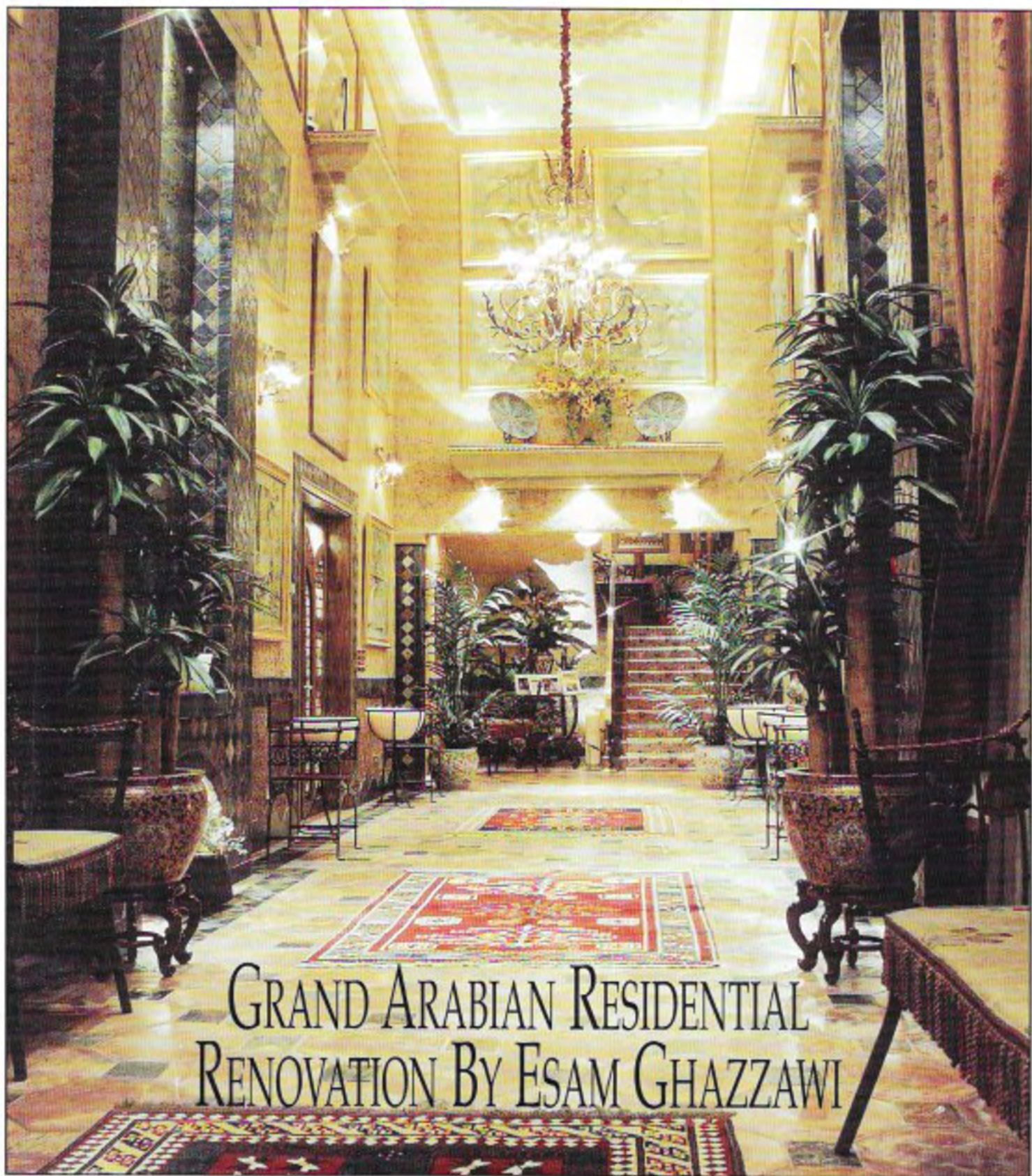


ON DESIGN

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CONTEMPORARY VILLA TRANSFORMED INTO GRAND RESIDENTIAL SHOWPLACE IN RIYADH

It wasn't some genie's magic that turned a 25,000-square-foot contemporary villa in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, into a residence of timeless beauty and longtime livability. Instead, the extraordinary interior and exterior makeover resulted from the innovative vision and resourcefulness of Esam A. Ghazzawi who, only recently, began taking his interior design talents seriously.

Text by Joy Green • Photography by Hisham Shamma



For over two decades, Esam Ghazzawi's hobby was creating grand-scale interiors for family, friends and associates. His intention was never to make a business out of it. However, satisfaction and encouragement from these "clients" caused him to rethink his career midway through it. They readily recognized that he was a master of his craft and prodded the gifted, self-taught designer to focus his passion — and his pro-

fession — more on interior design. Heading up the commercial landscape design/execution and exterior lighting contract business that he started 25 years ago in Saudi Arabia, Ghazzawi already had extensive knowledge of landscaping and lighting, including the technical aspects, as well as the capability to enhance residential exteriors.

