

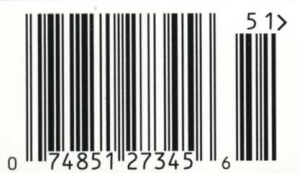
# AUSTIN HOME

Austin & The Hill Country

THE SHAPE OF WATER  
This Curved  
Glenlake Home  
Makes Waves  
With Its Ocean  
Theme

HOOP DREAMS  
A Spanish Oaks  
Dwelling Features  
An Underground  
Sports Court

SPRING 2020 US \$5.95



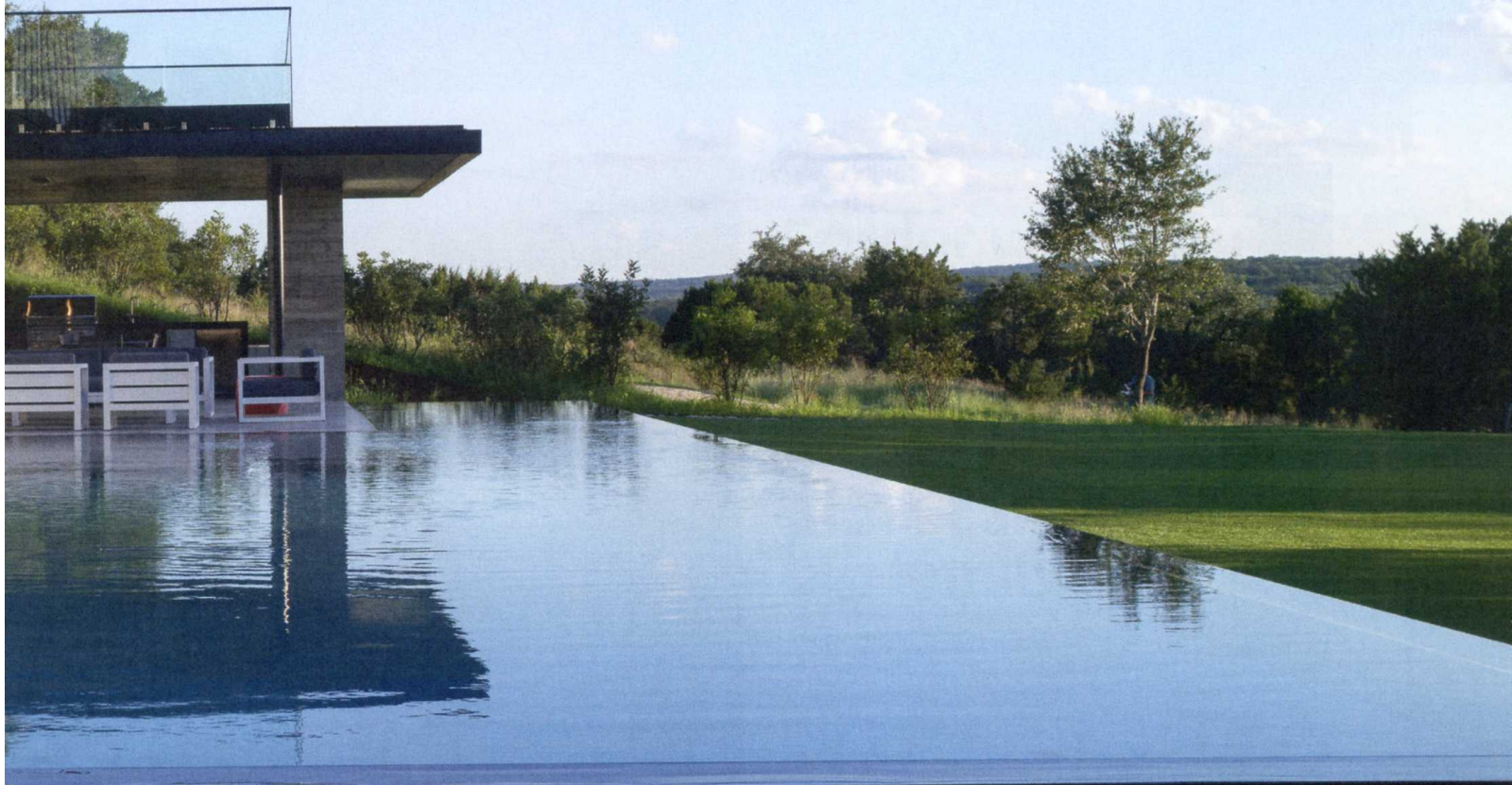
By **LAUREN JONES**

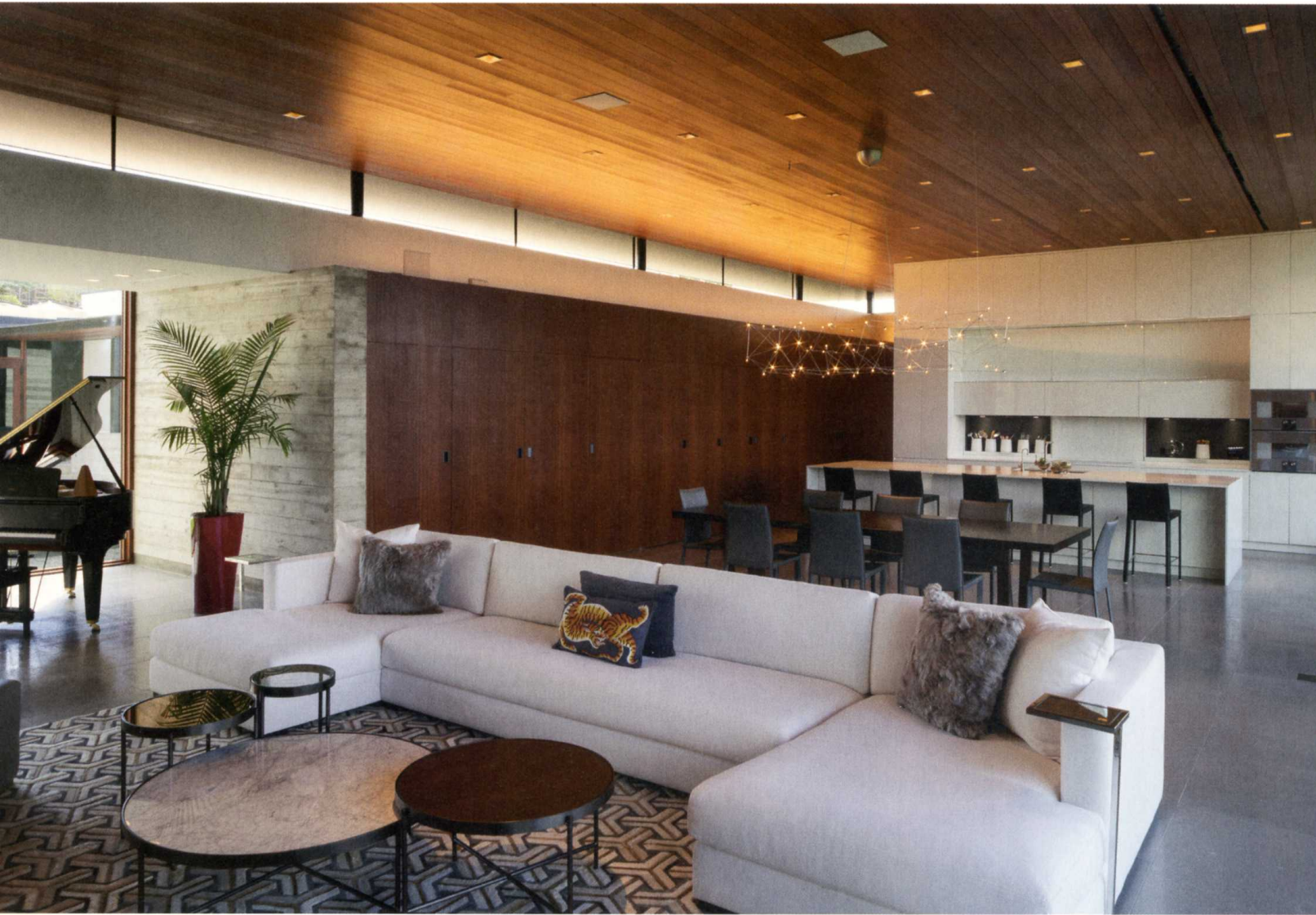
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# Space Jam



