



# TRULY DI



The Nolens' sense of humor is evident in subtle touches throughout the home — and shows up in unexpected places.

(Dan Sater suggested this whimsical touch, which only a few observant visitors spot as they pass under the home's grand cast stone arches.)



# S T I N C T I V E



The living room boasts a spectacular bay view. Linear patterns in the windows' rich wood gridwork are echoed by the ceiling's beams; curved architectural detailing on the fireplace surround softens the strong vertical scale of the room. The large space achieves an intimate ambience through the rich color palette Vickie chose, and the eye-pleasing mix of solids, stripes and pattern. The intricate cloissonne candelabra on the marble-topped coffee table was a surprise gift to Vickie that Truly found on Rodeo Drive.





A spectacular setting and inspired design create this one-of-a-kind home in Port Royal, Naples.

**T**he mailbox is guaranteed to make even Scrooge himself smile: a miniature Truly Nolen mousemobile rendered in bright sunshine yellow. On the driveway is its child-sized counterpart, a kiddie-car in the same Crayola® shade, complete with mouse ears and impudently perky tail.

The house itself — a dramatic play of angled elevations — seems to meld with the lush landscaping; completely hidden from its neighbors, it looks as though it has always been here, in this spot, one with the trees and shrubs and tropical flowers.

That's just the effect the homeowners sought. "I wanted to create a family atmosphere and a feeling of permanence," says Vickie Nolen. When she and her husband Truly (founder and CEO of Truly Nolen Pest Control) decided to build a home on Naples Bay in Port Royal, they turned to Dan Sater, AIBD of The Sater Corporation, Bonita Springs, and to Cronacher Construction of Naples. The collaborative result is extraordinary.

### **Creating the Design**

Sater sat down with the Nolens and asked them about their lifestyle and how they wanted the home to work for them. Vickie had some specific floorplan requests. "We wanted the main living areas to be on the first floor, along with the master suite, plus Truly's office and my office," she says. "The children's

rooms are upstairs, along with a playroom area."

"They had a lot of ideas for me to work with," Sater notes, "including tearsheets from magazines and photos of different design elements and styles that appealed to them. Both Vickie and Truly needed distinct, private office space, because they lead very busy lives. But their lives are also very family-centered, so it was important that the home be comfortable and livable for their children as well. I did some sketches for them, showing them how I would incorporate their ideas and make the most of the property's views." The home he envisioned and created has a Mediterranean flair. "It's very eclectic," he acknowledges, "and it borrows elements from several historical archetypes, but with a contemporary feel.

"Vickie and Truly lead fairly informal lives," Sater continues, "so we incorporated some formality in the dining room and the living room, using cherry woods, and then created a more rustic, casual look in the leisure or family room by using cypress. We also took advantage of the view by putting most of the rooms to the rear of the home, including Truly's office."

Sater's finished design clearly takes full advantage of the homesite's spectacular setting. When the front doors swing open to admit guests, they enter a gleaming marble foyer and look straight through the step-down living room's soaring windows to

Photography by Jennifer Deane



Vibrant yet cozy in cinnabar red, the powder room off the foyer is one of Vickie's favorites, incorporating several of her preferred design elements: warm color, curves juxtaposed with strong vertical lines, and mirrors to ornament and enlarge the space (there are several mirrors throughout the home, many dressed in elaborate gilt, others framed in plain wood and hung in alcoves).





**Intriguing architectural angles and curves highlight the hallway that leads from the foyer to the family room. A built-in bar is convenient to both living and family rooms but remains unobtrusively out of sight.**

the paradise outside: sculpted grounds leading to the bay and the home's private dock. To one side of the foyer is a floating circular marble stairwell; the cantilevered landing on the upper floor creates a dramatic tower effect as it overlooks the living room, offering another perspective of the breathtaking views. A simply styled wrought iron chandelier counterpoints the polished marble.

### **Warming the Interior**

Open space, natural light and classic architectural details fill the 9,200-square-foot home, which is furnished with an eclectic mix of antique and contemporary pieces, polished wood floors and mellow Oriental carpets. "When the house was being built [a few years ago], the faux finish look — lots of white-washed surfaces and neo-classical motifs — was very popular," Vickie says. "I preferred something warmer and with more color." Working with Karen Benson, ASID, she selected a palette of red, cinnamon and hunter green for the main living areas.

