

Southwest Homes

# SuCasa

inspiration ideas resources

## living large

a modest Santa Fe home  
packed with design

rekindle your home's spark  
with a perfectly planned remodel

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**M**ike Jorgensen and Laura Long, partners in Jorgensen Builders LLC and partners in life, have been bringing Santa Fe residents' home renovation dreams to fruition for decades. Jorgensen has spent more than 30 years preserving and elevating the historic origins of the homes he renovates. Long has a background in housing for economic development. Together, instead of urban sprawl, they prefer the restoration of existing—especially historic—homes, and all the requisite, inherent rewards that come with such endeavors.

So, it was serendipitous when the couple discovered an opportunity to tackle a different kind of renovation, one that applies more to a neighborhood than to a single house—infill in the heart of Santa Fe. They found an undeveloped, postage stamp-sized lot for sale in the Rosario neighborhood, walking distance from the Plaza, a true rarity.

"You just can't find lots like this anymore. Everyone said, 'man, that's a nice lot, but it's small,'" says Jorgensen. In fact, the property was just .07 acre, the equivalent of about 3,000 square feet. Once they purchased the lot, they undertook the task of designing a small home whose primary characteristic would be one not of size, but of thoughtful and comfortable design.

"It was a design challenge for us to create this small house and incorporate as much light and volume as possible to make it feel spacious," says Long. Volume increases value; not just the monetary kind, but also the sensory kind.

Given such a small lot, many people would be inclined to build upward to add square footage. But Jorgensen and Long decided against it. "We were thinking about a two-story, but we wanted volume, and with two stories we couldn't have the high ceilings," says Jorgensen.

Long confirms, "It would have been too compressed."

The result is a 1,478-square-foot, two-bedroom, two-bathroom home with a matching garden shed. By eschewing a second story, they could employ 13-foot-high, coved ceilings with vigas in the living area and nine-foot-high ceilings in the bedrooms, to provide that necessary sense of vast space.

# amping up a small space

local builders make  
the most of a modest lot  
in the heart of Santa Fe

Mike Jorgensen and Laura Long designed an artful home for a small Santa Fe lot. Instead of opting for a second floor, they chose high ceilings to create the feeling of a larger space.



Walking in the front door provides a view past the kitchen, through the living area and out into the yard. It's these purposeful design decisions that make this home feel significantly larger than its mere 1,478 square feet.

Forgoing the traditional island and instead making the kitchen and dining one area places less emphasis on the individual spaces and more on the overall flow.





Careful attention to scale in the furnishings ensured the home would accommodate exactly what the homeowners wanted without worrying about less furniture to save space. The high ceilings create the volume in this space that they were looking for to ensure the home feels large.

While the building's footprint may be on the diminutive side, the home certainly doesn't feel so. By angling the entry hall, they created a line of sight across the house, elongating the horizontal sense of space. Then, with carefully scaled, symmetrically placed windows and doors, they opened the visual field to the outdoors, while allowing lots of natural light to stream in.

Stylistically, the duo leaned on what they do best and created the feeling of a newly remodeled historic home. "Quite a few people thought this was a historic renovation," says Jorgensen. "We did as much as we could to use regional style." To that purpose, the lintels and the fireplace mantel are authentic sabino wood from the Rio Grande Valley. The mesquite pantry and closet doors came from Taos, and the rest of the doors are knotty alder.

In addition to local materials, the couple sought to give the home an additional layer of historic appeal through curated materials from around the country and abroad. Crémone bolts accent the French doors. Wrought iron accents in the garden wall, front door and the chandelier are pre-Civil War pieces sourced from Charleston, South Carolina. Walnut wood floors are from Pennsylvania, and the purposefully pitted plaster walls, done in an alabaster color customized for this project, provide an Old World effect. It's no wonder visitors to the home are convinced it's a renovation. "You have to be meticulous, not compulsive. That's really important if you want this look," says Jorgensen.

Edy Keeler, of Edy Keeler Interiors, who has partnered with Jorgensen Builders on previous projects, served as a consultant on this one. She added some color but was primarily a sounding board for their ideas. "My whole goal when I work with clients is not to prescribe but to support," says Keeler. "They had a certain vision that meshed



Easy access to the courtyard creates the feel of additional square footage.

A floating vanity creates the light, airy feeling a small home requires. The oversized mirror reflecting the primary bedroom also serves to create the sense of largess.



very nicely with the soft, traditional Santa Fe aesthetic. They have great taste.”

Naturally, a limitation of space dictates furnishing choices. To complete the look, it was important that the furnishings and decor didn't overwhelm the architectural appeal. The couple methodically thought through everything, from chairs to art, with an eye on scale. As minimalists, Jorgensen and Long were successful in not overcrowding the abode. “When it comes to function and form, the key is purpose. If it doesn't have a purpose, it doesn't get to be in the house. It gets eliminated,” says Long. For example, they opted against the ubiquitous kitchen island, an unusual choice these days. But it entirely changed the perspective, placing less focus on the kitchen and more on the space overall. Purposeful and artful, the entire home is



One flooring surface throughout the home creates a sense of continuity. The design statement is punctuated with the pops of black throughout.



## resources

### Architect

Andrew Lyons Architect

### Builder/Designer

Jorgensen Builders  
jorgensenbuilders.net

### Interior Design/Blinds

Edy Keeler Interiors

### Appliances/Cabinetry/ Kitchen Backsplash

Sierra West Sales

### Artwork

Ed Sandoval Gallery  
Marburger Farm Antique Show  
Phillip Stallars  
The Signature Gallery  
R David Marks

### Countertops

Sierra West Sales

### Bathroom Tub/Sinks/Fixtures

Dahl of Santa Fe

### Custom Features

Sabino Wood Beams & Antique  
Mesquite Doors/Ranchos  
Antique Furnishings  
Living Room French Doors with  
Cremona Hardware/Kilian Hardware

### Custom Furniture

Ranchos Antique Furnishings  
Mod Tribe Design  
New Mexico Stone  
Mexico Lindo  
Charles Stewart Company

### Fireplaces

Zia Masonry (kiva fireplace)  
Patrick Porter Ironworks (custom  
screen)

### Flooring (Hardwood)

Plaza Hardwood Floors

### Front Door/Interior Doors

Handcrafted Doors of the Southwest

### Landscaping

Eric Fox Landscaping


### Lighting

Gorman Electric

### Windows

Sierra Pacific Windows  
sierrapacificwindows.com

equally nascent and historic, spacious and warm.

Such a petite building envelope would be a challenge for some, but for Jorgensen and Long it was worth the effort. Long believes in the significance infill adds to an existing district. It improves the urban environment, and fresh construction increases market value in a neighborhood. These were their objectives. "We wanted to show that it can be done," says Long. And the fact that they left no detail wanting, their endeavor won them three awards in Santa Fe's Haciendas—A Parade of Homes: Best Outdoor Space, Best Infill Award, and tellingly, the People's Choice Award. It just goes to show, good things do come in small packages. 

The home features a consistent repetition of materials, which serves to streamline the finishes thus placing greater attention on the overall home. Repeated cabinetry style, countertop materials and even lighting are evident from one bathroom to the next.