

SuCasa[®]

Northern New Mexico

inspiration ideas resources

sleek
+ stylish
kitchen
sinks

creative
kitchens

warmly received
South Valley
soft contemporary


summer
lawn game fun

gracious outdoor living
in North Albuquerque Acres

third time charmed

Turning to a builder they know
and trust, a couple designs their
award-winning "last" home

Lowe-Bo Homes, lowe-bohomes.com



Ceramic roof tiles, arched windows and doors, and gabled awnings give Kirby and Camille Jefferson's home a Mediterranean feel—on the outside. Inside, however, a completely different aesthetic awaits.

by Amy Gross
Photographs by Kirk Gittings

Three homes in two-and-a-half years may be a record for homebuilding. Not for a professional builder, necessarily, but almost certainly for the same clients. Kirby and Camille Jefferson, who are currently living in a custom residence they're calling their "last" home in the Northeast Heights, previously built two other houses in the same area, both spec homes. In all cases, the Jeffersons worked with Ted Lowe, owner of Lowe-Bo Homes and a 30-year veteran of the homebuilding industry.

Lowe, who says he "cut his teeth on custom homes" working with his father, John E. Lowe, has built scores of residences in his career. Although well versed in traditional, Tuscan, and Southwestern design, Lowe is leaning more these days to what he calls a Southwestern modern aesthetic. The Jeffersons' 3,600-square-foot, two-story home most closely fits that last descriptor, though there are traditional and even Mediterranean elements in the mix. A recent entry in the Spring 2015 Homes of Enchantment Parade, the house swept its award cat-

egory, earning the Premier Award, Best Kitchen, and Best Bath.

With its clay roof tiles, arched windows, and 800-pound custom wood, glass, and iron door from Scottsdale Doors, the home offers an impressive entry. And that was entirely by design.

"We've lived in a house that had no curb appeal," Kirby notes, explaining that this is why they opted for a distinctive and pleasing exterior this time around. "We also learned from the other builds that we like a combination of pitched and flat roofs," Camille adds. Though neatly landscaped, the home, which sits on a lot in a short alley, has no yard to speak of—the house takes up nearly every square foot of the space. Also by design. With yard work a nonissue, Kirby, a longtime leader at Intel and Camille, a retired nurse, have the freedom to get away whenever the mood strikes them.

But when they're home, they're fully enjoying the spaces they designed with archi-



Ted Lowe, owner of Lowe-Bo Homes, prides himself on customer satisfaction. This is the third home he has built for Kirby and Camille Jefferson.



The kitchen's barn red walls are balanced by warm cherry cabinetry, highly patterned granite, and Camille's treasured collection of plates from Turkey. Granite: Splendor Gold from United Stoneworks. Thermador appliances from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery.

The Jeffersons were adamant about incorporating high-quality wood floors and laminate beams into their traditional living room. Wide-slat custom blinds from Budget Blinds adorn the arched windows from Moore Window & Door. Gas fireplace: Mountain West Sales.



tect Ron Montoya for everyday living. The barn red kitchen, with its warm cherry cabinets by Albuquerque Cabinet Brokers, butcher block–topped island, and Splendor Gold granite from United Stoneworks, is the natural congregating place. “When you’re in the kitchen, everybody’s in the kitchen,” Camille notes with a grin. Cushioned bancos at the kitchen window give anyone who can’t find a seat at the bar a place to hang out near the action—without being underfoot. The kitchen’s openness has much to do with the fact that there are very few upper cabinets, a design move that Lowe, who knows his clients well, calls “pure Jefferson.”

High-quality wood floors were another of the couple’s must-haves, and Benchmark Woodfloors delivered with beautiful red oak flooring that spans the public areas on the first floor. “Don’t fill the holes,” Kirby had warned the installers of the distress characteristics of the wood that make it so interesting. “We paid extra for those holes!”

The couple’s largely traditional décor looks right at home on those warm floors, brightened as it is through plenty of arched windows in the living area. Dressed with white, 4-inch-slat custom blinds from Budget Blinds, the beautiful windows and their treatments nat-

The homeowners have dedicated places for the display of favorite antiques, collectibles, and family heirlooms such as this vintage typewriter and old scale.



Upstairs, the office/den captures views on three sides, and the covered deck brings the outdoors even closer. The vibe is decidedly homey and comfortable, decorated with art and mementos acquired by the homeowners such as the model airplanes (inset) collected by Kirby, a former private pilot.



Kirby was determined to have a patina copper countertop on the wet bar—so he did it himself. He and Camille had to escape the house for three days while the epoxy cured, but the result was well worth the inconvenience: a rich, iridescent finish that's become the room's focal point.

usually draw the eye to the small outdoor sitting area—there's no actual yard, remember—on the other side.

All three bedrooms are on the first floor, including the master, and at the top of the stairway is the office-slash-family room, a large, open area with incredible views of the Sandias both in the room itself and from the balcony it adjoins. Kirby designed, built and installed the iridescent patina copper countertop in the wet bar, a process that involved, he says, “putting the epoxy on and then turning the heat in the house up to 80 degrees for three days.” Large-scale model airplanes and flying memorabilia decorate the office and stairwell of the former private pilot.

But it's Kirby's other hobby that actually led to usurping much of the available lot space for use other than as a yard. A 2,400-square-foot



The master suite employs various types and colors of wood for a traditional feel. In the master bath (above), a classic clawfoot tub is the room's focal point, flanked between cherry cabinets by Albuquerque Cabinet Brokers.



Right now there are only three cars in Kirby's spic-'n'-span checkered flag garage—a Model A, a 2014 Corvette, and a 1959 Corvette—but the extra tall ceilings might someday accommodate a second layer of collectible cars, or an RV, for when Kirby (below) and Camille decide to get up and go.

In the Spring 2015 Homes of Enchantment Parade, the house swept its award category, earning the Premier Award, Best Kitchen, and Best Bath.



heated and cooled garage with extra tall ceilings houses his collection of cars, which currently includes a Model A, a 1959 Corvette, and a 2014 Corvette. Kirby and Camille added their own touch to the garage by painting a checkered flag on one huge wall, to spectacular effect. Immaculate and decorated with racing décor, the garage naturally appeals to visitors. “I just wanted a fun place for people to hang out,” Kirby says. Do they actually drive the cars? “Oh yes,” says Camille, adding wryly, “Our granddaughter loves the Model A. It’s the only time in her life she wants to ride in the back seat”

They may soon have a lot more time to tool around in their cool automobiles. Retirement is on the horizon for Kirby, and both he and Camille are eager to travel and fully enjoy their comfortable, award-winning, and very livable last home.



"We tried to live other places," says Camille, left, with Kirby, on the deck of their Albuquerque Heights home. "But we always wanted to end up here."

"This is it!" they say simultaneously—and emphatically. Lowe senses that finality as well, and admits it's a bittersweet feeling. "I've really enjoyed working with Kirby and Camille," he says sadly. "I'm a little bummed out because I feel this might be kind of the end of the road with them."

It may well be with these clients. But Lowe has a long list of happy customers who might well decide to come back for another go-round. Building more than one house for a single client? Why, that's the very definition of "customer satisfaction." 🍷



Though the home has virtually no yard, its excellent siting takes full advantage of the outdoors. A covered second-story deck offers spectacular views.

