

Modern Masters

In preparation for an Austin parade of homes tour, architect Luis Jauregui led his team of designers and builders in creating a representation of classical architecture and design in the modern world.

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Architecture and interior design by Jauregui Architecture Interiors Construction



Opening spread: The formal living and dining rooms designed by Luis Jauregui and his design-build firm evoke traditional and contemporary influences. A painting by Roi James entitled *Faith, Hope, and Love 2* hangs above the mantel. The home features James's work prominently. "I feel that his artwork reflects tremendously what we're trying to do in this house and the spirit of this house," says Jauregui. "His artwork precisely represents a combination of very classic themes together with some very modern themes—it's not just in the subject matters as much as it is also its execution."

Above: The vaulted gallery, which opens to the front terrace, holds several large Peruvian canvases.

Opposite: The architecture of the master bath repeats the form of the tub that is the room's focal point.

The origin of architect Luis Jauregui's surname is almost too fitting: The name comes from the Basque *jaur*, "the lord," and *egui*, "castle." But Jauregui's claim to architecture is not merely etymological. Nor is it purely theoretical, though he speaks eloquently about the natural progression his designs have undergone through the years. Jauregui has lived up to his name through careful study and meticulous execution over the course of nearly three decades.

Though Jauregui and his design-build firm, Jauregui Architecture Interiors Construction, have maintained an impressive presence in Austin since the early '80s, one of the team's latest creations is a bit of a departure from the classically inspired work for which they are known and admired. When the architect began to prepare for the 2006 Parade of Homes tour presented by the Home Builders Association of Greater Austin, he considered the precedent set by his many parade homes to appear on the annual tour since 1991.

"This is an evolution," he says. "I think back as our company has matured and started looking to do the right combination of wow and exciting people about our spaces, not just through the use of dollars, but actually through the use of good, careful design. That's why these experiences are a great exercise for us, because it makes us reach very hard in every area of the house." Knowing this, Jauregui's clients granted his firm nearly free reign to create a home that would present their newest design ideas not only to them, but also to Parade visitors.





Above: A seamless window in the kitchen creates the feeling that the space is open to the outdoors.

Below: The home's orientation allows breezes from the greenbelt valley below to cool outdoor living spaces year-round. Jauregui designed a poolside water feature to integrate travertine and stainless steel, representative of traditional and modern building materials.



The home draws upon a modern appreciation of openness while recalling the classical and Old World-inspired architecture that is de rigueur in today's Texas homes, says the architect. This design hybrid yields an exceptionally livable design that lacks the stuffiness of some classical elements while also refusing to veer in the direction of impractical modern inventions.

"I personally love very much contemporary art and contemporary architecture," says Jauregui, citing architects Luis Barragán and Ricardo Legorreta as two of his contemporary influences. However, he admits, "I feel that architects ... we have a tendency to be too puristic sometimes." With this home, he set out to "create a nice marriage between the classic and the modern to be more appealing not only to me, but, I feel, to people in general."

Jauregui's mission for the home is nowhere more evident than in the kitchen, breakfast and family areas that occupy a substantial portion of the vast first floor. He describes the space as barn-like because of effect of the vaulted ceiling supported by massive beams that unify the three areas. "Kitchens have had a tendency to become too cocoon-ish," he says. "I think it's been an influence of the Old World look that's been pursued so much and I think that it's probably gotten to a point where that is taking that space to some extremes that make it not as cheerful a place in some instances."

The space avoids feeling cavernous in spite of high ceilings and large architectural features including a row of stone pillars and a 60-inch-wide kitchen island. Its warmth is due to the design team's skillful use of texture in furniture upholstery and in a mosaic that spans the cooktop's width. Eight contiguous patio doors and a 12-foot-by-6-foot seamless window over the sink allow sunlight and greenbelt views to flood the space with color.

Capturing the landscape correctly is often the most elusive element of home design, says Jauregui. From indoors, he seeks to frame landscaping with windows and with a room's shape. Entering the master suite, a curved and coffered ceiling complements a private glimpse of an interior courtyard. In the adjacent master bath, a circular tub—chosen as a unique sculptural piece that would create rounded lines in all three dimensions—is aligned with the curved ceiling's axis and appears to hover above the floor.

A series of contemporary windows glazed with stained glass create a motif of water and earth picked up in the horizon by the Hill Country landscape.

Symbiosis between landscaping and architecture is always foremost in Jauregui's mind. For more than 12 years he has worked with landscape architect Peter Fleury, owner of Oasis Gardens, to create gardens that will still work well with the architecture when mature. "I see too often landscapes that have been designed so many times strictly on a floor-plan level and don't study very well the three-dimensional aspect," says Jauregui. "The landscaping might hide some architectural elements that the owner and the architect work very hard, and spend a lot of money, to execute."

Water features integrated into the home's outdoor spaces introduce the "juxtaposition of the things that we were trying to do throughout the house, that of the modern and the old," says Jauregui. A contemporary, spherical fountain surrounded by radiating gravel beds defines the main entry, which is otherwise classically inspired. The outdoor living area includes a negative-edge pool with a water feature designed by Jauregui to further unify his modern and classic influences. He says, "That was another combination of very rugged, Old World-type materials, such as this travertine texture and the very contemporary and clean lines of the stainless steel."

Even in the wake of overwhelming positive response to the home from his clients and from Parade of Homes visitors, Jauregui is careful to maintain his technique of careful study and sensitivity to intelligent design. He hopes, though, that this project will generate heightened interest in an important architectural trend. "My goal is always to establish here in Austin a new statement and something to be a fresh statement. I really feel that modern architecture continues to find its place more and more—I really think it's time to welcome modern in the American home without necessarily going to the unsuccessful extremes that we've seen in the past." AH&L

