

RANCH HOUSE REVAMPED IN PASO ROBLES
WHEN IT WAS TIME TO REMODEL THEIR 1981
VINEYARD HOME, CAROL DEHART-KING AND DAVID
KING LOOKED SOUTH FOR INSPIRATION

Written by Rebecca Juretic

In the early 1970s, Carol DeHart-King took a bus trip from Tijuana to Mexico City, stopping off to explore small towns along the way. In a few days, she became captivated by Mexican culture.

She married husband David King in 2000, and the couple traveled frequently to the southwest.

So when the couple started making plans to remodel their modest, boxy Paso Robles ranch home, they knew it would be a blend of both Mexican and southwestern design. The couple's home sits on David and Carol's Vista Del Rey Vineyards, eight acres of dry-farmed zinfandel that David purchased in 1995. The home on the property was built in 1981 and in desperate need of a remodel.

"It was very inconvenient for our lifestyle, given that we have grandchildren and animals," said Carol. "It was so small and dark." The couple hired architect Jennifer Rennick and **Semmes** and Co. Builders to handle the remodel, which began in 2007.

They pushed out every wall, adding 600 square feet to the home. To brighten the space, they added skylights as well as large windows in the new cathedral ceiling entryway. Rennick and **Semmes & Co.** specialize in sustainable building and design, so they added eco-friendly features like stamped concrete floors, a solar water heater, and abundant insulation. The house is so well-insulated now, the family has no need for central air or heating.

"When it gets over 100, we just put on the fans and the house stays cool," said Carol. The home, formerly lacking in architectural interest, was given a Spanish infusion with arched doorways and niches, distressed ceiling beams, and massive, hand-carved Honduran mahogany exterior doors. The concrete floors were cut with faux grout lines and stained to resemble an old Spanish tile floor. The clean-burning modern fireplace was given a makeover with a plaster facade made to resemble a southwestern kiva fireplace.

In decorating the interior, the couple found inspiration in a favorite piece of textile art that Carol inherited from her mother. Its southwestern palette of turquoise, orange, yellow and green inform the color palette throughout the house. The rosettes woven into the piece are repeated in the kitchen backsplash tile and in several pieces of furniture.

Most of the furnishings and accents in the house are either antique or vintage. One of the couple's favorite pieces is their metal butterfly guestroom bed, said to have come from a brothel, which they found at a Santa Margarita antique store.

The cast iron chandelier that hangs in their foyer is an antique from a Spanish mansion. The tin ceiling panel behind their dining table was salvaged from the Saint George Theatre in San Francisco before the 1906 earthquake and fire. They found it in a Colorado antique store and procured it in exchange for a few bottles of wine.

The remodel, which took 10 months, not only enhanced the livability of the home, it completely transformed its ambience. "It has an incredibly different feel to it. It's much warmer, much more inviting," said Carol. "I never expected to have such a beautiful, practical home at this point in my life. For that, I'm very grateful."

TIPS FROM THE KING RESIDENCE:

REMODEL FOR LESS - If the cost of new kitchen cabinets is prohibitive, consider replacing some of your old cabinetry with a piece or two of furniture. A beautifully designed vintage or antique hutch offers storage, adds character, and is often more affordable than built-in cabinetry,

START WITH A MOTIF - Repeating a motif throughout the home offers a sense of cohesion. Choose a design -- like a rosette, a spiral or a fleur-de-lis -- then repeat it subtly in fabrics, a piece of art, or a carved piece of furniture.

ANTIQUING TIPS - Buying antique furniture and accessories is often a hit-or-miss proposition, especially when you are looking for a specific item. Get to know the owner of the antique store as well as dealers who specialize in the type of piece you want. They might be able to clue you in when something comes in, or even search specifically for the item you're looking for.