

A GUIDE TO THE BEST RESTAURANTS & ENTERTAINMENT

OKLAHOMA

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LUXURY HOMES

By Rachel Anderson Hill
Photography by Marc Rains

***Oklahoma Magazine* presents seven lavish homes you'll want to call your own — complete with media rooms, magnificent details, unparalleled design and home-sweet-home comfort. Contemporary urban to European-inspired, it's all in the details for these grandiose residential properties. Meet their creators, the best in the luxury home business, from architects to builders to interior designers. And yes, we're intentionally name-dropping in this year's luxury homes special. Oklahoma has its share of renowned home professionals, so sit back and enjoy beautiful homes at their best —and most luxurious.**



Brian L. Freese, Architect and Designer

Brian L. Freese received his bachelor of architecture from the University of Oklahoma in 1980. He is a two-time president of the American Institute of Architects, Eastern Oklahoma Chapter, and continues to serve on its board. Freese helped establish the OU College of Architecture Alumni Association. He now focuses on contemporary architecture and design in high-end custom residences.

A home is luxurious because or when...

A home is luxurious when it is fully nurturing and responsive to the physical needs, the mind, the emotions and the spirit of the residents. Luxury does not necessarily mean opulence or grandeur. The perception of luxury is different for each person. So, a home or a space can be luxurious and not have a single stick of furniture in it. For some, it could be a single open space with a comfortable chair and a huge wall of glass looking out to nature.

My favorite new or recent building material to incorporate into my designs is...

I am really intrigued with the latest introductions of textured laminated glass. There are so many beautiful new examples that have internal laminations or layers of field grasses, leaves or sand in an almost infinite variety of shades, colors and textures. I am also excited about the new advances in concrete and its various applications in countertops, integrated sinks and tubs, and even concrete board for exterior veneer applications.

The architectural style of my own home is...

"Modern ranchburger." I bought a 1950's ranch style and put in much bigger window openings, constructed large covered patios, painted the house white, opened up the interior and created a wonderful rear courtyard.

Architect "Don't"

Do not design anything or integrate into a project anything of which a client is not aware.

Handcrafted woodwork is...

Handcrafted woodwork should generally be confined to furniture. I am a strong proponent of using the construction materials we have of this era and time in the most direct and honest way possible.... I think we spend an inordinate amount of energy, money and labor in taking fresh, new wood and beating it up with chains and saws and axes to try to make it look 400 years old.

A single word to describe architecture is...

A single word for architecture is architecture. For those who understand what it is, there is no other word for it.

An architect's job is...

To design buildings, spaces and environments that respond to the physical, personal and spiritual needs of the users, and to artistically imbue in those buildings an expression of the technological, societal and cultural advances and sensibilities of that era and time.

When I begin with a new client, I always...

Focus on listening to their own unique needs, wants, thoughts and artistic/creative or personal/spiritual inclinations. If conversations are flowing naturally, a client will often make a small, subtle comment of which they may not be aware — an offhanded comment — yet one that may carry tons of weight in transforming a project from a very nice house to a magical and immensely personal expression of the client — and a true piece of architecture.

