

LIVING LARGE IN LAS VEGAS

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM TONY GRANT AND ASSOCIATES MEETS THE CHALLENGE OF TURNING A YMCA-SIZED ADDITION INTO AN INTIMATE PLAYGROUND FOR A LARGE FAMILY.

- > Interview by Brooke Lange
- > Photography by Leon Kermani

Home Entertainment: *This is a huge home recreation center—a 6,000-square-foot addition to a 10,000-square-foot home in Las Vegas. With its swimming pool, motorized glass roof and lounge, it's like having a private stadium and sports bar. Can you shed some light on the homeowners' vision for this addition?*

Tony Grant: Our firm was established in 1981 and we've never had a client who entertains on the scale of these clients. Their large, extended family lives in Las Vegas, as do their many friends and business associates, so they host numerous gatherings throughout the year—Thanksgiving, Christmas, Super Bowl, birthdays, graduations, business get-togethers and the like.

Although the existing residence is 10,000 square feet in size, it didn't fit their entertaining needs. So they decided to build an immense space for large-scale entertaining that was special for adult gatherings, and for the times when their children and their friends are using the space.

The entire family—including the three daughters and their many friends—uses the indoor pool immensely. And they almost always have the gabled, 30-foot-by-40-foot remote-controlled glass roof open when they're using the space, whether it's day or night.

HE: *Let's talk about the overall design you conceived for this setting. I'm guessing the design is somewhat of an extension of the home's overall look?*

TG: Actually the addition is somewhat of a departure. The owners love Italy and travel there on occasion, so it became obvious that the design vernacular would be Tuscan-influenced. However, during the design of the addition, much of the existing residence also was redesigned and remodeled. So for the residence itself, we designed new cabinetry, flooring and furnishings to complement the elements we used in the pool and recreation addition.

HE: *If you cut off the ceiling, this environment easily could double as an outdoor resort-style setting that revolves around a pool and a bar. It looks like you used your hospitality design background to design this space—breaking it down into numerous conversation groupings.*



Opening spread and top left: Four large handmade chandeliers, along with two 6-foot-tall candelabras—one on each side of the pool—provide serene evening lighting. A Crestron Pro2 processor controls all of the area's AV, lighting, pool and spa elements, as well as the sliding-glass roof, and the security and HVAC systems. A Crestron QM-WMC computer interface allows DJs to display computer graphics on the projection screen, as well as on any flat-panel monitors throughout the home.

In the bar, left, lightly grained Calacata Regina marble from Walker Zanger covers the countertops. The MacBook Pro laptop set-up works with a Crestron XPanel to control the AV, pool and lighting in the atrium, as well as other automation systems.

The media room, above, sports a 65-inch plasma TV and a 7.1 surround-sound system that includes a Crestron CNX-DAP8 processor; AV and other functions are controlled by a TPS-4L in-wall touchscreen and a TPMX-8X wireless panel (on the table).

TG: That's exactly what we did. The parents are very sensitive to their daughters' social needs, so they wanted the addition to be semi-private—not completely separate and not completely removed from the gathering at hand. The kids can be with their friends comfortably while the parents entertain.

The pool serves as a physical and social separation element, with the game room/lounge on one side of the pool and the bar on the other side.

The kitchen, which is open to the bar area, allows for lively entertaining and conversation. The dining area, opposite the water feature, seats 20. The iron chandeliers—each suspended from their own recessed, hand-rubbed wood coffer—cast a beautiful glow on the space.

HE: *If you remove all the furnishings, this is a rather cold room with 33-foot-tall ceilings and light-colored walls and limestone flooring. How did you warm the space so nicely?*

TG: What you have to understand is how unusual this space is. The main open area—not including the game room/lounge, bar, kitchen, laundry/changing rooms—is 80 feet by 42 feet. At 3,360 square feet, it's a massive room.

The challenge was to create a sense of intimacy. First we provided an immediate focal point that takes your breath away when you enter—a simple, 11-foot-high glass mosaic wall of cascading water that falls vertically into the hot tub. It's backed with a 21-foot-tall window wall draped with off-white, tie-back [draperies].

HE: *And the lounge area?*

TG: The large plasma TV is recessed into the center of the stone over-mantel. To further separate the lounge visually, we incorporated hand-distressed wood planks into the flooring with sections of limestone. The lounge walls are bathed in large pieces of straight-set limestone.

This area also incorporates a custom-



designed-and-fabricated sectional and two 9-foot-long limestone benches that “grow” out of the floor. These double as seating for lounge and pool guests who are wearing wet suits. In addition, two imported, hand-painted wood benches flank the lounge’s limestone fireplace.

HE: How many people can sit at the bar? Looks it’s designed as a semicircle on one side and a square on the other.

TG: The bar is 11 feet by 14 feet and is convex on the pool side to contrast with the straight lines of the pool and open area. The custom millwork houses every conceivable appliance needed to serve a crowd of up to 25 guests.

HE: Is the owner a big sports fan? Why are there so many TVs in such a small space?

