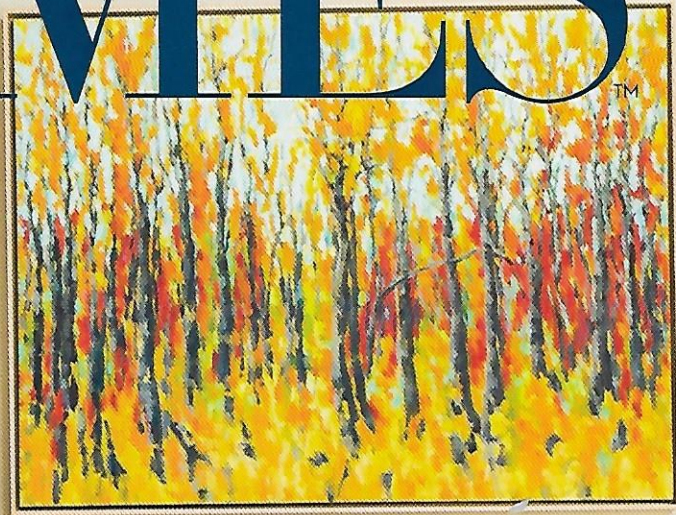


# ELEGANT HOMES

Add Color and Character to Every Room



FALL/WINTER 2017  
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meredith Specials

Stylish Updates for the Kitchen & Bath

**GORGEOUS DETAILS:**  
*LIGHTING ■ FLOORING ■ RECLAIMED WOOD*



# Tailored Beauty

Architectural  
salvage, local  
building materials,  
and thoughtful  
decorating choices  
fashion an elegantly  
appointed home  
that looks historical  
but lives for today.

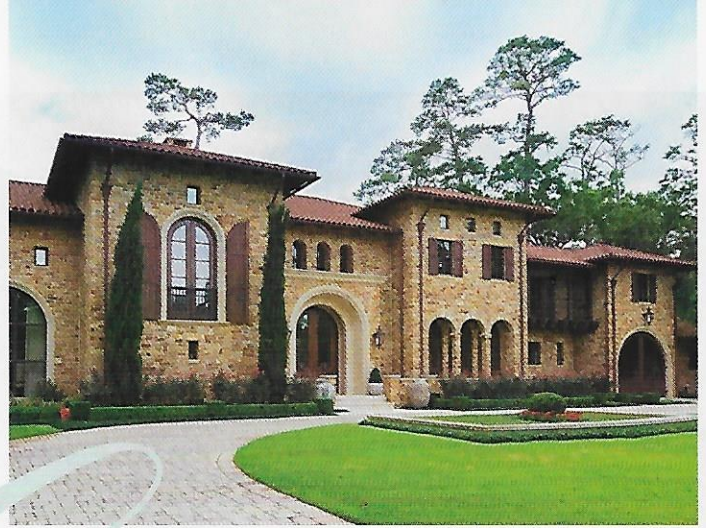
WRITER ANN WILSON  
PHOTOGRAPHER JULIE SOEFER  
PRODUCER SUSAN FOX

Interior designer Kara Childress chose a 6-foot-tall mirror, high-back chairs, and a hefty 19th-century Spanish writing table to balance the scale of the two-story library.



THIS PHOTO: The entry gallery is composed of a groin-vaulted ceiling, limestone-trimmed arches, and Tuscan-style columns that visually separate the family room and kitchen without blocking views or conversation. OPPOSITE: Seven different stones from Texas Hill Country are laid in a random pattern to lend regional distinction to the Italianate-style manse.





Cherished memories of sun-kissed villas, inviting arch-walled piazzas, and Florence's intricate ironwork inspired a couple to look to Italy as they drew up plans for a new home on a lush wooded lot in Houston. They tasked architectural designer Robert Dame, builder David Crow, and interior designer Kara Childress with creating a light-filled home that would feel timeless, connect indoors and out, and accommodate their entertaining needs and those of their two teenage children. "Our clients put a lot of time, research, and energy into the design-and-build process," Dame says.

In fact, the couple spent two years collecting vintage fixtures; sourcing reclaimed flooring, cement tiles, stone blocks, and timbers; and gathering 18th-century European antiques. They worked with Crow to come up with ways to install salvaged materials, devise custom cabinetry, and even build a hidden passageway.