**A WEST AUSTIN HOME WITH A  
SUNKEN SPORTS COURT, GYM,  
AND LAP POOL SUITS A HIGH-  
ENERGY FAMILY OF FIVE**





# B

## **“Build me a work of art.”**

That was the directive one Spanish Oaks couple had when they hired architect Jay Corder.

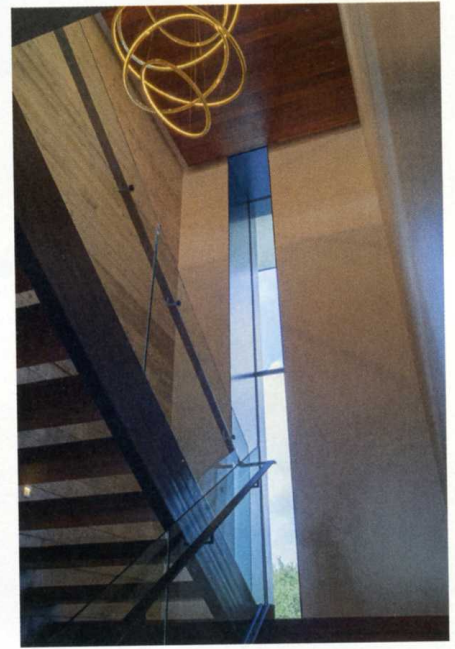
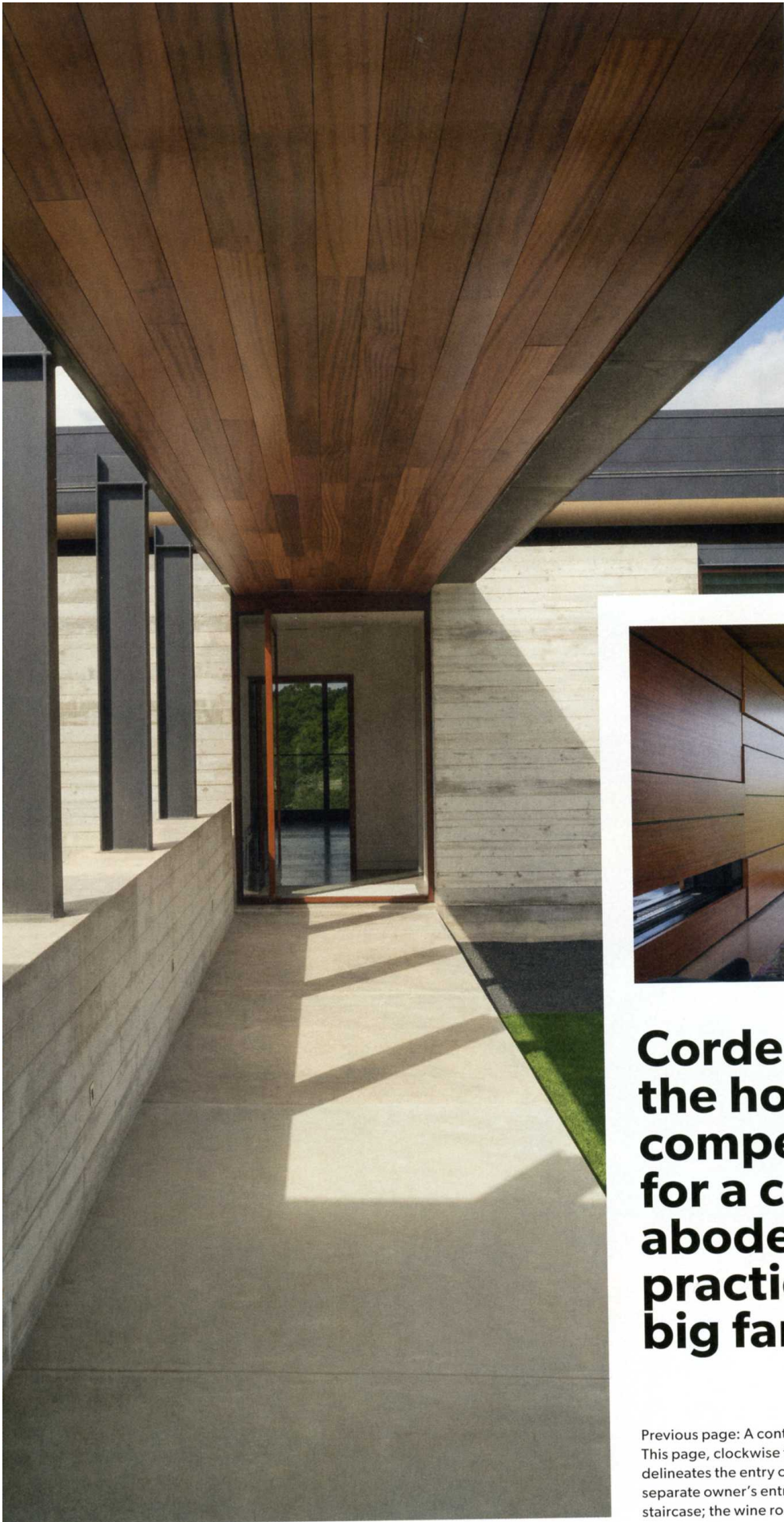
“I found a spec architectural drawing that Jay had out there, and I absolutely loved his style, and so I reached out to him,” the homeowner says.

