the 1800s by settlers who left behind their brick and stone and were influenced by the native customs.

Like ancient architects, the lay of the land and the tools at hand were their most important considerations. They sited and designed their home deliberately to preserve a landscape of wild flowers, sage, yucca, and mesquite and used authentic materials as much as possible. Behind the house, a huge retaining wall was required to support the design because the lot drops off to the Arroyo below. A central courtyard offers a transitional space before entering. Inside, the 3,000-square-foot home features an open floor plan, and the rooms are not squared. Instead, the walls and ceilings are staggered, which helps capture the pristine views of the Organ Mountains.

Stucco exteriors and adobe interior walls surround the homeowners in a comfortable quiet. The mutable material is perfect for creating niches, radius corners, and built-in architectural features. Traditionally, the home would have been comprised entirely of adobe bricks made of mud and straw then dried in the sun. But today, adobe is difficult to find.

Authentic materials also dictate the color palette. Clay tile from Saltillo, Mexico, is a central feature and used on the flooring in most of the home.



A fire glows in the hearth and throws light across the natural palette.



The courtyard is enclosed by adobe walls, which are curved and molded to create a sensual, flowing protected space. Wildflowers and an old mesquite tree were important building elements of the home itself.

Tiny luminaria lights and reindeer bells decorate the weathered dining room hutch.

This beautiful media cabinet and bookshelf was designed and built by Kiki with pieces of "scrap" wood from her home building project.



The breakfast nook features elements such as saltillo tile and old weathered woods to make it seem like it has already withstood the test of time.



Douglas fir and distressed pine surround the kitchen. Red glazed portofino tile forms the kitchen countertops.

A bright red napkin with a crisp white snowflake adorns the holiday table.

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Douglas fir ceiling beams and pine vigas and ceiling decks give the spaces a rustic, cozy ambience, while creating plenty of visual interest and dynamic movement.

On the walls, Kiki used a staining process for a two-dimensional color palette that looks like old plaster. Wherever the elements wouldn't cooperate, she used shortcuts to age and weather them. In the kitchen, for example, the half-round fir countertop was beamed, sanded, and scraped to make it look like it had withstood years of use.

Colorful portofino tile from Spain was used for durable kitchen countertops. On the backsplash, bright blue pieces are interspersed among the red glazed tiles to add a cooling voice to the fire colors.

There are three bedrooms, including the master suite with its pitched pine wood ceiling, bay windows, and a stunning master bath with flagstone flooring and slate tile countertops. River pebbles were also used to create a flowing sensation from rock hard elements.

An upstairs loft features an artist studio with walls of reverse tea-stain. A darker base beneath a gold stain was worked to resemble canvas, which is appropriate because the space is used primarily for Kiki's paintings and projects.

She and Wayne have been in love with the pueblo architecture since they first started visiting Santa Fe and Taos years ago. They own a company called Classic New Mexico Homes, which assists area homeowners with their own Pueblo projects.

While the rest of the world rushes ahead toward the next new thing, this quiet New Mexico home gets its inspiration from the past. Sitting quietly on the large lot, it waits patiently for the dark desert to fill the night with stars. And in the morning, the watercolor dawn will bleed across the eastern sky just like it has since the beginning of time. ■



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By reversing the process of "tea staining," Kiki was able to get a turquoise blue from combining dark blue with a gold wash.

Flagstone flooring and slate tile countertops create rustic elegance in the master bath.



In the master, a pine ceiling, viga beams, saltillo tile, strategically placed windows, and colorful fabrics combine for a rustic palette and a comfortable space.

