



# Tuscan Dreams

FROM HOUSTON TO THE HILL COUNTRY, A LITTLE  
SLICE OF HEAVEN BECOMES A WEEKEND HAVEN

By Bethany Heinesh

*When Houston residents Robert and Michelle Hobbs decided they needed a place to retreat to on the weekends, they headed west. Seeking tranquility, captivating scenery and starry skies, the couple was on the lookout for a place they could escape to—a place where they could get away from their intensely stressful jobs and truly leave work behind for the weekend. Upon discovering the Texas Hill Country on a road trip, the couple knew they had found what they were looking for; a quiet refuge just three hours away.*

We immediately fell in love with this area and began making regular trips here," Robert said, explaining he and Michelle even rented an apartment in Boerne after staying at several nearby bed and breakfasts. While a weekend hiatus to temporary accommodations was fun, the Hobbs were always dreaming of the day they could call the

Hill Country home.

"It wasn't long before we started talking about building here—it just made sense. Michelle and I wanted a place to enjoy on the weekends until we could one day retire and move here permanently. Even though we are a ways from retirement, we decided to go for it and put some roots down in Boerne.





Once we made that decision, everything else just clicked. Soon we found our lot and then our builder, Authentic Custom Homes, and with the help of King Bravo and his team, we began turning our dream into a reality."

After deciding to build in 2008, Robert and Michelle were drawn to Cordillera Ranch and met with one of the area's finest real estate agents, Gary Peterson, who told the couple, "I've got the right lot for you."

Robert joked, "When we saw the lot, it was a no-brainer. This is some of the prettiest land in Cordillera. We left a check that day." The Hobbs agree it was the land that really sealed the deal and nudged them to act fast. One only need glance around Robert and Michelle's premier six-acre parcel to understand what they mean by prime real estate. The Hobbs residence is set in an absolutely gorgeous landscape with a dynamite view. They even have their own private park area, complete with a private stream, a view of the Guadalupe River as well as quick and easy access to the park and trail system in Cordillera.

Choosing Cordillera Ranch was a cinch for the Hobbs, who appreciated the many activities offered within the community, and choosing the site was easy; but selecting the details that would transform their house into a home wasn't quite as simple.

"When we thought about what

features we wanted our one day retirement home to have, we basically made up a wish list and gave it to Jim (Terrian), who drew up the design and transformed our ideas into real possibilities," Robert explained. "He helped us narrow down our choices, which seemed a bit overwhelming at first. Creating the home we wanted included a lot of decisions, so it was nice to have Jim direct the process and narrow our choices based on what we told him we wanted."

Jim Terrian, an Authentic Homes architect, essentially masterminded the incredible indoor and outdoor space the Hobbs now take so much pleasure in. Jim says he not only enjoyed working with Robert and Michelle, he had a fantastic time designing their 4,500 square-foot home and guesthouse. Jim admits, however, that he couldn't have gotten the job done without his project manager, Ted Robinson. "The Hobbs were great communicators, which was part of our success in making this home so beautiful, but it was Ted's ability to take a conceptual design and do all the things necessary to bring about a final product that made any of this possible."

After a creative process that spanned two years, Robert and Michelle began officially moving into their home in Cordillera at the beginning of January and although they are still in the process of buying furniture and accents for their

home, they have settled in quite nicely.

In fact, the Hobbs couldn't be more delighted with their two story, three-bedroom home, complete with two-and-a-half baths. Robert is especially smitten with his study, situated just across from the master bedroom, and the upstairs game room. His study is finished with floor-to-ceiling alder wood bookcases, doors that open to the front courtyard and hard-wood floors, creating a studious environment that motivates thoughtful reflection. "Robert spends most of his time in here and he occasionally will step out into the courtyard and enjoy a cigar. As for the game room, what can I say—he needed a place for his drums," Michelle laughed. "He loves playing the drums."

Robert joyfully showed off another of his home's most exceptional features, what he considers a real masterpiece – a picturesque wine cellar chilling some of the finest vino at 56 degrees. Built into a prominent stone wall that stands boldly as the far left wall of the formal dining room, the cellar is finished with a distinctive chandelier inside. Adorned with glass grapes; this unique piece has become a running joke between Robert and Michelle. "I always liked it and I've kept it around for three years. Michelle was convinced I'd never make good use of it, but it really works in here." The chandelier is certainly a nice complement to the wine cellar's custom door by San







Marcos Doors, complete with wrought iron grapes.

The Hobbs home has a very unique feel to it—as if there is a three-story element at work. There's the main floor of the home, which includes the master bedroom and a guest room, a master and a half-bath, Robert's study, the living room, the laundry room, the formal dining room and a kitchen, complete with a breakfast nook for eating. The second story is home to the game room, a spacious guest room and bath and an observation deck. The lowest level, a six-foot drop from the couple's first story patio, grants access to a private stream and the couple's own park area. Adjacent to the Hobbs' home is a spacious and comfortable guest home with kitchenette, available year-round

to the Hobbs's loved ones with features that will make visits more comfortable for aging parents.

