

STORY BY LANCE SHEARER

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Andy and Alicia Hopping add up the delights of their Mediterra home.



A trio of openings, including one with a geometric pattern fashioned of steel, articulates the space between great room and kitchen.

AT RIGHT: The Hoppings' floorplan is airy and open, while still providing private areas for owners and guests.



Andy Hopping had two passions as he completed his education and prepared to begin his professional life — well, three, if you count his longstanding love affair with Alicia, his wife of 37 years.

Hopping was and has remained deeply committed to his music, playing his way through school until he eventually emerged with an MBA from UCLA, establishing his own record label, writing hundreds of songs and producing seven studio albums of his music.

He still has a band, Old 41, with other Mediterra residents he met on the golf course, and they play parties and club events. But, from an ROI (return on investment) point of view, Andy realized that the numbers game was going to be more lucrative than his musical endeavors. ▶▶

So he forged a career in the financial world, working for several Fortune 500 companies before retiring as executive vice president and CFO at Jackson National Life. They retired to Mediterra in North Naples, living in a very nice house — but then Alicia found the dream home they didn't know they'd been looking for.

"London Bay Homes was building this as a model. Alicia found the home and said, 'Omgod, this is going to be crazy good,' and we loved everything about it," Andy says. "To begin with, we're situated back on this private cul-de-sac, with preserve land and a lake around us, so we'll never have someone take our views away. This house just has an energy — it has momentum."

He extolls the oversized rectilinear pool, "big enough to swim laps in," that serves as the centerpiece for a spacious lanai area, with shallow sun shelf and separate spa, a water feature and a gas firepit providing an exotic backdrop for evening entertaining.

"It's the most spectacular backyard they ever built," Andy says of London Bay Homes.

The home abounds with distinctive touches, from the massive — and hurricane-proof, Andy says — slab of a front door to the way it combines an open floorplan with private spaces for homeowners plus a variety of guests.



PHOTO BY LANCE SHEARER





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Andy and Alicia Hopping in their Mediterra home. • The Hoppings' residence sits on a private cul-de-sac in Mediterra with preserve areas and a lake providing privacy. • The open floating staircase, with multiple landings and white oak treads and railings, is a focal point of the house. • In the kitchen, white oak and pewter-finished Shaker-style cabinets feature brushed nickel hardware. • The master bath tub offers a panoramic view of never-to-be-built-upon preserve area through floor-to-ceiling fixed glass.



But the piece de resistance has to be the stairway. With two-story fixed glass lighting the space and providing a view as you ascend, the staircase is a case study in sleek and minimalistic modern-industrial aesthetic, a multiple-landing floating affair with European white oak treads and railings, a steel powder-coated bronze-finish newel, and a stainless-steel cable baluster system.

At the top, you are in a separate world, with third and fourth bedrooms and baths, plus a bonus room,

loft and wet bar, which Alicia says are perfect for visits from their son and daughter, giving them plenty of space and privacy while still close at hand. The downstairs guest suite with its own morning kitchen, like the master suite on the ground floor, is where her mother stays.

Andy took a walk-in closet on the second floor for his music room, with guitars and electronic recording equipment — although he does have a separate offsite studio — and he says the elevator that otherwise doesn't

get a lot of use is ideal for taking musical gear up and down. He also has a baby grand piano at the bottom of the staircase.

The in-house LBH architecture team provided architecture design, with interior design by Romanza Interior Design, an LBH subsidiary. Senior design director Michael Scott took the lead on the home's interior.

"Like many nearby homes, this one has a Mediterranean flair on the outside, but for the interior, we took a more modern approach," Michael says. ▶▶

| OPEN DOOR |



“It’s bright, but very warm. I tried to approach this with a different look from the white on white on white that everyone wants.” The brick used on several interior walls is a warm white — “the color is called ‘chalk,’ and European white oak flooring unifies the study and master bedroom wing.”

One of Alicia’s favorite things in the house, she says, is the room that isn’t there. “There’s no formal dining room. We’ve found we never use them, anyway.”

Instead, a trio of openings, including one with a geometric pattern fashioned of steel, articulates the space between great room and kitchen. Adjoining the generous kitchen island is a table for eight, in what the floorplan calls the “café,” which then opens seamlessly out onto the 48-foot by 20-foot, outdoor recreation area, large enough to swallow up an enormous bar with dual televisions — for Michigan State games, Andy says — and an oversized linear glass rock fireplace.

The lady of the house also enjoys the kitchen setup, which allows the cook to be part of the action when entertaining but keeps utility areas tucked away. White oak and pewter-finished Shaker-style cabinets feature brush nickel hardware. A backsplash of smoky rectangular tile complements taupe beveled-edge Pompeii Quartz countertops, while on the opposing wall, cabinetry conceals the refrigerator, houses dual ovens and provides

ample storage space. Behind a series of openings at the rear of the kitchen, the laundry room, kitchen office, pantry and wine room are unobtrusive yet easy to access.

The island provides additional room for meal prep and casual seating with backless stools, while a prominent hood with chrome accents sits atop the range. The flooring is crosscut silver travertine, left slightly rough on the covered entry and outdoor living area, and polished to a high sheen on the inside.

The Hoppings have gone through designing the architecture and interior of a home from scratch, including one on Michigan’s Walloon Lake that was featured in *Traditional Home* magazine, but this time, they let loose and went with the flow.

In just one example of how interior designer and homeowners achieved a mind meld, leading to what all involved called a harmonious and hassle-free design process, another of the Hoppings’ passions is collecting art glass. Some of the larger pieces stand on their own, but the built-in shelves in the great room have integral up-lights, providing an exotic and colorful accent when the artworks are displayed there.

“I just trusted Michael,” Alicia says. “It was a leap of faith, but we couldn’t be happier.”

“If I built another house,” Andy says, “I’d copy this.” **G**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: An open “café” with a table for eight, open to the kitchen, takes the place of a formal dining room. • The upstairs bonus room offers separate lounging areas for guests and views over the nature preserve. • The expansive pool area is worthy of a resort hotel. • In the powder room, the décor takes on a darker hue.