

as published in Residential Architect
June 2005

on the boards / blue moon rising

There's an interesting infill phenomenon going on at the edge of downtown Tucson, Ariz., and an interesting new firm is behind it.

The firm is Dreamspace, a collaboration of Page Repp, president of Repp Design + Construction in Tucson; Luis Ibarra and Teresa Rosano, husband-and-wife principals of Ibarra Rosano Design Architects, also in Tucson; and Tucson investors Jerry and Desi Winter. The neighborhood is Barrio Blue Moon, and it's not far from the University of Arizona School of Architecture, where Repp, Ibarra, and Rosano all studied.

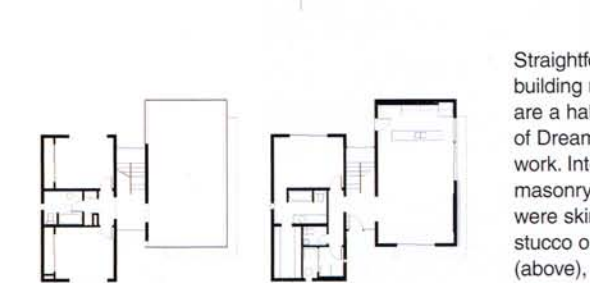
"Page was already building his own house in Barrio Blue Moon, as well as some other houses in the neighborhood when, about a year and a half ago, he and Luis and I started talking about combining our efforts to do more projects in the neighborhood. As much fun as our custom projects are, we all wanted to be able to make good design available to more people," explains Rosano. "At the same time, the three of us were working on a remodel for Jerry and Debbi Winter's house. As we told them about our plans, they became very excited about it. Of the five of us, they're the largest financial investors."

Dreamspace's first completed project is a duplex called the Slice, so named because the back-to-back homes have been built on a 40-by-155-foot slice of land. Each of the 1,740-square-foot, two-story units, which share a masonry wall, includes three bedrooms, 2½ baths, and plenty of wide-open living space.

That narrow lot did more than just give the paired homes a catchy name; it dictated almost all of the major design decisions. "The design for this project was based on setbacks and the city's zoning requirements," says Repp. "It's exactly as tall as it can be and exactly as wide as it can be."

The firm had a little more room to work with for its second Barrio Blue Moon project, the Double, which is now on the boards. Their identical plans are geared to families with children and include true master suites rather than the more equitable bedroom arrangement of the Slice.

With their wall-dominant outlook and clean, simple lines, Rosano thinks both the Slice and the Double mix well with their adobe neighbors. "Obviously, the shape of the Slice is different, but the massing and the plaster is actually not," she says. "It relates to some of the adobe structures, which have tall, fairly blank, plastered walls close to the street." —*kathleen stanley*



Straightforward building materials are a hallmark of Dreamspace's work. Integra masonry block walls were skimmed with stucco on the Slice (above), but will be left exposed on the Double (below).

