



**VALLONE**



A French limestone mantel added by homeowners Kim and Taber Anderson enhances character while respecting the living room's human scale. The rug and console table are antiques. Opposite, clockwise from top: An antique chest and a large painting, part of the Andersons' growing collection of modern art, keep company with tree-checked chairs and striped drawers in the entry hall. • Twins Nate and Lucy keep all-eyes on things here—the child-safe iron banister their mother Kim designed using individually attached balusters. • An ottoman's bold print provides graphic pattern in the otherwise low-key living room.



**HOLIDAYS ARE DIFFERENT IN THE DESERT.**

While many of us take in the season's spectacle of outdoor lights from the cocoon of a car, its heater cranked high and steaming drinks in our hands, that's not the preferred approach in the Arizona desert. At least not for the Anderson family of Paradise Valley, a town in the heart of metropolitan Phoenix, where even nightfall rarely sends the mercury much below 50. On Christmas Eve, Kim and Taber Anderson pack their 4-year-old twins, Nate and Lucy, plus any extended family or friends who happen to be on hand, into an oversize custom golf cart for their annual tour of lights. It's a cheeky, open-air ride all the way.

"The golf cart is big enough for an army," says Kim, an interior designer who made the vehicle festive with a bright red paint job and weather-resistant upholstery fabric in polka dots—a spirited motif that's among her favorites. "Family and friends can just pile in and drive around after dinner to look at Christmas lights in the neighborhood. It's a fun tradition we've developed for our own family, and it turns heads." So much so that neighbors enlisted Kim to customize another golf cart for their family. (The carts, incidentally, are perfectly legal for tooling around their golf-course community.)

Even stay-at-home celebrations of the season are a little different in the desert: Outdoor living spaces are the preferred setting even in December. "Most days the temperature is in the mid-70s, so whenever we have an opportunity to be outdoors,







Opposite: The new dining room includes Kim's favorite piece—a reproduction crystal-and-iron chandelier that hangs from the hand-stenciled ceiling. Left: Honed carrara marble countertops and backsplashes aren't too shiny for the rustic, chunky kitchen cabinetry. Above: The front door was hand-carved by a local artisan. Below: The breakfast room originally was the only dining area.

we take it," explains Kim, who was drawn to the indoor-outdoor flow of the 1960s-era home when she and Taber were house hunting six years ago. "The potential for outdoor living was a huge factor in our falling for this house. We love the covered area, which we call the 'cantina.' We always have lunch there," she illustrates, pointing to the outdoor dining room, which is open to the courtyard but sheltered by a beamed ceiling and warmed with a fireplace. The cantina is casually furnished with wicker dining chairs plumped up with striped cushions in pink and green—a serendipitous ruse on traditional green and red that's good year round—and a long table that seats up to eight, with plenty of space for grandparents.

"Last year, both grandmothers spent the night [Christmas Eve]," says Kim. "It was great to wake up in the morning and run out and see all the presents, with the whole family there to celebrate." A full-bodied fir tree with glinting white lights, silk magnolia leaves, and swirls of shimmering ribbon is the focal point for the Christmas morning ritual of unwrapping gifts.

From the beginning, the home has embraced an ad-lib lifestyle. When they purchased the property, which spans more than an acre, Kim and Taber didn't have children. Kim's first remodeling plan focused on adult needs. But the prospect of twins changed everything. "The design is continually evolving," laughs the nothing-if-not-flexible decorator. The remodeled home now sports a tile roof instead of shingles, and stucco





Left and top: The "cantina" is the preferred site for holiday lunches served by Kim Anderson on Southwestern-style pottery. Above: Kim's design talents extend beyond home interiors to customizing golf carts—like the one the family uses to view Christmas lights or to attend progressive dinners. Right: Kim and Taber added a pool house (and a swimming pool) to their 1½-acre property. With its kiva fireplace and comfortably cushioned rattan furniture, the pool house is a favorite entertaining area enjoyed by the whole family.





Left: Kim relied primarily on textures to create visual interest in the soothing, monochromatic master bedroom.  
 Above: This corner of the room spotlights a unique treatment for displaying family photos. Twin striped chairs—the room's only nod to pattern—turn the corner, enabling a single ottoman to serve them both and conserve space.  
 Right: Embroidered old French fabric adds Old World glamour to the restrained room.  
 Below: Glamour emanates from the neutral-toned bathroom that contains a capiz-shell vanity and shapely chair and lamp.

siding where there once was brick. The original garage is now a master suite, and a new wing provides more bedrooms and a dining room, which the original plan didn't include.

But Kim refused to change two things: proportions and flow. "We really liked the layout and size, which were just right," she says, sounding like a real-life Goldilocks. The human scale—an aberration for Arizona homes, which lean toward the large—is even more important now that the couple have children. "Guests say the house feels like people really live here. It's not just the toys, but because the scale feels so good," Kim says.

Yes, but it's also because the furniture, fabrics, art, and accessories—and how they are all arranged—feel good, too. The furniture is a livable mix of comfortable seating and antique accessories and case goods. Fabrics swing toward a mix of patterns or textures. In the master bedroom, it's textures only with a monochromatic palette in shades of sand. "But in the patio off the dining room, I loved mixing polka dots and stripes," says

Kim. The living room conversation area is clean and simple with white upholstery. Pattern is an accent, with bold graphics on an ottoman and a cotton Fortuny print on a pair of X-leg stools. "The draperies in the kitchen are about as floral as I ever go," says Kim, "and to me, even they feel more graphic than floral."

In the living room, she retained the ceiling beams and darkened the wood floor. And for a good first impression, she replaced the front door with one that's heavier and custom-made from indigenous mesquite. "It looks like an antique but it's a better fit," says Kim. Her other design decisions are just as pragmatic. With young children, she confined her "glam area" to the master bath, where a capiz-shell dressing table exudes 1940s glitz. "It's glamorous without being heavy," she reasons.

"There is a sense of informality about the Southwest all the time," says Kim. And at Christmas—with its golf-cart processions and cantina dining—it's at its kicked-back best. ■

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