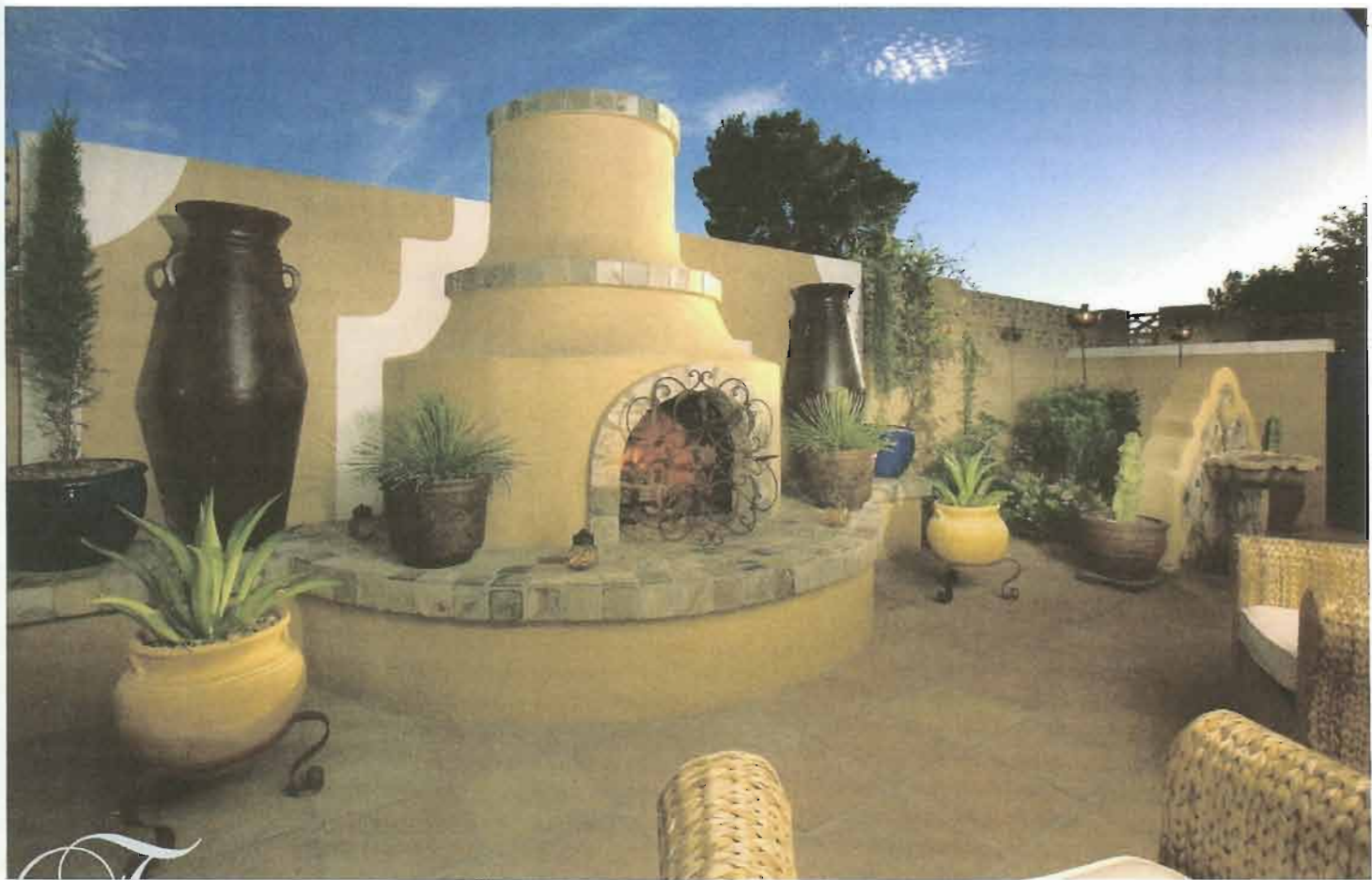


A photograph of a patio garden. In the foreground, there are purple flowers and green foliage. In the middle ground, a paved patio area features a large archway with blue and white tiled patterns. A wrought-iron gate with intricate scrollwork is set within the archway, leading to a covered patio area. To the right, another smaller tiled archway is visible, partially obscured by green plants. The background shows a light-colored building with a decorative cornice under a clear blue sky.

SMART & SASSY

A modest-size patio garden gets a stylish makeover



he saying “big things come in small packages” hits pretty close to home when describing the intimate outdoor setting at Carlos Andarsio’s cast Phoenix town house. Three years ago, his long, narrow backyard, which also contains a covered patio, went from desolate to divine with the help of landscape architect Chad Robert.

“Carlos was looking to turn his backyard into a retreat,” says Robert, principal of Exteriors by Chad Robert Inc. “And he wanted to include several elements in a very small space.” Adds Andarsio: “I also wanted as much greenery as possible, while still preserving some of the natural desert elements inherent to Phoenix.”

Opposite: Newly replanted, the front yard of this Phoenix patio home features sago palm, pink-blooming vinca, and Italian cypress. To the right of the entry, a row of sour orange citrus trees creates a sense of privacy for a guest room. **Above:** The addition of an oversized fireplace on a small patio actually makes the space feel bigger, notes landscape architect Chad Robert. Green slate enhances the fireplace hearth and sitting area, while a band of white on the stucco wall lends visual interest.

