



HOMIE

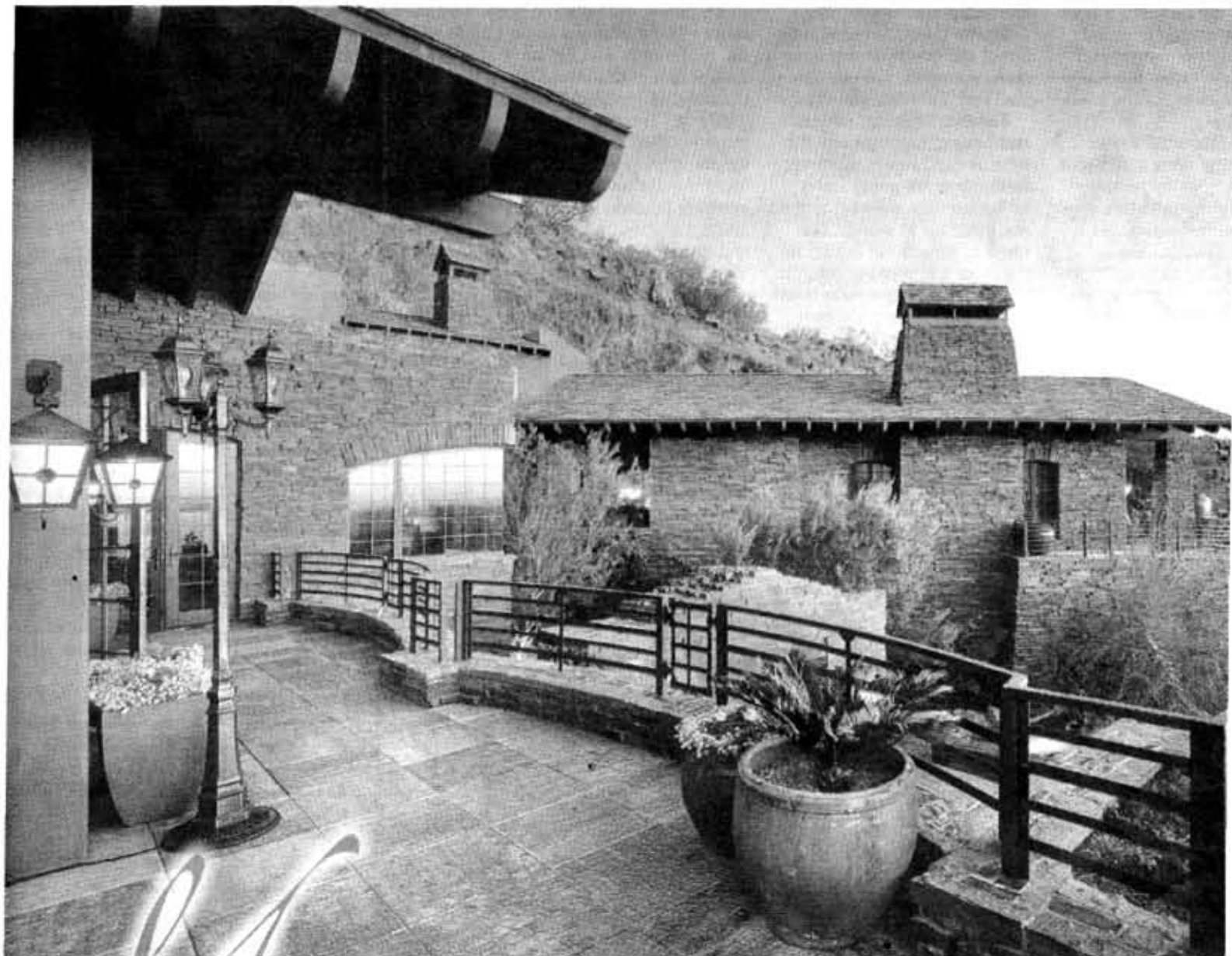


ONLINE COVERAGE

See the coolest Cool H we've showcased, at coolhomes.azcentral.com

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC HOME.AZCENTRAL.COM

SECTI



MOUNTAIN MAJESTY

Estate's Camelback setting creates a 'magical experience'

By Patricia Bathurst
SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

Some men look at a mountain and want to climb it. Herman Chanen looks at a mountain and thinks it'd be a dandy spot to build a house.