The home's expression of rustic Tuscan style is evident in the exterior's stonework, tile roof, deep overhangs, exposed timbers, and arched windows. Inside, thick plaster walls with rounded corners, distinctive ceiling treatments, and dark-stained millwork take their cue from Italian homes. The floor plan's easy flow and large steel windows partner with these historical references to produce a "timeless and fresh result," Dame says.

Childress furthered the European look with Italian, French, and Spanish antiques. She called on fabrics with richly patterned textures, appliquéd details, and hand-screened patterns to brighten the home's dark finishes and weighty details. "Natural materials make every space feel livable, comfortable, and unfussy," Childress says. "Just like in Italian homes, there's a bit of pattern, a bit of color, and a few faded textiles that evoke a collected feel."

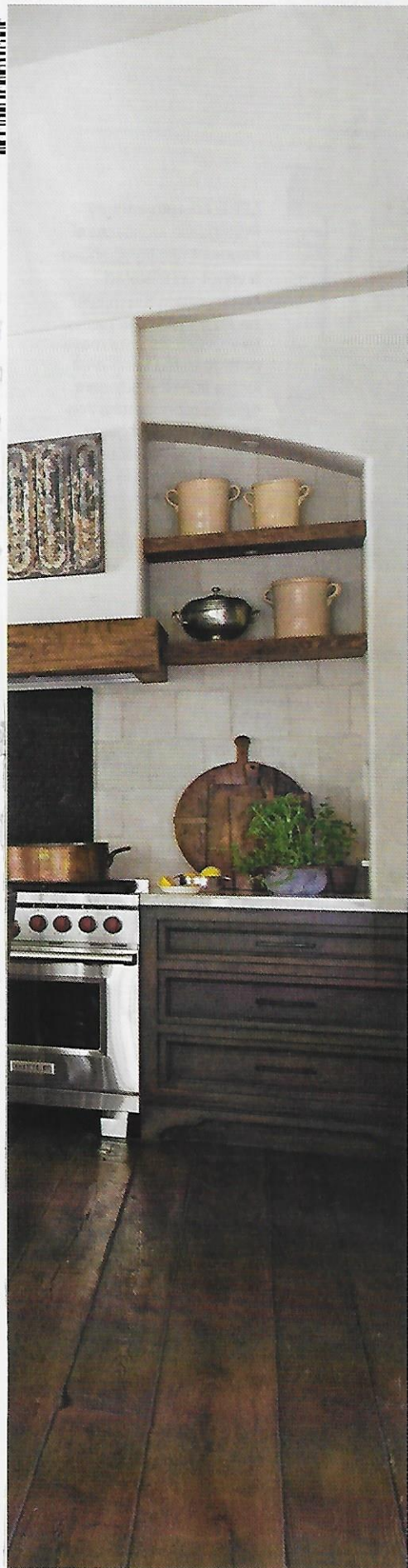
A seamless flow between inside and out, where sunny patios and shaded loggias provide gathering room around an aquamarine pool, makes entertaining a breeze. "With its beautiful bones and well-edited furnishings, the house is always ready to welcome guests," Childress says.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 138.