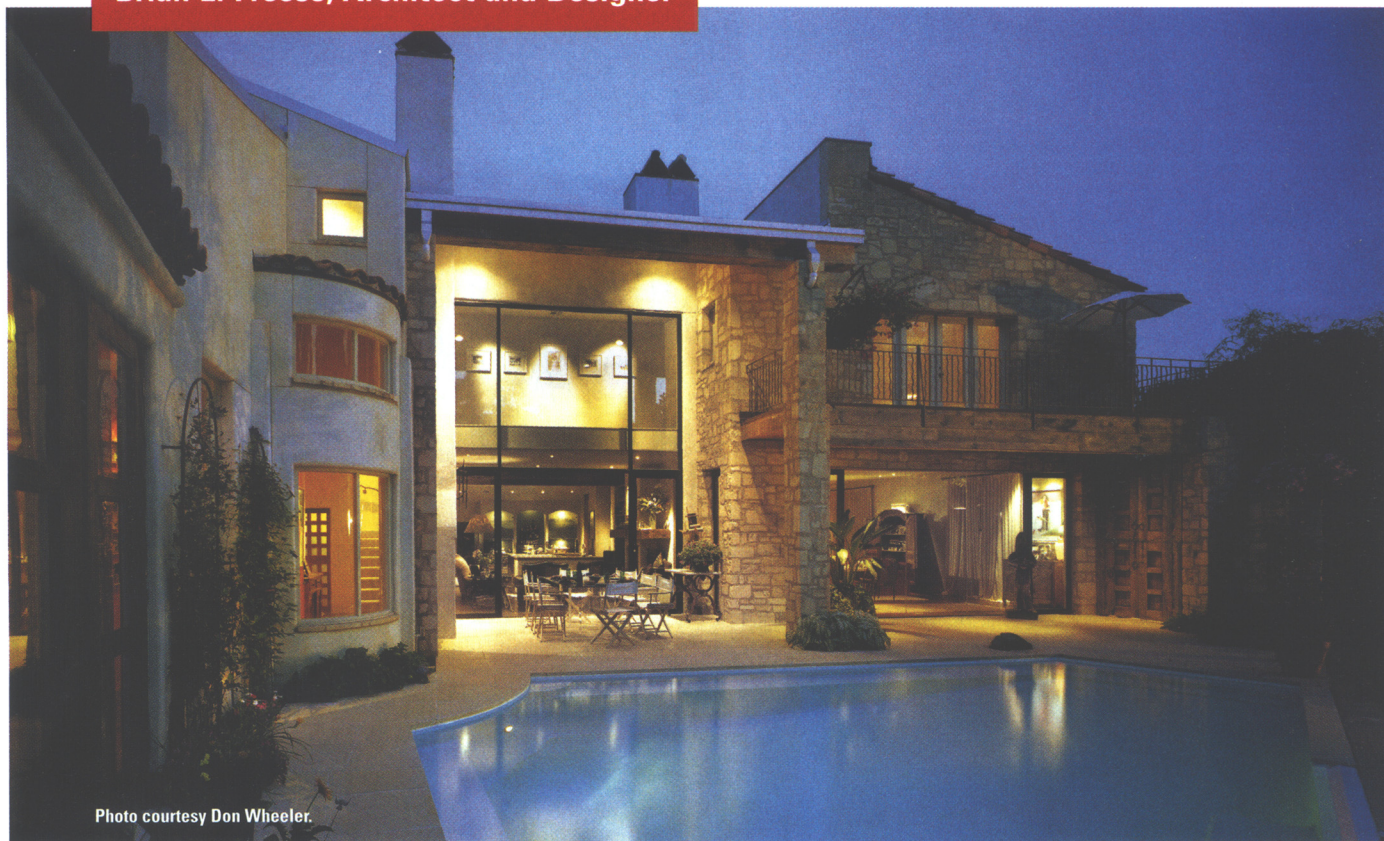


Photo courtesy Don Wheeler.

The courtyard is the most central space to the home with a dynamically shaped pool, ancient materials of stone, stucco and clay tile roofs, and large, open windows that look out from almost every room.

Stone for this home on a private drive in Tulsa was locally hand-cut and smoothed from discarded material collected from a quarry in Kansas. And large wooden doors welcome you to the home's contemporary courtyard.

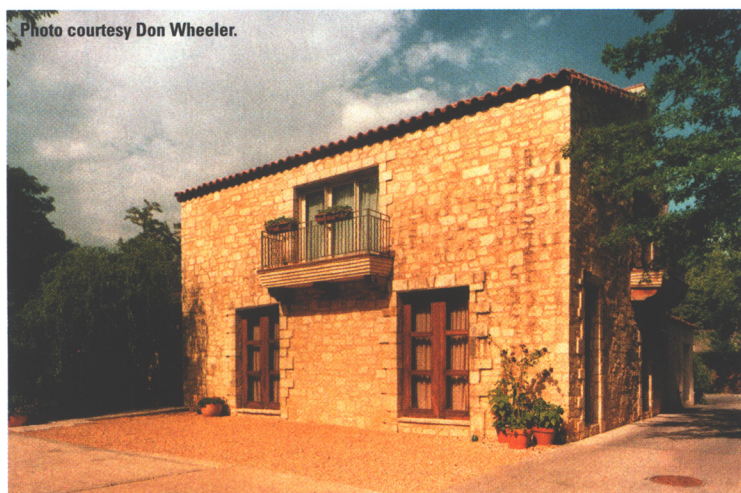


Photo courtesy Don Wheeler.

The style of this project was influenced or inspired by...

This home was a true collaboration with the clients and was inspired by our mutual love for nature and the out-of-doors, as well as the architecture of some of their favorite places in the world — places they have lived and visited, namely the south Texas hill country and the southwest U.S.

The final outcome...

The final outcome of this design effort is a home that has a strong visual connection to the natural surroundings, and is an integration of contemporary and somewhat ancient elements. The huge expanses of unframed glass blur the line between indoors and outdoors, and are themselves a contemporary application of glass.