In a cost-effective move, Robert replaced the patio’s existing concrete flooring with upside-down Saltillo tile to attain the look of stone. In addition, he changed out the patio’s original nondescript support columns with Tuscan-style pillars constructed of concrete. Although small

spaces often can be limiting, the landscape architect was able to fit a four-person spa, an oversized fireplace, and several sitting areas into the tiny yard.

“Carlos asked for a spa off the master bedroom that could be enjoyed in both cold and hot weather,” Robert explains. “And he wanted it to look like a water feature.” The resulting cobalt-blue tiled spa on the property’s west side incorporates a wall fountain with decorative tile work.

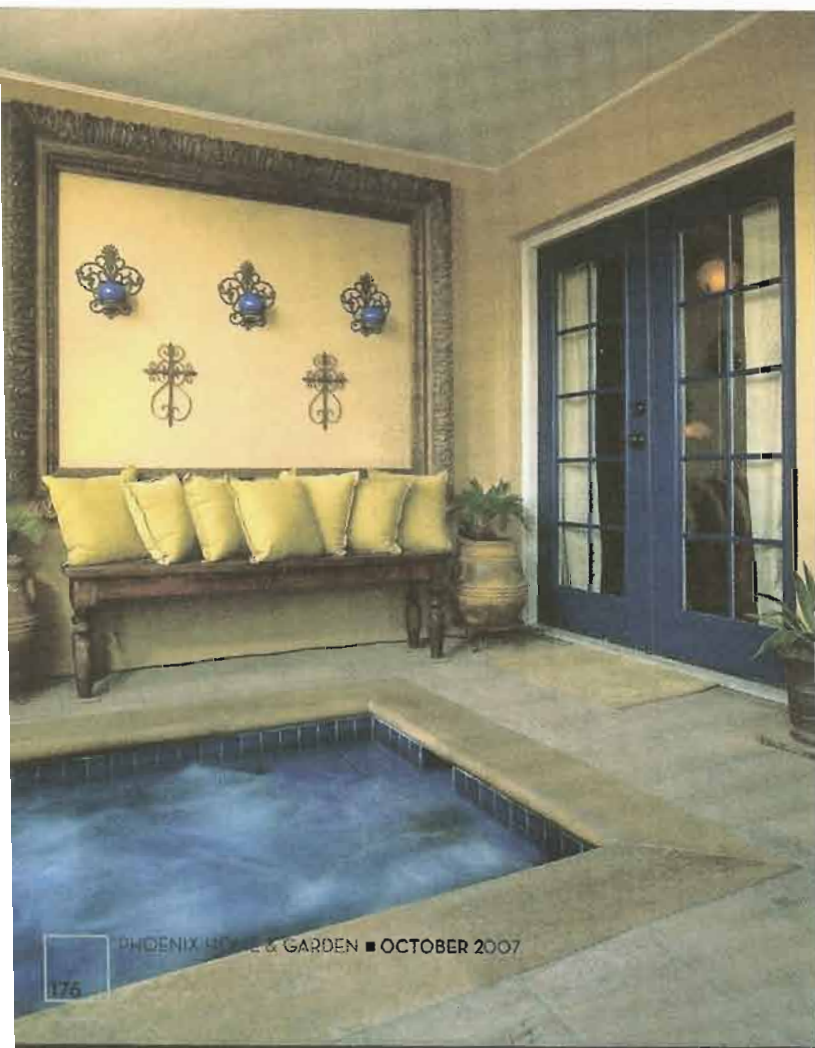
In the center of the yard, Robert designed an elaborate 7-foot-high fireplace that can be viewed from inside the house through one of three sets of French doors. Moorish in style, the rounded fireplace with built-in seating keeps the area warm when temperatures turn cold.

And on the east side of the lot is a cozy covered sitting area that receives little direct sunlight, keeping it cool and comfortable year-round. Potted succulents and other heat-hardy plants here and throughout form a connection to nature.

A year or so later, Robert updated the home’s front yard by creating a private terrace off the guest bedroom with a hedge of sour orange citrus trees.

“Working with an experienced landscape architect makes all the difference in the world,” states Andarsio of his experience. “Chad was instrumental in this whole transformation. And I love everything about it.” □

TEXT BY NANCY ERDMANN ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL WOODALL



Above: Since the homeowner knew he would be using the patio frequently, he accessorized it as if it were an indoor room. From floor-to-ceiling white curtains and rustic-looking wooden tables to wrought-iron wall sconces and rattan seating, the space is smartly designed. **Left:** An inviting spa is located off the master bedroom for easy access. Candle sconces hung inside a large mirror frame and pretty pillows lined up on a bench further enhance the setting. **Opposite:** Water from a spout pours into a shell-shaped catch basin on the spa's tiled wall. Behind the water feature is a small planting area accented with a pair of copper torches.

See Sources.

"CARLOS ASKED FOR A SPA OFF THE MASTER
BEDROOM THAT COULD BE ENJOYED
IN BOTH COLD AND HOT WEATHER"