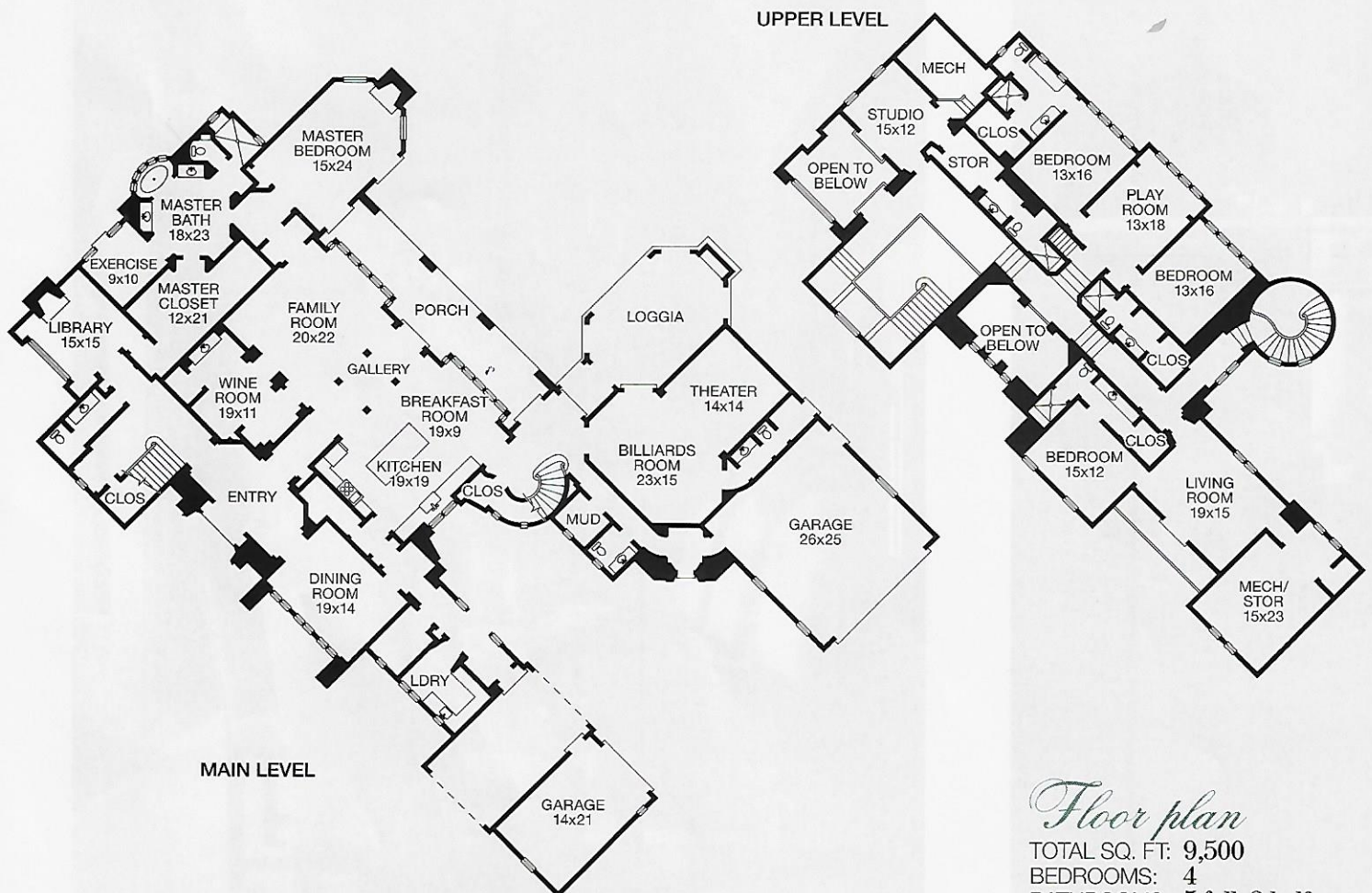
Deep, rounded walls create recesses with old-world-style mass around windows, fostering an illusion of age.

LEFT: The homeowners' salvage efforts are on display in the kitchen, where antique cement tiles from Provence compose the backsplash, a salvaged fireback and a reclaimed ceiling tile decorate the range area, 150-year-old boards line the floor, and 250-year-old French oak tops the island. Shelves crafted from thick pieces of reclaimed wood reference the ceiling beams. BELOW: Thin pieces of stone cut from reclaimed blocks (possibly from a French castle) form a focal-point wall in the formal dining room. An 18th-century Italian chandelier, Fortuny-clad chairbacks, and hand-appliquéd silk draperies provide romantic counterpoints to the stonework.





LEFT: An 18th-century Portuguese architectural fragment displayed above a velvet-upholstered headboard in the master bedroom provides patina. OPPOSITE: Guests move outside to the living-area loggia from the adjacent billiards room to take in a televised football game, cook in the barbecue pit, or just kick back in cushy chairs while enjoying breezes and sunshine streaming through the arched openings.



*Floor plan*  
 TOTAL SQ. FT.: 9,500  
 BEDROOMS: 4  
 BATHROOMS: 5 full, 3 half

Floor plan © Robert Dame Designs



