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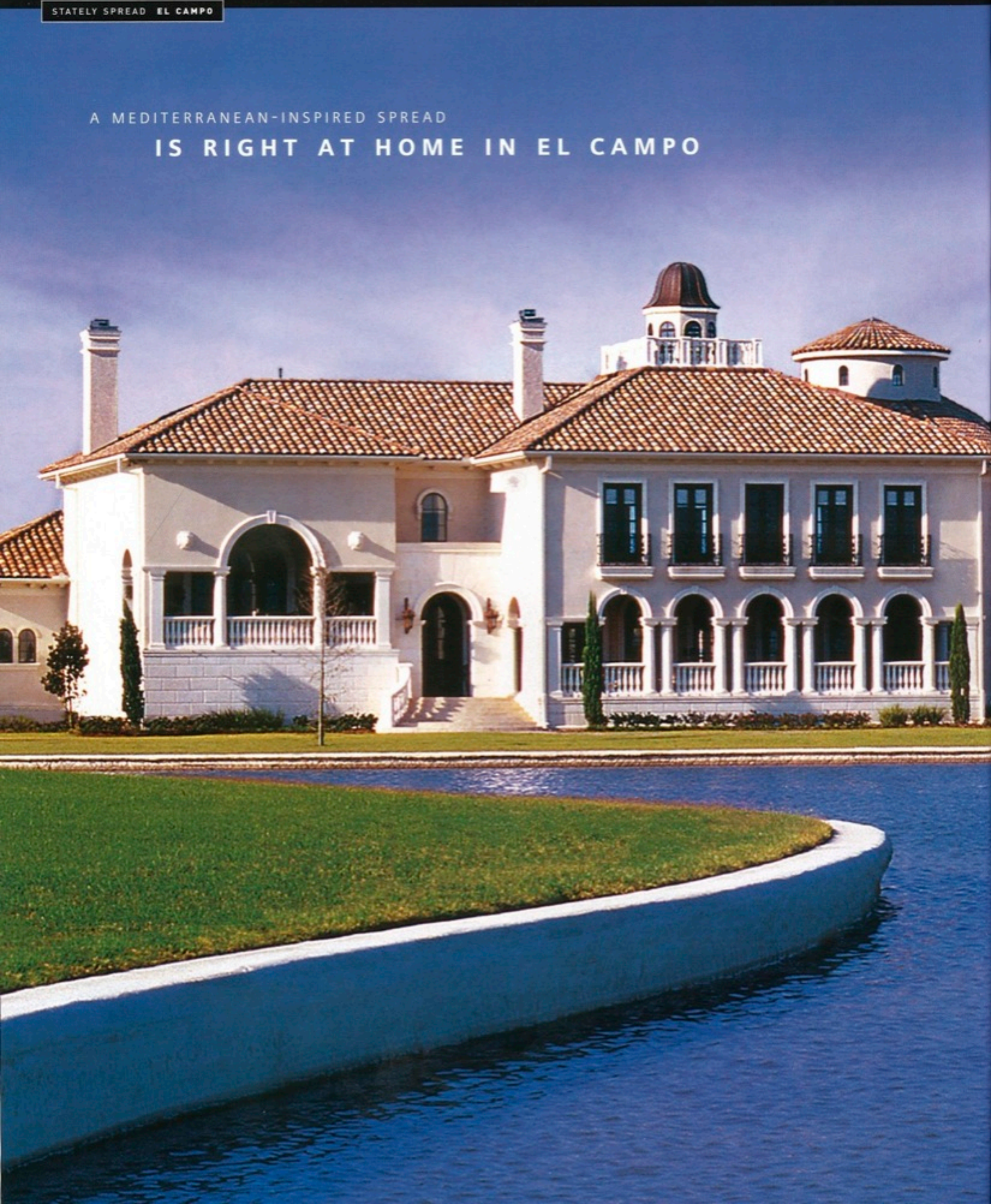
PREMIER ISSUE

A MEDITERRANEAN-INSPIRED SPREAD

IS RIGHT AT HOME IN EL CAMPO



STATELY SPREAD

WRITTEN BY **ISABEL STOLTZMAN**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ROB MUIR**

DAVID AND VICKI ZALMAN COULD HAVE BUILT THEIR DREAM HOME IN ANY OF THE SWANK NEIGHBORHOODS OF HOUSTON—SWEETWATER, RIVER OAKS, MEMORIAL. INSTEAD, THEY CHOSE 20 ACRES IN THE SMALL FARMING TOWN OF EL CAMPO, IN WHARTON COUNTY, AN HOUR SOUTHWEST OF HOUSTON. One could say they traded the silk stocking district for the privacy, space and pace of a more rural setting. David took close to two years to assemble his dream team of

BUILDER Chris Sims	**INTERIOR DESIGN** Kelly Welsh	**ARCHITECT** Robert Dame
BEDROOMS 6	**BATHROOMS** 7	**SQUARE FEET** 16,000

STUDY TIME
The warm paneled walls and ceiling in the study add an aura of sophistication and warmth.