The couple was drawn to his modern sensibilities but also found that Corder understood their competing desires for a contemporary abode that was still practical enough for a big family. They have three boys, ages 7, 9, and 11, and wanted a home that would make sense for the long-term.

Corder, who has run his own practice, Jay Corder Architect, for the last 15 years, specializes in designing large, high-end custom residential properties. For this project, he aimed for a design that spoke quietly from the street, maximized the lot’s views, and had plenty of indoor/outdoor connections and natural light. Clean stucco, natural concrete, glass, and mahogany would be the perfect contemporary palette from which to draw.

Besides an exterior that would be nothing short of a modern masterpiece, the homeowners had another imperative for the home: a larger-than-life sports court. The catch? It had to be indoors.

“People think the weather is perfect in Austin, but in the summer, it can be 106 degrees, and an outdoor sports court would hardly get used,” the homeowner says. “In the winter, it can be too cold, and two out of three of our kids have bad allergies, so being outside in the spring is also an issue.”

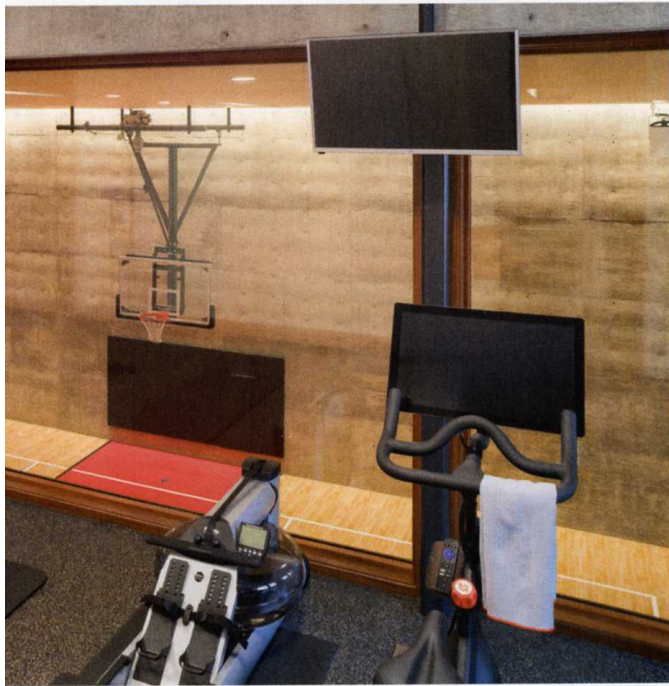


**Corder understood the homeowners' competing desires for a contemporary abode that was still practical enough for a big family.**

Previous page: A continuous clerestory unifies the living spaces. This page, clockwise from top left: A cantilevered breezeway delineates the entry courtyard and connects the garage to a separate owner's entry near the kitchen; the steel-and-glass staircase; the wine room has a fireplace and walk-in wine storage.



This page: Skylights bring ample daylight to the underground gymnasium, which is the activity center of the house. Next page: A fully appointed workout room situated on the lower level of the residence overlooks the underground gymnasium.



**Built underground, the sports court has become the favorite spot in the home. Today, the boys can be found picking up a game or two after school, while Mom and Dad watch overhead from the elevated gym.**

The solution was to build an underground court decked out with skylights. From the street, it's completely hidden beneath the slope of the property line.

"There was no way the HOA was going to let him have an indoor basketball court separate from the house, so we thought, why not bury it?" Corder says.

When the 40-foot hole for the court was first being dug, both the architect and homeowner believed that there was a low possibility it was actually going to be built. Not only did the project succeed, but it's become the favorite spot in the home. Today, the boys can be found picking up a game or two after school, while Mom and Dad watch overhead from the elevated gym.

