

# IN THE COURTYARD

BY KIMBERLY SUTA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DROR BALDINGER, FAIA AND MATTHEW NIEMANN



DROR BALDINGER

PAX CHAGNON, AIA, OF CHAGNON ARCHITECTURE TOOK ON THIS MID-CENTURY MODERN-INSPIRED AND ARCHITECT-LED DESIGN-BUILD PROJECT AS THE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGNING THE HOUSE, MANAGING CONSTRUCTION AND SUBCONTRACTING TO TRADES.



DROR BALDINGER

“IN MY EXPERIENCE, THE ARCHITECT-LED DESIGN-build process is more streamlined than the traditional design, bid, build process — at every decision that needs to be made during construction, the author of the design is present. Likewise, at every decision that is made during the design process, the builder, who is aware of costs and construction feasibility, is also present because the architect is the builder. The creation of this home was a collaborative effort between the owners and myself, including the interior design. I had the opportunity to teach interior design at Texas State University for six years. As an architect, my design efforts are equally focused on the form, color, texture and light of the interior and exterior spaces and specifically how they work together,” explained Pax.

The kitchen is made bright and airy with cool, polished concrete floors and white statuarietto marble countertops with detailed veins. The warm custom walnut cabinets by Dupont Cabinetry & Design help anchor the kitchen, and the vibrant Eames dining room chairs give the room a fun pop of color alongside the Saarinen dining room table. The stylistic and iconic backsplash is a nod to M.C. Escher called Small Diamond Escher by Fireclay Tile; the funky, almost retro, island pendant light fixtures are PH5 by Louis Poulsen.



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This open floor plan allows the design for each room to blend into the other. The unique fireplace, a Malm Zircon 34 gas fireplace, was custom painted to artfully match the dining room chairs. The living room side chair, Modell 711 Chair, was designed by Fredrik Kayser and the Nelson Saucer Crisscross Bubble Pendant light was designed by George Nelson.

Thoughtfully situated in the center of the action and open to the living room, the bar offers seating for two with a direct view of the pool courtyard. The bar backsplash maker is unknown, as it was discovered at a roadside tile shop by the homeowners. The zig-zag design on top is a clever result of not having enough tiles to run it up to the floating shelf above.

The utilitarian office, with a wall of walnut cabinets that conceal printers and office materials, offers a tranquil view of the wooded forest to the north.

Step into a tropical locale with this eye-catching "Wild Thing" wallpaper by Flavor Paper, a non-repeating mural that is scaled to full-width and height. Additionally, the semi-recessed sink sets in a floating Zebra wood shelf and the multi-light pendant light was designed by Louis Weisdorf.



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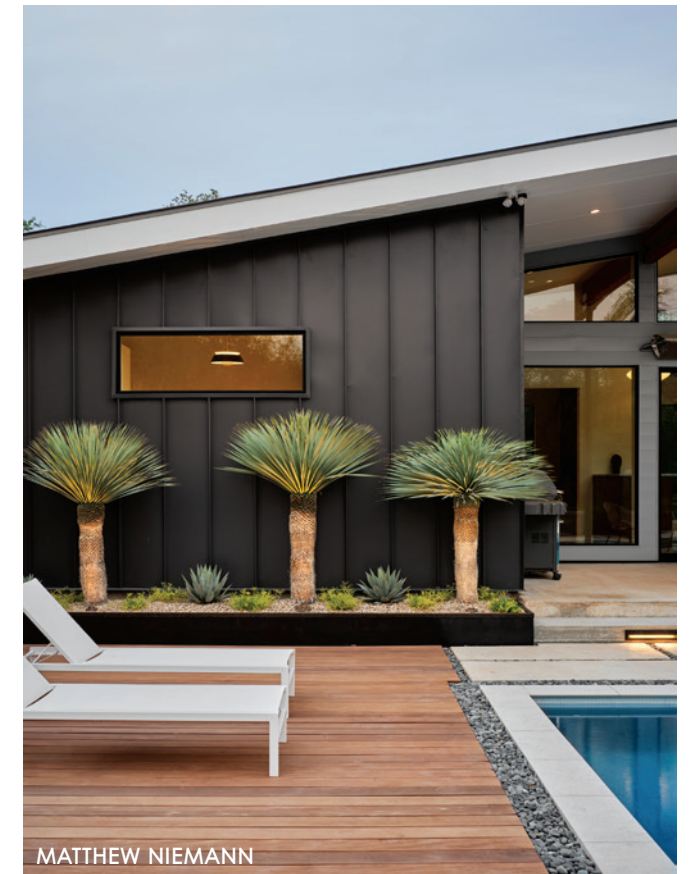


As you approach this stunning one-story home, you can see the low-slung roofline is consistent with mid-century modern style and the structure of the home is expressed inside and out.

The entry from the carport is a composed view of board-formed concrete, cactus in steel planter boxes and a controlled view of the pool courtyard beyond.

It's easy to delight guests as they enter the home through an artisan-designed, custom steel gate of playful geometric shapes by LUSH GreenScape Design. The path to the front door is along a slightly elevated pathway, with the pool courtyard below.

MATTHEW NIEMANN



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His methodology really shines through in this charming one-story home that is gracefully situated on a secluded wooded property, surrounded by clusters of live oak trees, just west of San Marcos.

The intentional focal point of this entire home is the courtyard and the orientation of the pool and pool deck to maximize sunlight and create a seamless indoor and outdoor environment, ideal for sunbathing and entertaining. The 26-foot-wide sliding glass door by Western Window Systems that opens up to the courtyard helps

accomplish the savvy transition from the interior to the exterior living space.

The pool deck, planter wall and refined landscaping were designed and installed by LUSH GreenScape Design. With its mid-century glam, including the requisite palm tree, you can almost imagine lounging by this pool in the Hollywood Hills during its golden age, if you're inclined to daydream.

The homeowners also prioritized the use and quality of indirect natural lighting in the interior spaces as well as

This home is elegantly organized around the pool courtyard, the fulcrum of the design. The living room is connected to the courtyard by a transparent wall consisting of the five-foot front pivot door and a 26-foot-wide sliding glass door manufactured by Western Window Systems, seamlessly bringing the courtyard to life for parties and entertaining.

The front porch is covered by a high roof plane, supported by glue-lam beams and steel posts, and the accent wall leading from the entry gate to the front door is clad in a clear cedar rain screen.

The pool deck, planter wall and overall landscaping were designed and installed by LUSH GreenScape Design.

sustainability features that include daylighting and solar orientation, rainwater harvesting and filtration for potable use and water-wise landscape planting. "One of the most unique sustainability features is that the sole source of water for the house is rainwater collection," Pax noted. Even in Central Texas, rainwater collection is an effective method, which requires calculating the size of the roof and tank needed to accommodate the size of the household and average rainfall expected in the area.

Other sustainability features in this home include high performance windows and doors, building insulation, HVAC system, a dehumidification system (a necessary addition due to the large sliding glass doors) and tankless/on demand water heaters.

Overall, the home really exemplifies Pax's own sense of style. "If left to my own devices, I lean towards simple, modern lines, and I think this house really has that," he said. "I am a fan of the large windows, too, whether they have a wooded view, courtyard view or distance view. Many of my projects have hilltop views, but this house is nestled in the woods, so you have the courtyard on one side and woods on the other. It is beautiful." ♦

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