PRODUCT PICK
An antique-looking globe, set into a wrought-iron scroll stand, adds worldly flair to a study. *Iron Scroll Globe Stand, price available upon request. arteriorshome.com*

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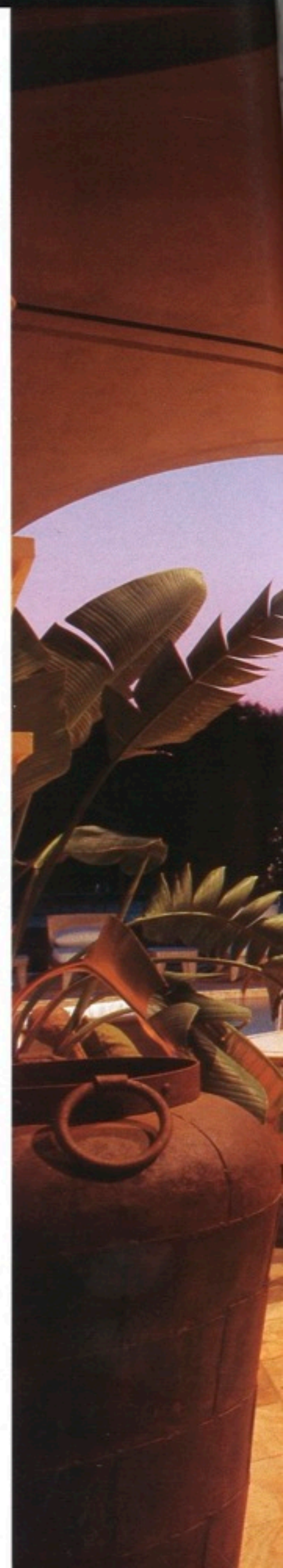
professionals to construct his dream home. "We spent lots of time upfront and then we stepped aside. We needed someone who knew how to build quality into a large home. The architects and designers would have to satisfy Vicki's desire for comfort and hominess and my preference for something along the lines of The Four Seasons—palatial but warm."

Builder Chris Sims, no stranger to elaborate homes, was put in charge of developing a stately resort on raw, flat, treeless land. "We designed a seven-acre lake that wraps three sides of the home and created berms to give the property some topography. The foundation is elevated five feet above grade, affording a nice view of the lake. The scale was large: a 16,000-square-foot framed area including the house, porches and balconies," he says, adding, "The driveway itself is over a quarter mile."

RIGHT AT HOME
Vicki and David Zalman spent nearly 2 years assembling a dream team of professionals to build their impressive El Campo home.



THE INTENT FOR THE INTERIORS WAS

TO MAKE THEM LIVABLE YET FORMAL

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The Zalman's chose an Italian Mediterranean style of architecture. The intent for the interiors was to make them livable yet retain a formal atmosphere. Kelly Welsh, the interior designer on the project, was careful to create the perfect backdrop. "The bigger the home, the more important it is to put emphasis on design continuity," she says. "We wanted to be sure all the elements were perfectly blended."

For David, everything about the home is spectacular. "Once you start a dream, you can't go backwards." he says. As you approach the home, the front loggia sets the mood. A rotunda with a wide split staircase curves up to the first landing, where lead glass doors open into the study and adjacent smoking balcony. The two-story living and dining areas feature

OUTDOOR LIVING
The informal loggia, which overlooks the infinity edge pool, is the ideal spot for relaxing or enjoying an evening meal.

SWEET DREAMS
The designer selected soothing tones for the bedroom in keeping with the homeowners' desire for the room to be a restful retreat.

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an attached gallery hall leading to the master bedroom. In the back of the home, the informal loggia, with a fireplace, boasts a summer kitchen overlooking the infinity pool. Each setting is, indeed, inviting yet formal.

A good example of the degree of detail involved in the interior finish-out is seen in the formal powder bath. Punctuated by a full height statue just outside its door, you enter to find a custom vanity piece, antique mirror inlays, stone countertops and a lit glass bowl sink. Wood veneer in natural maple with scrolls of black ebony inlays covers the walls.

When asked about his favorite part of the house, David can't decide between the backyard loggia and the study. But he knows what Vicki would say: The media room. With its big screen and feathered couches, it's become a New Age family room. L