"Vickie had really great instincts," says Benson, who owns Karen L. Benson Interior Design, Inc. in Fort Myers. "Consequently all the rooms in the home have a lot of personality. She feels most comfortable with fairly traditional colors, though her taste in art runs to the playful and whimsical.

"Vickie had some very nice pieces already in the home, so we moved some of them into the living room where they could become focal points of that room's more formal decor."

The gloriously rich drapes that soften the living room's soaring cherry-framed windows were Benson's suggestion. "We purposely went with very full drapes to warm up the room," which is a large space with high coffered ceilings and off-white walls. The final choice was Lee Jofa's Amalfi Silk Weave, in spice, with Robert Allen bullion fringe as an addi-



tional softening element. Two French armchairs were recovered, and Vickie's beautiful Oriental rug was given a place of honor in the room.

Another lovely Oriental graces the dining room, where Vickie chose to use existing furniture. Benson had a customized credenza built into the wall to match the furniture, along with a custom-framed mirror. "That whole wall is custom," Benson notes, "and it creates a very dramatic effect." The custom draperies are Schumacher's antique linen in Tea Rose.

"We worked on other custom touches here and there throughout the home," says Benson. To complement both Orientals, for example, she designed a rug with America Art rugs that runs through the hallway leading to the offices and family room. "But many items for the home were 'off-the-rack,' so to speak." Several lighting fixtures, including the foyer's chandelier, came from Consolidated Lighting.

"Normally, when I work on a home, I do the 'interior envelope,' or interior architecture," Benson



The free-form pool, designed by Russell Bencaz, is a haven of sparkling azure, enhanced by verdant plantings and a soothing waterfall.

explains. "But Dan [Sater] had done such a complete job; he had placed niches and built-ins and even suggested lighting designs."

### A Family-Oriented Lifestyle

Benson is very enthusiastic about Sater's design and the luxury touches throughout the home. "The coffered ceilings and wood beams are wonderful touches, and the home flows well from one area to the next."

That, too, was planned.

Formal yet comfortable, the home's design and decor really are a perfect fit for the Nolens' family-oriented, low-key lifestyle. "The family is our first priority," says Vickie, noting that the pool and Gulf-access location are two of the home's best assets for this water-oriented clan. "Truly's favorite exercise is swimming, and he also loves to [scuba] dive."

Everybody spends a lot of time in the beautiful free-form pool complete with waterfall, designed by Russell Bencaz of Russell P. Bencaz & Associates Inc. in Naples (he was also the landscape designer). The family also enjoys boating, or sometimes just relaxing at the private dock. Here, overlooking the bay, is a life-sized sculpture of a dolphin, created by an artist friend of Truly's who has known him since grade school. The same artist also designed the whimsical diver mobile sculpture that hangs over the small chickee area off the patio.

Personal interests are reflected in other areas of the home as well. Each of the children's rooms is a testament to personal passions: Scarlet (her room, appropriately, is painted deep red) collects frogs; her bath area boasts a rain forest frog mural. Son Spyder prefers a nautical theme, with lots of boats and maritime artifacts. Sincere, the eldest daughter, loves animals. Her room, replete with "a gazillion" stuffed animals, sports a leopard-motif rug and a jungle hut mural in her study area.



"All the rooms in the house have a lot of personality," says Benson, "even the powder room off the foyer." One of Vickie's favorite rooms, it is painted in rich cinnabar red. A dramatic alcove showcases the gleaming white pedestal sink with its voluptuously curved legs and gold faucets. An ornately gilded mirror and a pair of gilded sconces, along with the Oriental rug, speak of intimate luxury. But the owners' mischievous humor is apparent even here: Outside the powder room is a painting of a saucy female chimp dressed to the nines and oozing pearls. Within the privacy of the powder room, she coyly begins discarding her troublesome vestments.

Portraits and informal paintings of Vickie and the children ornament the home, but one spot that speaks to its heart is the private, enclosed back stairwell that leads from the upstairs bedrooms back to the first floor. It's a lovingly arranged photo gallery with shots of various holiday celebrations, important events and candid moments.

Plus a mousemobile or two. ❁