



A spiral staircase links the master bedroom to the pool and patio. Stairs (above) to the second level begin near the living room (opposite).

"This is truly a special place for us."

Deepika Bhalla

Physician's family follows friends to

Just What the Doctor Ordered

Story by SUZANNE PICKETT MARTINSON

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When Dr. Ravi and Deepika Bhalla decided to move from north Phoenix to Arrowhead Lakes, there were several conditions: The new location needed to be easily accessible to Ravi's thriving medical practice in Sun City and Sun City West and close enough to schools for their children. Also, the couple desired an area that offered views of the surrounding environment. And most importantly, their new neighborhood needed to appeal to their best friends, Dr. Kumar and Manisha Daulat.

"It's true," laughs Deepika of the families' close friendship. "We moved from Illinois together and were neighbors in north Phoenix. Now we both purchased land here and are building homes together—across the street!"

Best friend Manisha Daulat agrees that the Arrowhead Lakes location is ideal and that the close proximity to water especially appeals to her husband. "We consider ourselves lucky to have found such a beautiful area with four lots next to each other," says Daulat, whose home is scheduled to be completed in spring 2005. "We can't wait to move in!"

Creating The Dream

The Bhallas, who moved into their home in July 2002, thoroughly enjoyed the design and building process of their 7,000 square-foot dream home. Although they had a good idea of what they did and did not want, they credit architect/builder Rob Trop of Trop Design & Development with making the project a pleasant experience.

"Rob is truly wonderful to work with. He is clear with his ideas and



create a contemporary home



strives for the best," says Deepika. "We are also grateful for Rob's project superintendent, Jim Samuels, who was here everyday."

Likewise, Trop, who is also one of the artisan builders at the new DMB Verrado community, enjoyed working with the Bhallas. "Deepika and Ravi are great," says Trop. "They wanted a contemporary home with views of the lake, so I wrapped the house around the two lots in a way that you can see the water from almost every angle."

Trop also made sure that there were enough windows to let in the sunlight and frame views of the lake and mountains just outside. Both the living room and great room have expansive windows and doors that provide the perfect backdrop for the Bhallas' colorful contemporary furnishings and accessories. "We like an uncluttered look," explains Ravi, of the clean lines and well-appointed décor. Custom contemporary art created for each room pulls the colors and themes together to produce a stunning effect.

In the great room, the brushed steel fireplace mantle and dramatic curtains that flow effortlessly from the soaring ceilings enhance built-in maple cabinetry. To one side is a generous-sized bar that has a pass-through window to the backyard and its pool, spa and boat dock—a much-appreciated feature during the family's frequent parties. "We love to entertain," says Deepika. "We definitely had that in mind when we designed our home."

Family And Guests In Mind

Although the home is spacious enough to handle the 400-plus guests at the couple's welcome party, it is designed and decorated in a way that is comfortable for the couple and their children, Varun, 16 and Eesha, 13. Like many guests, one of Ravi and



When they're not entertaining guests in the great room (above), Deepika and Ravi (left), Varun (center) and Eesha (right) are relaxing in their own bedrooms.

Varun's favorite places is the game room, just off the bar. A pool table and drum set occupy the space along with a trio of slot machines from a Las Vegas casino, Deepika's birthday present to Ravi.

On the upper level that overlooks the great room and lake beyond is a cook's delight. The open floorplan kitchen is surrounded by maple cabinetry and double-slab granite countertops that feature a unique slanted angle. An outdoor kitchen was installed next to the kitchen dining area to accommodate the preparation of spicy Indian food. "Some dishes really need to be cooked outside," explains Deepika. "The spices can be really strong!"

Past the indoor water feature that produces the soothing sound of gurgling water is the family's most cherished room. A mandir, or temple, was created to provide a peaceful place for the family to pray and meditate during their weekly Tuesday time together and alone each day. "This is truly a special place for us," says Deepika. Across the hall is the high-tech theater room with a big screen that spans an entire wall



The kitchen's open floorplan is highlighted by maple cabinetry and granite countertops.

and cushy theater chairs that have been placed on two levels.

A Design Partnership

Two guest rooms complete the downstairs wing. One is resplendent in the colors of russet and brown and the other is awash with white lacquer furniture and brilliant red fabrics. "I really loved working with design consultant Loretta (McCaw) from Copenhagen," adds Deepika, who purchased most of her furniture and accessories from the store. McCaw's LM Designs provided window treatments throughout the home.

The master bedroom suite upstairs, like many of the rooms, was a joint effort between Deepika and McCaw. After the furnishings were selected Deepika found fabric that she liked and McCaw worked on coordinating curtains, artwork and rugs. "Deepika has excellent taste and it was fantastic to work together," notes McCaw.

"We both wanted a multi-level floor plan," concludes Ravi, who smiles at his wife. "In fact, we are so much alike that our choices for this home were nearly identical so it was a good experience for us. We love it here." ♦

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