

MASTERS OF THE SOUTHWEST

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This page: Kim Bouton and Barb Foley show their expertise with fabrics in this girl's bedroom, where they combined solid sheers with pretty prints in shades of pink. **Opposite:** A soothing color scheme was used in the master bedroom. The design of the bed was based on an antique. The silver table lamps are topped with Fortuny shades. A pair of chinoiserie prints behind the bed enhances the room's sophisticated sensibility.



This page: Furnished like an indoor room, this inviting poolside cabana is a favorite spot for entertaining. **Opposite:** Island Stone river rock defines the outdoor shower, with a custom rug pattern on the floor portion. The door leads to an indoor steam shower.

See Sources.





Design Innovators

Kim Bouton and Barb Foley are masters
at reinventing the wheel

DOWN-TO-EARTH AND VIVACIOUS, Kim Bouton O'Connor and Barb Wilson Foley are passionate about design, from studying the latest trends and working with the finest craftsmen, to slamming on the brakes when an "estate sale" sign catches their eye.

"We're always looking for that quirky treasure to make a home unique—an old rundown chair, for example, with great lines that we will repaint and reupholster with a vivid fabric for a teen's room," says Foley.

"We'll go flying in the office for our checkbook because we've found some old cigar labels that we'll frame for a game room, or old bottles to dress up a bathroom," adds Bouton.

Their partnership began more than 10 years ago with the launch of Scottsdale-based Bouton & Foley Interiors. Combining their talents in endlessly creative ways, the pair caters to homeowners across the country, fashioning interiors that reflect the unique personalities of their clients.

"I took one interior design class and was sucked in," recalls Foley, who then switched career paths from civil engineering. Bouton was surrounded by architecture and design as a child, and had long contemplated the field as a second career. She previously worked in advertising.

In time, both moved to Arizona—Foley from Los Angeles and Bouton from Chicago—and enrolled in the interior design program at Scottsdale Community College. The budding talents met in a drafting class and hit it off.

"We were the 'menopausal' women of the class," Foley says with a laugh. "We would hang out at school at night and on weekends, so working together was just a natural progression."

Today, the colleagues work closely with the homeowner and architect on the details of a residence such as the one featured on the pages ahead. Bouton and Foley appreciate being included

early on in the process, when they can make recommendations based on elements including furniture placement and traffic flow, or in time to design ceilings and storage niches.

A big part of their job is getting to know clients and understand their moods and thoughts. "Chemistry is so important," says Foley. "We listen, listen, listen, and everything sort of unveils itself. If they say they want Spanish Colonial, we want to know their interpretation of that style of architecture."

"We give them magazines and books and have them mark what they like and hate," remarks Bouton. "From that, we discover a theme or style. We also go through their present home to learn how they live and ask a lot of questions, from whether they want to sit up or lie down on the couch, to where they store their Tupperware."

With an uncanny knack of being able to make a home warm and intimate, and using designs that are timeless, these Masters of the Southwest say they do not have a signature style. "There are some similarities, but we like to reinvent the wheel," comments Foley. "It would be cheaper to make every home the same, but that's not us." The pair often surprises clients with whimsical touches, such as custom tiles strategically placed throughout a house or a custom tile backsplash that reflects a hobby of the homeowner. Or perhaps there will be a cutout of a cat on the cabinet that houses the litter box.

"We have such a passion for this," says Foley. "We love what we do, but it can be challenging. There are so many details, and there's always a hiccup."

"I remind myself that this isn't heart surgery; we're going to live," adds Bouton. "And when the project is complete and the homeowners are delighted, it's like Christmas morning seeing it all come together." ■



KIM BOUTON & BARB FOLEY

INTERIOR
DESIGNERS

This page: The deft touch of Kim Bouton and Barb Foley is evident in the dining room of this Phoenix home, where a hand-painted antique buffet is combined with leopard-print chairs and a crystal chandelier. The painting is by Ed Mell. **Opposite:** In the great room, the team upholstered a pair of chairs in a crewel-pattern fabric for visual impact. *Yellow Mums*, an oil on canvas by Jacqueline Rochester, hangs above the fireplace.





This page: A decorative fire screen and iron chandelier, both featuring curlicues, add detail to the breakfast nook. The painting by Dana Hoopers is titled *Boarders*. **Opposite:** In the kitchen, a tiled backsplash behind the range is enlivened with a colorful mural inset. Honed black granite on the counters contrasts with white Calcutta marble on the island.







Left: The distressed vanity cabinet plays down the elegance of the crystal chandelier in this feminine bathroom. Details such as a tile border around the mirror, with the pattern repeated in the wainscoting, are characteristic of the designers' work. "We wanted to cozy up the space with a timeless look that will never be out of style," notes Barb Foley. **Below:** Book-lined wallpaper lends a whimsical look to this guest bathroom. The designers created the faux bamboo vanity from a chest of drawers. **Opposite:** The master bath was given European flair with white Calcutta marble countertops, a free-standing bathtub and mirrored wall sconces. Lighting was an essential element here and throughout the home. "It is really important to us—not too much, but just enough so the eye is drawn into the space," Foley comments.

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