

CONTEMPORARY STONE & TILE DESIGN

A **bnp** PUBLICATION

www.cstdmag.com | FALL 2018

Residential Design
LEED-Certified Installation

Connecting Stone to the Surrounding Landscape

Using the local topography, the architects and builder designed a Texan home to work with the pond and slope on the property

by Jason Kamery

Photos ©Dror Baldinger

Located in the generally flat terrain of Dallas, TX, sits a house on a unique parcel of land. The homeowners wanted to transform the property and the house to be able to host friends, workout in and primarily live on the first floor. "This urban house is on this sort of funny little street in Central Dallas," said James LaRue, principal of LaRue Architects. "It has a little pond in the back of the property and the property comes to a point at the pond. It's shaped like

a slice of pizza. They are also empty nesters and primarily live on the first floor. We knew they liked to entertain, so we came up with the idea to focus on the pond for the design of the building."

The homeowners wanted a modern, sophisticated, yet warm and inviting retreat for their central Dallas home. Most of the house is designed for livability primarily on the main floor, with two additional bedrooms on the upper floor. There is also a detached guesthouse where many game-watching parties take



The homeowners wanted a modern, sophisticated, yet warm and inviting retreat for their central Dallas home.

place. An exercise room and a 25-meter lap pool are essential design elements for the active homeowners. The floor plan is open and great for entertaining; the kitchen, dining, living and wine room flow together, while remaining separate from the private master suite. The office is adjacent to these spaces via a beautiful gallery, where the serene view

is best experienced. "This house is unique for Dallas because you don't expect to see this pond back there. The site also has a significant slope down toward the pond," said Emily Haydon, project manager at LaRue Architects. "This is something we have in Austin, but something you don't typically see in Dallas."

For Barry Buford, president of Buford-Hawthorne LP, the slope was one of the biggest challenges and most unique aspects of the job. "I think that's why the client hired Jim LaRue to draw the house, which was a good thing," said Buford. "It's something he deals a lot with in Austin. It was extremely helpful to have him on the project. While



The floor plan is open and great for entertaining; the kitchen, dining, living and wine room flow together, while remaining separate from the private master suite.

the flat work was relatively standard, there was just a lot of grade changes so we had to map it all out in advance. This was a project that needed a lot of planning in the beginning for it to work.”

The master bedroom is on the opposite side of the foyer, and has a private suite-like feel. The exterior materials flow to the inside of the house to blur the distinction of interior and exterior. The main exterior stone has a beautiful texture that not only runs through to the foyer, but behind the wall of the bed in the master bedroom as well. Not only is the stone on the vertical surfaces, but it is located horizontally as well,” said LaRue. “It has an interlocking granite driveway. There is just a lot of masonry in the project. The stone [the homeowner] picked really works well with the concrete. It’s a beautiful look. The project used 90 tons of Ozark Blue from Arkansas. The client had picked the stone with her dad. It was a big deal for her. The stone was used all throughout the building on the inside.”

The 4,600-square-foot house features 3 ½-inch high, rough-face, random-linked, back-mortared Ozark chopped running from the outside of the building to the inside. The trapezoidal-shaped lot allowed for unique design opportunities, resulting in both the house and additional landscape features to be nestled in site specific ways. The site is long — wide in the front and narrow in the rear — forcing a perspective to the small pond beyond. Because there



“This urban house is on this sort of funny little street in Central Dallas,” said James LaRue, principal of LaRue Architects. “It has a little pond in the back of the property and the property comes to a point at the pond. It’s shaped like a slice of pizza.”



The project used 90 tons of Ozark Blue from Arkansas. The client picked the stone with her dad because it was a big deal for her.

are houses on either side of the lot, the residence focuses both inward and lengthwise. The lot slightly slopes from the front to the rear, allowing for a generous crawlspace, exercise room below, various outdoor entertaining spaces, a 25-meter lap pool, and a detached guesthouse that marries itself to the lawn, directly engaging itself to the pond. But for the design team, this was some of the most challenging work. “The site is just so narrow,” said LaRue. “So how do you get a view out of all these rooms to

the pond on such a narrow site? The property starts reasonably wide in the front, but gets skinnier and skinnier. Breaking down the house into two wings that are skinny and connecting with a glass link is how we solved that. Connecting that all together was the biggest challenge and getting the meaningful spaces to have that fuse. She liked to see people coming over, and part of the challenge was to see the driveway from the kitchen without the kitchen being the closest part of the street.”

The clients also wanted an 25-meter lap pool in the back to fit on the lot. “Relating the house to the pool and all of that to the site we went back and forth with wing angle one or wing angle two,” said Haydon. “We also went back and forth on pool rotation as well. In the end, the house is really designed to work with the pool. With the pool, we figured out how we would extend it and integrate it and decided on this acrylic panel of the end of the pool to the pond. The landscape architect integrated the pool extremely well.”



The clients also wanted an 25-meter lap pool in the back to fit on the lot. "Relating the house to the pool and all of that to the site we went back and forth with wing angle one or wing angle two," said Emily Haydon. "We also went back and forth on pool rotation as well."

Buford also remembers the challenges with ordering the stone. "There was so much of it that we had to get it ordered pretty far in advance," said Buford. "That was the planning for that and then it all sat on concrete decks. So we had to make sure all that concrete work was the right level to accommodate the stone. There were lights in the stone that had to be put in well in advance. There was a planning process for that. We had our stone guy bring it in his yard first so that it was ready for us. So he

actually cut a lot of slabs into the flatwork pieces with his own equipment and then he was ready to go. Better to stage it and get it locally and stage it in the yard and have it ready to go."

Construction of the project lasted about 18 months. It took less than a year to design and the project in its entirety took roughly three years. "They really love it," said LaRue. "Friends have gone to parties there and it has been well received, and published a couple of times. They love it. It's really beautiful, and

it's very unique — and unique for Dallas in the materials and the architecture. It's a nice piece and a little art piece. We have sent clients to look at it over the years and it's been a positive experience." **CSTD**

Private Resident Dallas, TX

ARCHITECT: LaRue Architects, Austin, TX

BUILDER: BufordHawthorne Builders LP,
Dallas, TX



"I think that's why the client hired Jim LaRue to draw the house, which was a good thing," said Barry Buford. "It's something he deals a lot with in Austin. It was extremely helpful to have him on the project. While the flat work was relatively standard, there was just a lot of grade change so we had to map it all out in advance. This was a project that needed a lot of planning in the beginning for it to work."