"My pursuit of turnkey design projects was a natural offshoot of my other compa-

Before the designer worked his magic on the outdoor garden, there was little to look at. Wanting to do a lot visually around the pool so that his clients could enjoy a view, Ghazzawi created seating for ten persons. Two large round beds and a sofa in the center were built around a palm tree. In the background, the harmonious fusion of Spanish, Mexican and Mediterranean styles that replaced the villa's original architecture. Not shown is a bar next to the seating arrangement, constructed of manmade bricks with an aged appearance, a BBQ with ample counter space for a buffet, and a gazebo. Although this 8,000-square-foot area is not considered large by Saudi standards, the view does not detract from its beauty or functionality.

Saudi Arabian-based designer, Esam A. Ghazzawi, provides turnkey design conceptualization, consultation and installation services, primarily for grand-scale residential interiors within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A gifted, self-taught designer, Mr. Ghazzawi has become a specialist in very exclusive, one-of-a-kind interior design for both new construction and renovation/redesigning projects. His clients are well educated, well traveled and very affluent. To date, most have been high-ranking government hierarchy in his home country.

A representation of Mr. Ghazzawi's interior design talents may be seen at the Luxury Home Collection showroom in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There, he has created vignettes of various rooms, incorporating furniture, accessories, lighting and art from sources worldwide. The showroom is being met with great response because the designs reflect the designer's departure from what is considered customary or typical in that area of the world.

For over two decades, as a hobby and labor of love, Mr. Ghazzawi took on interior design projects for family, friends and associates. However, as the new millennium approached at the end of 1999, and after much encouragement, he decided to pursue this endeavor as a profession. This more serious focus on interior design projects became a natural offshoot of Esam Arabian Projects Est., his commercial landscape design/execution and exterior lighting contract business that he began 25 years ago and still



**MORE ABOUT
ESAM A. GHAZZAWI
DESIGNER**

owns/operates. Mr. Ghazzawi has extensive knowledge in these areas (including the technical aspects) and the capability to enhance residential exteriors. "I believe that there must be a compatible, synergistic relationship between the inside and the outside of any project I undertake," he says.

HIS MISSION

- To make a home beautiful, exciting and enjoyable inside and out.
- To create original interior spaces, with a grand sense of global style, that are in harmony with the exterior facade and immediate surroundings.

HIS STRENGTHS

- Innovative design talent and capabilities resulting in a perfect balance between aesthetics and functionality.

- Resourcefulness and passion for his work has led to his hands-on participation and supervision of each special project.
- A keen eye for architectural elements as well as the most infinitesimal detail.
- A full-time staff of architects, draftsmen, CADD operators and artists who interpret his visions and give them life. He also employs tradesmen (i.e., carpenters, plumbers, tile setters, painters, etc.) in order to meet time constraints, and to control quality and costs. It is not unusual for Mr. Ghazzawi to have hundreds of workers on site at one time, if that's what it takes to get the job done and do it to his exacting standards.

PERSONAL

- Graduated high school in Saudi Arabia. Attended college in the U.S.; completed two years at the University of Southern California; transferred and graduated from Chapman College in California in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.
- Married to Deborah Ghazzawi. They have five children.
- Mr. Ghazzawi is fluent in Arabic and English.
- Mr. Ghazzawi maintains residences all over the world — The family's primary residence (which is a sprawling beach house) is in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia, on the Arabian Gulf. Mr. Ghazzawi also has a large city penthouse in Riyadh and other secondary residences in Maidenhead on the Thames in London, England; on the Gulf of Mexico in Sarasota, Florida; and in Arlington, Virginia, USA.

SAUDI ARABIAN HOSPITALITY AT HIGH POINT

East met West in October during High Point Market when designer Esam A. Ghazzawi of Saudi Arabia rolled out the red carpet and welcomed select American manufacturers to a soiree that the town — and those in it — are still talking about!



Mr. Ghazzawi was a most affable host, along with his family and colleagues from The Luxury Home Collection showroom; they, too, were on hand at the beautiful Grandover Resort in Greensboro, NC to meet and mingle with the hundreds of guests in attendance. Never one to do "the expected" or what's typical, the designer was pleased to entertain manufacturers with whom he has established relationships.

The invitation, written in the "first person" for a personal touch, stated "As one of our most valued suppliers, you have played an important role in The Luxury Home Collection's success." Mr. Ghazzawi is the chairman/chief executive officer of the showroom that opened in Riyadh in May 2000 and displays vignettes of numerous rooms with exquisite furniture, lighting, accessories and art from his worldwide sources. The new facility continues to receive rave reviews since the designs are a departure from what is considered customary in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Because many of the manufacturers had not had an opportunity to visit The Luxury Home Collection yet, or to see their products used in the designer's grand-scale residential projects in his part of the world, Mr. Ghazzawi lined the elegant hallways leading to the resort's ballroom with dozens of oversized, full-color installation photographs.

The designer also displayed other giant photos showcasing the beautiful Saudi Arabia landscape and depicting the country's intriguing customs. Worthy of mention as well was that, as Ghazzawi family members interacted with guests, they offered explanations of some of their time-honored traditions.

Commenting on Esam Ghazzawi and his hospitality, Jeffrey Gaynor, president of Jeffco, said, "Esam is a pleasure to do business with and he is a pleasure on a personal level as well. He is a very interesting and honorable man, an astute businessman, and a gracious host." Jeffco V.P. Tom Morton added, "Esam is a gentleman, well-mannered, bright and creatively wonderful. He is one of our best international customers because of his style and ability to understand our culture and communicate what is going on in his culture."

Alex Malouf, president of The John Richard Collection, offered another opin-