To suit the high-energy family, Corder went even further with their sports complex by installing a 25-meter pool with a designated lap lane.

"It's half an Olympic length," the homeowner says. "My wife is into triathlons."

In addition to its practical purpose, the boys use the pool every day when the weather is nice. It's also a design element that juxtaposes the concrete-and-glass home.

Another unusual ask was for a sound-proofed jam room. The family is quite musical, and it would also serve as another space the boys could turn to when they wanted to have friends over—or have more privacy as they reach high school and college age.

The entire lower portion of the home acts as the main amenity hub and is the ultimate relaxation spot for swimming, for summertime gatherings, or to enjoy a full-court game. Moving inside, the home has been thoughtfully laid out to take full advantage of its oversized floor plan. "Despite its size, it's very much a functional family home," the homeowner says.

As the family plans to make the 12,000-square-foot house their permanent residence, Corder also considered how their lives will change over time during the original design process. He decided to organize the space in a "linear way, so each connects both horizontally and vertically and there's a centrality to it," he says.

The homeowners have their master bedroom on one side, opposite of the boys' domain, but can easily get downstairs to their bedrooms when necessary. The main family room is adjacent to the pool, and there's an outdoor casita for guests and in-laws.

Another evolution in the design was creating a wine room in lieu of a formal dining room. While the family are big entertainers, the dining room at their former Bee Caves home was rarely used. "A house this size certainly needs a formal dining room, but we have designed an experience that is a compromise," Corder says.

They decided to create a wine room with a double-sided fireplace and club chairs, the ideal spot to enjoy a pre-dinner cocktail or leisurely conversation with friends. "If someone wanted to sit in there for dinner and make it a formal space, they could. But, like the rest of the house, it has some flexibility in terms of its functioning," he says.

In addition to the wine room, Corder built the family a sunken fire pit as another area they could host guests on evenings when the weather allowed.

"It's a great place for socializing," the homeowner says. "I threw the idea out there to Jay, and the team came up with the idea of a linear slot fire pit. You sit at the ground level and then dangle your feet down. We fully trusted him in executing our artistic vision."

And that trust paid off, as Corder delivered on the family's request: building a home that is, indeed, a work of art. ♣