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By Alicia Kellogg

Photographs by Mark William Photography

When Chris and Nicole Wascoe Bauman moved into their home near the Sandia Mountains with their young daughter, Grace, in the fall of 2010, they loved the 1978 adobe's unique organic form but knew a remodel was in their future. "While this house had all sorts of character, it didn't have the functionality," Nicole says.

Perched in the foothills with dramatic views up to the mountains and down into Albuquerque, the home is an adobe expression of textures and curves rendered in a rustic Spanish Pueblo Revival style. Originally built by Ralph Roybal, "the house itself feels hand-molded," says Nicole. Walking through the main hall, she points out a tile accent and a stripe of painted trim along the bottom of a kiva fireplace. "I like new homes, too," she says, "but this one had a lot of details."

For all its charm, though, some aspects of the design were not exactly conducive to a family in 2012. The kitchen had been updated over the years, but by today's standards it was a rather claustrophobic space with poor lighting. The room also failed to take full advantage of the sweeping views of the Sandia Mountains out the back door. "I could see the tram while I was doing dishes, and that was a selling point for me," Nicole says. "But the windows were shorter, so you couldn't see the top of the mountain unless you leaned down."


Enter designer and builder Diego M. Ruiz of Diego Handcrafted Homes. Ruiz expanded the kitchen and added a higher ceiling and expansive six-foot-by-eight-foot windows. The new space "creates a panoramic view of the Sandias and draws you into the mountain," he explains. Enlarging the kitchen created room for a dining area, where the family can enjoy the scenery, as well as two islands that provide ample workspace, plenty of cabinets, seating, and storage for everything from dishes to the family's pasta and bread makers. An Apple computer mounted on the wall near the refrigerator allows Nicole to play music or pull up recipes on Epicurious.

Toward the living room, Ruiz and interior designer Laura Myers of Laura Myers Interiors created a banquette seating area overlooking the original kiva fireplace nearby. A storage area under the banquette

Diego Handcrafted Homes can be reached at 505-573-8888 or at diegohandcraftedhomes.com.

foothills fabulous

remodeling a Pueblo Revival residence
to maximize views and functionality



The remodeled and expanded kitchen space allows for "a panoramic view of the Sandias and draws you into the mountains," says builder Diego Ruiz.

This page and opposite: Designer/builder Diego M. Ruiz of Diego Handcrafted Homes expanded the home's kitchen, raised the ceiling, added oversized windows from Sierra Pacific Windows, and created room for a dining area, two islands, and additional seating and storage. Cabinets by Davis Kitchens.

cushion provides a place for 4-year-old Grace's Play-Doh and art supplies.

Before the remodel, bringing in groceries from the lower-level garage involved walking up the stairs, past the front door, and down the hall into the kitchen. Now, Nicole gives a kitchen bookcase a light push and it slides forward to reveal a hidden pantry and a passage to the home's front door area. The new pathway provides a shortcut to the kitchen and easy access to a remodeled powder room via a small vestibule accessible from the home's front entry.

Ruiz updated the powder room with new flooring, a custom-fitted vanity, and a rectangular Talavera sink, but the biggest change goes back to function. Located near the front door—down the hall from the kitchen, living room, and bedrooms—the powder room originally housed the laundry room. Ruiz relocated the washer and dryer to the master suite in the center of the home with convenient access to the master closet, the guest room, and Grace's bedroom. "It's just much more functional and efficient," Nicole says.

The master bedroom itself retains its original personality but gained some practical features. When Chris, a radiologist, and Nicole, who has a background in marketing and currently stays home with Grace, bought their house, the master bathtub and shower were open to the rest of the bedroom and across the room from the sink area. "My husband had to get up early in the morning, and he would go shower in the guest bathroom because otherwise he'd wake me up," Nicole says. Ruiz moved the master bath into one enclosed space with two sinks, a glass-walled shower, and a tub with a mountain view. They kept the bedroom's original kiva fireplace, but Ruiz extended the built-in banco and reconfigured the old bank of closets. "We created a new curved wall that complements the original adobe wall—a serpentine shape that gave us the opportunity to create a his-and-hers closet there and still not take up too much space," he says.

Throughout the remodel, Ruiz looked for ways to blend the new with the old. "We tried to keep the architectural integrity of the original style throughout the addition and remodel so it looked like it was always part of the original home," Ruiz says. The kitchen now has light-colored chiseled-





"Now we have this great new space, but we have all the quirks of the old space too," says homeowner Nicole Wascoe Bauman.





The home's curved walls, vigas, nichos, and bancos reflect its original Spanish Pueblo Revival style.



edge travertine floors, but Ruiz created a brick perimeter to tie in the flooring with the rest of the house. New tongue-and-groove ceilings visually relate to the originals. For the kitchen's addition, Ruiz used two-by-eight construction on some of the new frame walls to provide a thicker feeling that replicates the original adobe, as well as heavy skip-trowel plaster reminiscent of adobe construction. Meanwhile, green-building choices such as spray-foam insulation, energy-efficient windows, and HVAC systems help the owners save on utility bills and enhance their quality of life, Ruiz notes.

"I'm a hands-on builder, and I'm meticulous about every detail in the home, from the energy efficiency to the aesthetics and the authenticity of the design and materials," Ruiz says. "My building philosophy begins by approaching each home as if I were building it for my own family."

Outside, new brick pathways and landscaping tame the rugged terrain. The yard incorporates a ground-level hot tub to replace the former dilapidated deck and above-ground model, grassy spaces, and what Nicole describes as an infinity view overlooking the surrounding neighborhood. An enclosed deck on the roof of the garage gives the family space to grill, eat, and entertain right off the kitchen.

The remodel was begun last August, and by April the family had settled into the completed space. "The time we've spent here so far has been great," Nicole says. "When Chris's family was here, we had six adults and three kids, and I put everybody to work. I had everybody making breakfast casseroles, and we were cooking dinner for that night. Everybody was in their own space and having a good time. We hope to do that at Thanksgiving also."

The updated home manages to retain the character that attracted Nicole and Chris while gaining the features that make it work for their family. "Now we have this great new space, but we have all the quirks of the old space too," she says. ■

Above and opposite: Ruiz changed the master-bathroom design (which originally had the tub and shower open onto the master bedroom) by moving the bath into one enclosed space and adding two sinks, a glass-walled shower, and a tub with a view of the mountains through a vintage window.



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