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# Unique by Design

By Kirsten V. Freeman | Photography By JaneBailey.Com



With its curiously curved roofline and Asian-inspired boxed glass double front doors, you can tell at first glance that the Ted and Julie Schmid contemporary rambler in the posh South St. Cloud neighborhood of Cortona is something special.

"Our ideas for this home were very unique, and, at times very challenging," Ted said. "But we accomplished it all locally, which was our goal, and the workmanship was impeccable-second to none."

"We did all the design ourselves," Julie said. "I had a book two inches thick with ideas from magazines of things that I wanted to incorporate." But much of Julie's wish list had to be customized, and in some cases, special-ordered. "We were able to do it all through the lumberyard and other St. Cloud connections," Julie said.

The Schmid's roots run deep here. Ted, a graduate of Saint John's University and current COO of Lumber One, and Julie, a St. Cloud Beauty School graduate, met through mutual friends nearly 20 years ago. They've worked together ever since building a family, a company,

and four personal homes together. The two bicycling enthusiasts recently celebrated their 15th anniversary with a biking tour of Italy where they discovered the inspiration for their new home's neighborhood - Cortona. "It was this great little town we visited. We loved it so much, we wanted to stay - so, we named the site of our new home after it," Ted said of the very new and exclusive neighborhood.

Ted and Julie wanted a truly custom lifestyle home for their family which includes son, Roman, 13, and daughters, Margaux, 10, and Sydney, 6, and were not willing to compromise quality in any way. "I believe if there's a way to dream it, there's a way to build it," Ted said. "We're very tactile people," Ted said. "Every element of our home is consistent in texture, smoothness and sturdiness."

Heartland Glass was a key supplier for several of the unique style elements in the home including the glass back splashes that embrace the kitchen. Painted from behind to match the suspended soffit above the island, and secured with cool contemporary inch-wide stainless steel rivets, the glass adds a wonderful glow and clean simplicity to the kitchen. Even the switch plates are glass.

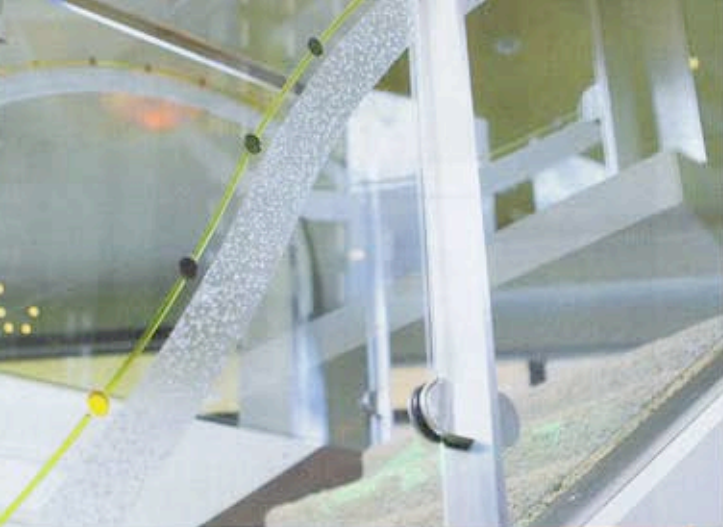
A collection of glass teardrop lights is suspended over the curved island to add to the luminous effect.

Even the staircase is special. With the help of the consultants

at Heartland, Julie had customized glass panels created for the stairway that coordinate perfectly with the home's soft green, orange and yellow décor palette. The one-of-a-kind stainless steel stair railing was handcrafted by Jay Netter of Netters Welding. "I have a custom racing bike in the garage that doesn't have as nice of welds as this does!" Ted said.

*"I believe if there's a way to dream it, there's a way to build it."*





Splashes of vibrant orange, radiant yellow and juicy lime are found in the wall artwork which Julie found close to home. "I got luck locally," Julie said. When she picked out the super thick, chocolate-colored great room carpet, there were skeptics who doubted her vision. Now, the plush flooring is the perfect anchor for the large space and ties elegantly with the super dark cabinetry and trim.

Created by Tischler Cabinetry in Avon, the sleek, dark contemporary cabinetry and built-ins were hand sanded for more than 135 hours and built to tricky precise dimensions. "The final grade of sandpaper they used was a 600 grit," Ted said. The result is a sensuously smooth ultra-flat finish that looks nearly black. When sunshine catches it, the birch wood grain comes alive with a rich glow. The drawers are all under-mounted to allow for maximum space and are "soft-close", which means they are nearly impossible to slam shut. "There was absolutely no room for error," Ted said of his lower level entertainment center that had to fit up snug to an unusually shaped plaster fireplace.

"They didn't use shims or anything," Ted said, "they built it to fit this well." One of the greatest challenges the cabinet crafters faced was bringing to life Julie's sketched perfect radius booth in the family room. The finished booth looks like it was carved from a giant tree, but was actually painstakingly crafted with many layers of beveled wood, then skinned with a birch laminate. A giant circular ottoman designed, built and upholstered with a colorful tapestry circle pattern by Julie's dad is the perfect compliment to the room's unique booth, not to mention the favorite seating area for the kids.

Following traditional design, the Schmid's let their gas fireplaces be the focus in their gathering areas. But, that's where anything "traditional" goes out the window. Instead of the same old burning-log-look, the great room features a yawning hot coal bed with glowing ebony and amber coals and suspended dancing flames. A border of fiery black Cococabana granite hugs the fireplace face and a luscious metallic paint polishes off the unique look.

*Opposite page:* Vibrant wall art and bright accent pieces inspire the home's color palette.

*Inset:* Asian-inspired boxed glass double doors and curved roof line cheerfully greet visitors to the Schmid home.

*This page above:* Customized glass panels, from Heartland Glass, with alternating soft green, orange and yellow circles along with curved lines create a decorative wave suspended between the one-of-a-kind stainless steel railing.

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