

# Splendor Through the Glass

## Less restricting:

Unencumbered views and the ability to seamlessly transition into assisted living were just two of the many reasons a couple chose their unique home.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF SPLENDIDO

Retired CPA/ investor Dick McLean laughs when asked if his art-filled villa helps him maintain his effervescent mood. The 78 year old indicates that the only “object of art” capable of that is his wife of 18 years, Julianne, which draws a huge smile from the target of his affection. The couple met and married in their native Seattle, a second marriage for both. The notorious gray of the Pacific Northwest didn’t bother the couple but they did choose to migrate to a second home in Palm Desert, California, for incrementally longer periods of time each year. Julianne, now retired from the medical field, says she and Dick eventually decided that the chill and damp of California winters wasn’t so great, and neither was the constant layer of fine sand covering every inch of their patio.

And so the hunt for a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) began. They chose Splendido at Rancho Vistoso, which is owned by Mather LifeWays, an Illinois-based non-profit company whose mandate is to enhance all aspects of senior residential living. “Most retirement communities are simply developments with individual homes,” says Julianne, “but we were looking for a community in which you could segue into assisted living on the same campus.” *Campus* is especially apropos to Splendido, where their neighbors include plenty of retired members of academia. “The residents are incredibly diverse and educated,” observes Julianne. “At first I thought I might be a bit low on



ABOVE The dining area features a chandelier of wrought iron and “seedy glass.”



the totem pole,” she adds with a laugh.

A “Southwest Totem” actually figures prominently in the couple’s Great Room. Created by Harry Bliss, a professor at UCSD, the soaring wooden talisman is painted in rich jewel tones. Julianne describes the piece as “funky and fun,” and occasionally turns it in the room to appreciate its varying design. The work was purchased at the renowned Coda Gallery in Palm Desert, and Julianne says she was longing for a residence with a vaulted ceiling to accommodate the 98-inch-tall piece. The custom armoires and cabinets from Rudy’s Custom Cabinets here in Tucson testify to Julianne’s assertion that the couple tries “to purchase from local artists.”

The McLeans have not completely abandoned their Pacific Northwest influences, however. The clean lines of Asian-influenced interior design blend aesthetically with Southwest character. The villa features a Japanese Tansu chest in the guest room and a print by Japanese calligrapher Toko Shinoda over the fireplace — in close proximity to a Western painting by Scottsdale artist Julian Soncco. Animal prints give the home an eclectic feel and include a cushioned bench upholstered in leopard print in the master bedroom. A vintage Eames lounge chair and ottoman in black leather also feature prominently in the master, a source of pride for Julianne, although Dick’s appreciation of the pieces is for their incredible comfort.

The largest and most awe-inspiring “art pieces” in the McLeans’ Great Room are the nine-and-a-half-foot windows that frame ever-changing views of the Catalinas. Their valley vantage point,



ABOVE Julianne and Dick McLean relax in their Splendido villa Great Room. The painting behind the couple is by Terry Masters. The vase on table is a Mata Ortiz vessel crafted by Jorge Quintana.

looking primarily southeast, allows the couple to experience monsoon storms as they develop and sweep across the landscape, sometimes as a somewhat ominous roiling black wall. The window tableau allows spectacular sunset viewing as well, and it is the palette of the desert sunsets that inspire many of the interior colors favored by the homeowners. The couple brought in Citron Paint and Design and chose 16 different colors for the home, from a buttery gold to a soft salmon. The ceiling is an almost imperceptible sage green and a chocolate brown gives dimension to the fireplace in the Great Room.

At first glance, the blue chosen for Dick’s office seems out of place in the color scheme, but Julianne points out, “That’s the color of the desert sky.” The McLeans brought with them most of their furnishings from their Palm Desert home, which indeed suit their new Sonoran Desert digs. When hunting for the dining area chandelier, the mandate was for a wrought-iron piece but with lightness to it. An iron-framed mirror that Julianne designed herself and had made in Mexico hangs in the dining area, giving the illusion of space to the 2010-square-foot villa.

The McLeans say they appreciate Splendido’s on-campus dining options, but Julianne still enjoys cooking. Custom-stained alder wood pullout drawers replaced original cabinetry in the cathedral-ceilinged kitchen, while a monochromatic color scheme makes the area warm and inviting. A single lava lamp sits on the counter, adding a touch of whimsy.

The couple is often out and about. Julianne walks each morning for two to three miles and Dick participates in water volleyball matches three times a week in the community’s saline pool. And when not in the pool or on the path, the McLeans can be found venturing to attractions such as Biosphere 2, Bisbee, Kartchner Caverns or catching a Broadway In Tucson production. Coming home to their delightful villa, though, is the best attraction of all. **HG**



LEFT Large windows dominate the Great Room. The couple replaced carpeting with hardwood flooring.