TG: He is a huge sports fan and always entertains during big sporting events. The remote-controlled pool-area projection screen, which drops down in front of the water feature, can be seen from anywhere in the space. Plasma TVs are mounted on the walls throughout the lounge and seating areas, as well.

The family uses the drop-down pool-area screen to watch movies or television while reclining on the chaise lounges.

HE: How did the convertible glass roof concept come about? Being able to slide back the ceiling with the touch of a button must be magical when taking in a movie at night, or entertaining.

TG: The skylight is the brainchild of the owners. They wanted the best of both worlds—to enjoy Las Vegas’ great weath-

er, but not be overwhelmed by it during the hottest part of the summer. It’s unbelievable to experience the interior ambient lighting mixed with the moon and stars when the skylight is open.

HE: This entertainment zone also has a wine cellar and tasting room—where are they located in reference to the pool area?

TG: Adjacent to the kitchen and bar is a glass mosaic-tiled rotunda that houses a circular staircase, which leads downstairs to the wine cellar and tasting room.

In the cellar area, natural rock—no man-made stone allowed!—covers the walls, lending a touch of authenticity. The solid-wood coffered ceiling is fabricated by hand, as is the cellar cabinetry. Rough, hand-hewn wood planks intermingle with the aged stone flooring.

The two 46-inch LCD displays in the wine cellar are controlled by Crestron TPMC-4X and TPS-4L wireless and in-wall panels. The cellar seating area, tucked behind full-height sliding-glass doors, stores oak barrels of private-label wine, produced at the owners’ private vineyard just one state away.

HE: Back upstairs, where do those three arched doors—opposite the pool—lead to?

TG: Those three doors lead to the main residence. Originally, this wall was the back wall of the home.

The three hand-wrought-iron-and-glass doors create an open atmosphere between the two structures, even when the doors closed. When entertaining, all

three doors remain open so guests can intermingle between the two areas.

HE: There’s obviously the potential for a lot of activity—splashing about in the pool, watching a movie in the lounge, enjoying a football game at the bar. What’s it like to be in this space at the height of activity?

TG: That’s entertaining!

HE: Any closing remarks?

TG: The space is used exactly how it was conceived: as an entertainment and gathering place like no other. I recently met with the client and I asked them how they are enjoying the space. Their answer: “Every single day!”

TECH TALK: The Roll-back Rooftop For Leon Kermani, president of Big Boss Productions in Henderson, NV, the key to the success of this project is a combination of approaches gleaned from the residential and professional installation worlds. This is true especially in the indoor pool/spa area, with its huge open spaces, semi-aquatic environment and stadium-style motorized-glass ceiling (the operation of which is governed by the same Crestron control system that handles the home’s distributed A/V).

It takes a lot of power to push an image across such a large space to the 400-pound, drop-down Da-Lite screen above the pool, so Kermani couldn’t rely on the typical kind of projector used in a small home theater. Instead he opted for **Panasonic’s PT-D7700U-K**, a large-venue dual-lamp DLP designed for auditoriums and retail spaces and the like—which offers 7,000 lumens of light output and a liquid-cooled optical engine to ensure long life. “I’m shooting the image across this giant space—45 or 50 feet,” Kermani says, “and it still looks intense!”

The area also sports a mix of indoor and outdoor speakers: eight **Sonance Mariner 63 outdoor speakers** and three **Sonance Cinema Two.SUB in-wall subwoofer systems**, for a total of six subwoofer enclosures. “We did what I felt was a unique design with the subs,” Kermani says. “I took an outboard crossover system that let me sum my mono sub inputs so that I could run them directly into a 12-channel amp that

had a mono input. [That allowed me] to power all six subwoofers, three of them with one side of this 12x60 amp [Crestron’s **CNAMPX-12X60 12 Channel Multi-Room Amplifier**, which was used because of space restrictions]. The other half was used for the other three, with some other amplification used for the balance of the interior and exterior speakers.”

Kermani and his team also used the Crestron control system to avoid the kind of problems that can arise when water and electronics mix. “We’re in constant communication with the pool control equipment, so we know if the water spillway around the pool is engaged,” he says. “That’s important because when it’s under full pressure, it sprays water upward and has the potential to get the screen wet, which we obviously don’t want.”

“So we have two scenarios: If you’re watching a movie and turn on the spillway, the screen automatically retracts. Conversely, if the spillway is on and you select a source that needs the projector, then the water spillway automatically turns off.”—*Dennis Burger*

RESOURCES

CUSTOM INSTALLER: Big Boss Productions of Henderson, NV (702.436.1054, bigbossproductions)

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Tony Grant ASID and Associates of Las Vegas, NV (702.362.6162, tonygrantasid.com)

➤ For more images of this project and a full equipment list, please visit HEmagazine.com.

“This project is not a theater, it’s not a summer kitchen, it’s not an outdoor pool with a remote-controlled roof. It is all of the above and more.”

—Tony Grant, interior designer

“Crestron’s diverse line of products makes it a logical choice for a house of this magnitude. A principle we follow is that the simplest way to accomplish the task is likely the most reliable.”

—Leon Kermani, custom installer