

# Our Home



When we purchased this home in 1999, we named it Bella Terra (beautiful land). Built in 1910, even before Arizona was a state, this Mission style home is one of the last few historical estates in the area. Rich in history, the property is 2 acres and is 10 minutes from the downtown of the country's 5th largest city.

The main house boasts a rare one-of-a-kind bottle green Ludowici tile roof, graceful arches and architectural details. With large roof overhangs and 18 inch thick brick walls, the main house is blessed with a generous floorpan that includes 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, 2 half baths, 7 fireplaces, a library, butler's pantry, office, sitting room, basement and wine cellar.



The outbuildings consist of a guest cottage, pool house, well tower, barn, hen house and 3 car + workshop garage. On the south side of the property is the original orchard filled with various fruit trees. In addition to a large vegetable and flower garden, we also enjoy a rose and tropical plant garden.



## **Discovering Our Home**

We found our current home, a 1910 Mission-style fixer upper on nearly 2 acres after our family of 4 outgrew our previous home. The term "fixer upper" was an understatement. The house, located in Phoenix, Arizona had no central air conditioning, had cloth-covered electrical wiring, a Frankenstein switch to shut off the electricity, and a yard that was very overgrown. The previous owners were "collectors" and after a 9-month real estate close we finally signed the ownership documents. Yet, it called to me-the house had great bones and was perfectly placed on the lot. To have land in an urban area was rare. I knew it's potential and called it Bella Terra.

## **The Restoration Process**

It was a painful and arduous renovation, but during the three year process, we split our time with 2 toddlers between a double-wide trailer and the newly renovated guest house in the far western part of the lot. Nearly 2 years into the renovation, I became pregnant and begged our contractor (who promised us the work would be completed in 12 months) to please have the house ready so I wouldn't bring my newborn daughter home to the "trailer". Baby was born and house wasn't done. The contractor disappeared with his sign and our money. Both my husband and I had demanding full-time jobs and here we were stranded with an unfinished home, living in a 24' x 56' box. Of course, it was then I was laid off from my corporate job. Groan. But in retrospect it was the best thing that could have ever happened to me –

With the help of a sitter during the day, I was able to finish the renovation, happily sold our double-wide and we finally moved into our historical estate. The property has always been a magnet for our childrens' friends, family gatherings, charitable events, boy and girl scouts, and numerous dinner

parties. My husband and I feel like caretakers of history in a city where there aren't many "old" things. As property becomes more valuable and developers plow down the big estates and turn them into subdivisions, lots like ours are becoming scarce. I feel like we have the best of rural and urban living-a farm-like environment within 10 minutes of the 5th largest city in the U.S.

For those of you who have owned a historical home, the work is truly never done. We feel so fortunate to have rescued this beautiful home and property and we hope you enjoy our journey here at Bella Terra.

## **THE PROPERTY**

### **WELL TOWER**

### **FRONT HALL**

### **LIVING ROOM**

### **DINING ROOM**

### **GUEST COTTAGE**

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