

"It's what I do," designer and decorator Marcia Pratt says referring to her involvement in the architectural design of her dream home at 2320 Clubs Drive. Her husband's career with Exxon Mobil has moved them around the globe twenty times, and Marcia is elated to finally have the southern-style home she always wanted.

Originally from Louisiana, the Pratts' most recent assignment has been in Jakarta, Indonesia, where they've been living for the past three years. Before moving to Jakarta, the Pratts became friends with Nalga and Paul Mebane while living in Doha, Qatar. Nalga had searched high and low for the perfect place for her and Paul to retire and landed on Cordillera Ranch. "So that's how we got out here and we were like, 'oh my gosh, this is beautiful!' But of course, it took me like a year to learn how to say Cordillera," Marcia remembers. So in 2007, Nalga set the Pratts up with Tracy Harris to review several lots to determine if Cordillera Ranch was

somewhere they could see themselves retiring. "As soon as we saw this lot, I said, 'I know exactly what to put on this lot!'"

Almost immediately, the Pratts chose designer Jim Terrian to embark on their journey toward a southern antebellum home. "We sat down together and we talked about their lifestyle and

how they really live in an everyday atmosphere, how their family interacts, how they want to entertain, what their furniture needs are, what their likes of décor are and the mechanics of the house. Then we looked at the site and evaluated how we were going to fit all of these things on it,"

Jim says of his process. "This site had a lot of unique characters in the slope of the land and it also had a lot of setbacks which were difficult to fit everything that they wanted in. Cordillera was really generous in how they worked with us and trusted us in our vision of what we wanted to put here. They were very generous in allowing us to do some things that hadn't been done before in

Cordillera." But their efforts were delayed due to Mark's career. Marcia explains, "Years passed, Jim left the builder he was working with and went on his own and we moved several more times. I was living in the Woodlands and Mark was rotating to Iraq and I got a package in the mail from King Bravo. It was a book; basically How to Design Your House for Dummies by Trey Garner. King Bravo said he had been working with this great kid, so Mark came back from Iraq one weekend and we started looking at it and called Jim up to say, 'let's fire this thing back up.'"

That's when the Pratts made the switch to Garner Homes in 2011. They took a look back at the 2007 design they had begun and realized that they would need to make some major changes. "We were building a two-story antebellum that every Louisiana girl wants. Then I hurt my knee, and I was like, 'I'm never going to bring any beer upstairs to the icebox on the second floor.' So then we said okay, that's ridiculous. It was too big and too expensive" Marcia says. So they brought the home

down from a two-story plantation home to a one and a half story southern British Colonial home. "They also wanted to have top quality of everything and this house has top quality of everything. They wanted the technology, like the geothermal heating and air conditioning systems, rainwater catchment, a lot of technology in this house that you can't see. Mark did a whole lot of research on the modern sciences of building. We really became intrigued about all of the stuff that he brought to the table, and we started implementing some of those ideas even before we started building their house in other projects.," Jim says.

From Jim's first renderings of the house, Mark and Marcia were taken. "Right off the bat, with Jim, we told him what we wanted and boom. It's amazing," Marcia says. "His willingness to listen to our suggestions and questions, his sense of proportion and perception, and his quickly drawn 3-D hand sketched drawings really helped us in making decisions," Mark says in agreement. Jim acknowledges that

SOUTHERN CHARM

by Kristine Duran :: Photography by Ben Weber





Marcia's expertise is what really made it so simple. "With someone like Marcia, she's got fantastic experiences with design, so it was easy for her to communicate back and forth with me. Sometimes clients don't know how to communicate that as well, so it takes more attempts."

Making sure they would get all that they desired and needed in a home within their

financial parameters was made possible by Garner Custom Homes' reversal approach. "We do a reversal of what is normally the process. You [usually] design everything then put out the price. With Garner, they take the initial concept and they price it initially, then work backwards to make the design fit the price. It gave us the opportunity to design the house more specifically

to what they wanted," Jim explains. Since Jim has started designing on his own, he has worked with several builders, but is especially impressed with Garner Homes. Marcia describes her positive recollection of working with Garner Homes, "They're great! They're young and they're on the ball. My husband wanted a tin roof; I never wanted a tin roof. It's just not my look. So Trey Garner said, 'why aren't you going with that new concrete slate roof?' He said about two or three houses up, another house has one. So I went by and I said, 'yes!' And when it rains on it, it turns a little darker. I love it."

Aside from the roof, Marcia's favorite part of her home is her fireplace, which she turns on during chilly mornings. Marcia wanted large windows to allow plenty of natural lighting into the kitchen, which left no room for outlets, so now she is able to pull hidden outlets out of the counter at her convenience. Also a part of the Pratts' kitchen is Marcia's grandfather's influence. The clear story above incorporates cypress beams from his farm that she grew up visiting. Their trim carpenter placed them so that, from below, Marcia can still see her great aunt Edna's name etched into one of them. To add even more character, they incorporated bricks that Marcia had



collected from her hometown of Natchitoches, Louisiana. The majority of the home is handicap accessible for both elderly family members and for themselves later on in life.

The outside of the Pratts' home was done, in large part, by John Hackett at Dynamic Environments. "He had a really integral involvement in the outdoor involvement that we have with the New Orleans style rear courtyard. He and I worked together to create the look, then he did all the finishes and actually built all of the walls. Then of course, he was involved in all of the front landscaping and rainwater catchment design as well," says Jim.

The Pratts' were involved in every nuance of their home. They worked closely with Jim on the design to ensure that every need and desire of theirs was met, and Jim made every attempt to make those ideas a reality. "I was impressed with the way the Architectural Review Committee did a really good job with working with the Pratts to take care of the hardships that this lot had. Also, with the styling of the home. Most of the houses are Hill Country, Mediterranean, or Tuscan and we wanted to go in a different direction. We were able to convince them with the quality of the materials and the finishes that it was going to be fitting because it was just going to be a quality house. They are protecting the homeowners out here and I've come to appreciate the job that they do because it's a hard job," Jim says.

With Mark still residing full-time in Jakarta, Marcia continues to travel back and forth." I kind of repatriated several months ago, but I still go back every couple

months. It's great when you're over there, but just getting there isn't. If something happened to my parents in Louisiana, it's 34 hours to get from my door to their door. That's a long way." Mark will permanently join Marcia in their new home at Cordillera Ranch when he retires in August. Marcia continues to decorate and is currently gearing up to help with Shindig and admits that traveling is not high on the agenda at this moment. "Boerne's great, you can do everything on two streets! I finally got the house I wanted; I'm going to stay in my house."

Garner Homes recently won GSABA's 2014 Summit Award for Best Design for a Custom Home for the Pratts' home, with Marcia Pratt recognized for Best Décor. 🏡



SPECS

4 bedroom
4 1/2 bath
3-car garage
4360 heated/cooled square feet

Classic merged South Louisiana plantation/British West Indies/Texas Hill Country architecture

New Orleans courtyard with antique brick columns/stucco walls

Eclectic Louisiana heirloom/Middle Eastern/North African/Far Eastern décor

Ultra high efficiency Ground Source Heat Pump HVAC system (+30 SEER) with standalone dehumidification and fresh air ventilation

40,000 gallon rainwater collection system