Chanen Construction has been creating everything from college campuses to hospitals for more than 50 years, and now the company has entered the estate-home market. Chanen began by building his own home. A few years ago, he had a chance to consider a lot halfway up the west side of Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, where the state preserve lands run into the Biltmore Estates.

The views were unparalleled, but there was one problem with the site: It really was the side of a mountain, and Chanen had no inclination to build a

supermodern home clinging to it. He wanted a home that looked as if it belonged on the site, one that appeared welcoming and inviting from every angle. And he wanted it to showcase the incredible views of Phoenix and the western horizon, as well as the spectacular mountain.

It took nearly six months just to prep the site, he recalls, carving a chunk from the side of the mountain to provide a shelf on which to build the house. Even before the site was ready, Chanen called upon an architectural firm with which he's done several projects.

"We were just completing the Union building in Phoenix. That was one of the most exciting projects we've ever built. I called John Sather at Swaback Partners to say I wanted

COOL HOME

See CHANEN Page HO6



Above: The patio off Herman Chanen's office in his 16,000-square-foot estate built into Camelback Mountain. There are Phoenix or mountain views from nearly every room. Right: "I wanted my house to look like it's a hundred years old," Chanen says. Old World colors prevail throughout the master builder's home.

16,000-square-foot Phoenix estate has a 'European look, country feel'

Right: The wine cellar's door displays a grape motif, a big clue as to what's beyond the door. The hardware echoes the ironwork around the entrance and inside the room.



Right: An art gallery provides an inviting entrance from the lower-level garage.



Right: The sink and cabinet in the guest bath were converted from a media



CHANEN *Continued from H01*

to talk with him about designing a house — and he told me they were too busy.”

Chanen, however, persuaded Sather to take a look at the site one weekend and suggest other firms with whom he might work.

“John came and looked, and he didn't say too much. But he did give me some names to call.”

By that Monday, Sather called and told Chanen not to bother calling the other firms. “He fell in love with the site,” Chanen says.

“I came to the site and was blown away,” Sather says. “It's one of the great mountainside sites anywhere.” With 150 feet of elevation change across the site, it was also a challenge.

For a building style, Chanen wanted Old World, Country French.

Sather determined that a “country, relaxed feeling” (not necessarily French) would be the intent of the home, and then determined to use “rugged materials of the area” and colors to help the house blend with the mountain.

“The typical approach in the Valley is to perch houses



There are five water features on the property, and at this feature, the back wall nestles against Camelback Mountain.

along the mountainsides. We wanted a house that would be integral to its setting. Every detail is intentional,” Sather says, “both in the architecture and the fine furnishings.”

Chanen, who is a community activist and philanthropist, wanted to live a gracious life, but also to host some of the grand parties of the Valley. The end result is 16,000 square feet of rambling house sitting firmly across the mountainside, with city or

mountain views from nearly every room and access to a back patio and wraparound terrace from every room, allowing guests to wander indoors and out with ease.

Chanen shares the home with his 7-year-old Maltese, Miss Lily.

“It's not exactly Country French,” says Mike Wetzel, project architect. “When you go to the house, it almost feels like a small village, with a very European look and feel.”

With a second-floor guest apartment and a separate guest casita, the home still meets one of Chanen's primary requirements: “I wanted a home, not a hotel. Too many large homes take on the feel of a hotel lobby, and I wanted a warm, intimate look and feel inside, with spaces where you could be comfortable having a good conversation,” he says.

Interior design was provided by Studio V and Katherine Pullen, director of design. The house has “wonderful, intimate rooms with incredible vistas,” Pullen says.

“We wanted to make sure that when people open the front door, they aren't intimidated (by the space), but recognize that they are in a gracious, welcoming space.

“It's a timeless look,” she says.

Sather adds, “The magical experience of the house lies in seeing that grand, urban experience in one view, and in another area, experiencing the majesty of the desert. There were multiple challenges to meet in constructing the house, but we worked in a synergistic collaboration.

“Herman Chanen really demonstrates the pure idea of a master builder.”