



# BUILT for LIFE

By Mauri Elbel Photography by Thomas McConnell

*Building a home has been a life-long dream for Austin-based couple Jonathan and Leslie Moore. Leslie, who grew up in St. Louis, always loved the spacious homes protected by secluded wooded lots situated a stone's throw from the conveniences of town. Jonathan feels most at home surrounded by the same wide-open, natural Texas landscape he was raised on.*





For 25 years, they've had countless conversations about the home they would eventually build together. Fast-forward a quarter century and the contemporary, light-filled home they now share represents the thoughtfully-planned, impeccably-designed result.

"Jonathan and Leslie have very specific tastes and knew exactly what they wanted," says builder David Wilkes who collaborated with architect Pete Callejas and interior designer Allison Burke on the project — a 3,354-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bathroom modern home sitting on a four-acre lot in Barton Creek.

Although it's positioned just minutes from downtown Austin, the home's orientation on the property shields it from bustling Barton Creek Boulevard to create the kind of privacy you would expect from a house way out in the country.

"They wanted the house to intentionally turn its back on the public realm with few windows and large bold Texas limestone monolithic walls which visually suggests a sense of stability and security," says Callejas whose firm, HOMESTEAD Architecture, is based in Savannah.

When the time came for the Moore's to design their home, they turned to the architect and long-time friend. Callejas and his wife, also an architect and close friends with Jonathan and

Leslie, traveled to Austin to spend a weekend gathering ideas about their likes and dislikes and gaining a sense of their lifestyle to achieve a design that would best suit the way they lived.

"From the beginning, it was our design objective to create a very dynamic space inside and out," says Callejas.

Presented with a dozen different concepts, Jonathan and Leslie settled on the one that featured a stunning butterfly roof, which drove the entire design. On the outside, the metal roof soars over an exterior comprised of stucco, stone, steel panels and Douglas fir. Now from inside their home, the early morning sun seeping through clerestory windows washes over the walls and bounces off the ceilings. Each space throughout the house hones an entirely different vibe with light entering at different locations and dancing across the smooth South American mesquite floors throughout the day. The home, which Callejas designed to capture and maximize the long vistas, features eight completely different yet visually compatible elevations which allows the house form and massing, materials and views to change as one moves around the home and the sun shifts throughout the day and season.

"The experience of the house was meant to flow, inspire and liven up the day," says Callejas. "We had an outstanding interior designer, Allison Burke, who was so great to team up with. She was able to bring the spaces to life and I believe

that our design intent was fulfilled and it turned out to be a huge success."

A koi pond at the entrance creates a tranquil, cooling experience in the hot Texas climate as you cross stepping stones toward the home — a feature that evokes the feeling of floating above water that Leslie borrowed from the botanical gardens she used to visit in St. Louis. Wilkes says it's one of his favorite elements of the home, along with the handrail Jonathan was inspired to replicate from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels, the subtle logo Jonathan designed that joins the J, L and M initials from their names that can be seen in various spaces throughout the home and the outdoor shower that connects with the master shower.

"We really love this detail," says Wilkes. "They can work in the garden, shower privately outside, then step directly into their master bath shower."

Leslie and Jonathan had a few preferences from the onset of the process. Rather than placing windows on the front of the home, they wanted a design similar to a contemporary lake house, with ample windows on the back side to soak in natural views and blur the lines between inside and out. Because the home backs up to a habitat preserve, the Moore's will never have to worry about neighboring houses interrupting their wide-open views. Neither of them were keen on the





open and connected living, dining and kitchen spaces often seen in contemporary homes. Instead, their home is arranged to accommodate their lifestyle — there is one master suite with offices for Jonathan and Leslie at opposite ends of the house to create a noise buffer that allows them to work from home simultaneously.

While both gravitate toward the modern aesthetic, Jonathan didn't want to feel as if they were living in a museum so they worked with the designer to incorporate color and texture into various spaces. Jonathan's office is painted coal black, with one wall coated in black chalkboard paint so he can take notes while he is working. In the kitchen, Caribbean blue hand-painted subway tile ties into details on Leslie's antique server, which the entire room was designed around. Dark quarter sawn white oak paneling surrounds the master bedroom and bathroom where punchy red tile splashes the master bath.

Sustainability was a central component to the design as well, according to Callejas, who says natural materials were used wherever possible and solar studies were done to capitalize on natural light and minimize the need for electric lighting. From the home's well-insulated, air-tight "R" Zip sheathing to the highly-efficient high SEER-rated HVAC system, Callejas says energy consumption is reduced by at least one-third.

But for Leslie and Jonathan, the real beauty of the home lies in the fact that it's built for the way they live.

"We love everything about this house," says Leslie. "I like

that everything is exactly how we wanted it to be, even down to the little details."

For Leslie, who is left-handed, it translates to everyday conveniences like having the dishwasher located to the left of the sink. Jonathan appreciates the fact that their modern house is completely ensconced in nature and wildlife — each spring, the wildflower seed mix he got from the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center blankets the landscape in blooms. Their four-legged roommate, a Bullmastiff named Teddy, seems to enjoy his own feeding table and bedroom off of the master.

While the design was many years in the making, Jonathan says the time and effort spent were well worth the result: a dream home they never want to leave. They've even ensured the design is ADA compliant to guarantee its functionality throughout their retirement years.

"There's a real rhythm to this house," says Leslie. "It's nice to get it all exactly right. It just flows so well with how we live." ♦

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