"One of the most challenging parts about this project, which also made for one of the most amazing components of the house, is that it is built on a sloping site with a 12-foot fall," Jim said. "We had our parameters and knew what Michelle and Robert wanted to build, so I think we ended up with a smooth transition from the front of the home to the back part of the property. We worked with the contour of the land, which paved the way for an interesting project."

When asked what style had the most influence in constructing this luxury weekend/retirement home, Robert answered, "We took a trip to Tuscany

and just loved it there. We wanted to incorporate the Tuscan style into our home, which is why you see the archways, the wrought iron and wood timbers combined with brick and stone. Plus, Cordillera feels like Tuscany to me, so that's an added bonus."

Robert, the CEO of an oil and gas corporation; and Michelle, vice president of human resources at a deep water drilling company, say getting out of Houston and breaking away from the incredible responsibility that comes with each of their careers has become a necessary part of their routine.

"Just to get that physical distance from the job and the hustle of life in the big city is like lifting a ton of bricks," Michele smiled. "Robert and I are both much more balanced and peaceful





people when we go back to work every Monday because we have had a thoroughly relaxing, almost spiritual weekend here in Cordillera."

When the Hobbs began thinking about what they were looking for in a Hill Country home, they decided they wanted a house that was functional and stylish with a focus mostly on the outdoors. "Because we truly love being outside and want to spend a lot of time out here, we invested in some custom outdoor features," said Michelle.

In front, there is a gorgeous courtyard, revealed only after being buzzed in at the Hobbs' walk-in Tuscan-style entrance. Finished with an aged wood and wrought iron door that combines elegance and class, the entrance to the Hobbs home says, "Come on in, y'all,"

be it ever so subtly.

In back, an outdoor flat screen television hangs above an inviting back patio fireplace, set adjacent to a deck that overlooks the breath-taking Texas Hill Country. Additionally, the edgeless sparkling pool and Jacuzzi by Pristine Pools were designed with good times in mind.

The Hobbs' house is also equipped with a very colorful bathroom, just across from the outdoor fireplace. The half bath has two doors—one leading to the home's indoor living space, the other outside to the pool area—just to make sunning and swimming more convenient for guests. The second-story observation deck is soon to be finished with a high-powered telescope, ideal for stargazing, another outdoor feature the couple is

looking forward to enjoying. "The stars out here on a clear night are absolutely amazing," said Michelle.

When the Hobbs got married in 2007, they created a beautifully blended family and when thinking of the design for their dream home, they wanted each of their children to have something to look forward to when they joined them on weekend visits. Tucker and Lili, Michelle's black lab and golden retriever, got their very own alcove and hallway equipped with Dutch doors and they enjoy morning jogs around the neighborhood with Michelle.

Robert's two teenage daughters share their own upstairs room just off the game room. The girls got what every teenage girl is after in a home—an awesome bathroom with separate vanities. "And





Robert wanted to live in a golf community, so we all got what we wanted," said Michelle.

Michelle's small touches have made a big difference to the overall look and feel of her Hill Country haven –there's an ambiance of a woman's touch throughout the Hobbs' home, a perfect balance to Robert's more masculine preferences.

From an expansive laundry room to a customized kitchen, the stone fireplace centered in her living room to the lush outdoor landscape, Michelle says she thoroughly enjoyed selecting all the things that would make her house complete. Her master bath is a beautiful array of stunning mosaic pieces and Italian tile. The accompanying master





bedroom is the perfect size –not to big, not too small. “I wanted a bedroom that wasn’t huge,” said Michelle. “And I love that our bath area is spacious and accommodating for two, but not too large. Plus, I love my closets, which have incredible drawer space.”

In designing the interior of their home, Michelle and Robert decided to support the local economy. The couple has gone shopping at local mom and pops and have already purchased several striking pieces of art from local galleries.

Robert and Michelle look forward to many years at their new Hill Country locale, a space so new to Cordillera Ranch, even the guard can’t give directions to it. They are

grateful to the entire Authentic CustomHomes team for constructing a home that is sure to be the center stage for many soon-to-be-made happy memories.

“People work so hard to make these kinds of things happen and we feel blessed that we have the opportunity to belong to such a wonderful community, in a home that far exceeded my expectations.” Robert said. “To one day have the pleasure of retiring here makes it all worthwhile. In the meantime, Michelle and I plan to enjoy what we have worked so hard to build as often as we can.” ☺

## HOME TOUR CHECKLIST:

### POOL/JACUZZI:

Pristine Pools

### INTERIOR DESIGN:

Kim Gauntt, Authentic Homes

### CABINETRY:

Adam Henshaw, The Cabinet Shop

### LANDSCAPING:

Pristine Pools

### CUSTOM LIGHTING:

Light by Design

### INTEGRATED ENTERTAINMENT, LIGHTING, SECURITY SYSTEM:

Todd Jarvis,

Sterling Home Technologies