



WINTER PARK HOMEOWNERS ENJOY THE ARTISTRY THAT FAMED BUILDER SAM STOLTZ POURED INTO THEIR HOME

# A SENSE OF

# history

BY CHRISTY SMITH

Winter Park has served as a haven – even an inspiration – for skilled architects. From every corner of this little village, stories abound regarding its rich history of famed home creators.

In the late 1920s, artist and builder Sam Stoltz was part of this tradition. Stoltz came with his wife to Central Florida from Illinois and brought with him a sense of artistry in his distinctive home designs.

In addition to traditional home features such as cathedral ceilings and stone fireplaces, Stoltz incorporated aspects of Florida’s natural beauty into his designs, including indigenous fauna as well as birds, fish and other wildlife. He also embraced Florida’s natural coquina, using it as a building element and design feature.

Brian and Sara Furey’s 2,647-square-foot home is one of Stoltz’s Winter Park showpieces. Built in 1929, the home offers Stoltz’s characteristic textured stucco, towering ceilings and detailed touches both inside and out.

The first feature is found at the entrance, with coquina steps welcoming visitors. The elaborate doorway has an ornate door surround topped by a coat of arms crafted by Stoltz. Arched windows – many of them original – wrap around the home.

The living room, with soaring wow-worthy ceilings lined with pecky cypress boards and beams, exemplifies another signature Stoltz touch. “The [pecky cypress] wood is like iron,” Brian says.



The living room in Brian and Sara Furey’s 1929 home (above) has features typical of builder Sam Stoltz, including textured stucco walls, arched windows and a massive fireplace with a whimsical carving of jousters (opposite page).

The room is a comfortable mix of casual furnishings and finely tuned décor. A coral slab serves as an eye-catching coffee table; a beefy armoire adds strength. The focal point is an elegant fireplace decorated by Stoltz with a small carving of jousters. To restore the prized inset, the Fureys brought in an artisan to refinish the piece and remove years of neglect.

“It’s whimsical,” Brian says, referring to the carving.

### COZY SPACES

Two outdoor porches are now cozy indoor spaces, with pitted wood beams and rosy red walls. The Fureys use one space as a music room. It features expansive windows that seem larger than the room itself. Beneath the couple’s piano is a stone floor abstractly painted in myriad colors. Even decades later, vivid hues of red, orange and blue are visible.

“He had a bit of a whimsical flair to him,” Brian explains. “This is the original floor.”

An arched doorway, typical of the rest of the house, leads visitors from the living room to the dining room. This room still maintains its original charm.

“[A small dining room] was typical of the day,” says Brian. The room is small, but a glass dining table makes it appear more spacious. Red dining chairs add elegance. A large antique buffet stands at the ready. Overhead a stylish black chandelier with dangling crystals adds sparkle and a hint of edginess.

Separating the dining room and kitchen are a pair of rustic hand-hewn doors. One can almost picture a burly craftsman planing the fine hardwood with simple carpentry tools. Wrought-iron hardware gives the doors an Old World feel.



*‘He had a bit of a whimsical flair to him. This is the original floor.’*

— BRIAN FUREY



Once an outdoor porch, the music room (top) has a stone floor painted in many colors. Massive hand-hewn doors separate the dining room and the kitchen (left and center). The home’s entrance (above) is warm and welcoming.



In the kitchen, a cabinet-height table is centered in the room. Warm umber-toned cabinetry is topped with inky granite. A commercial-style range is tucked into an alcove. A tiled mosaic of a rooster, created by Sara's sister, sits over the range and adds a cheerful touch.

### LET THE SUNSHINE IN

A sunroom sits off the kitchen. It's a circular room, lined with windows. A later addition to the house, it features a cedar-beamed ceiling, which replicates the living room's cypress ceiling. Cozy chairs dot the room.

"It's my favorite room in the house," Sara says. "It has large windows overlooking the fountains and pergola in the courtyard."

The master suite sits off the living room. The bath area appears as more of a grand entrance to the suite than it does a bathroom. With the exception of a large pedestal sink, each element of the bathroom is tucked away into its own room, with a large open area in the middle.

A deep arched entryway leads from the bath area into the bedroom. This room, which was added to the home about 10 years ago, reflects much of the original home's details. There's an aromatic cedar ceiling, a twin of that in the sunroom. A brick fireplace offers a touch of warmth. Windowed doors line the back wall, keeping the space light and airy. Neutral linens add simple sophistication.

Upstairs, there are two bedrooms, offering some of the home's best



views. Sitting among the trees, the rooms each feature an outside balcony. Sara, who is retired, uses one of the bedrooms as a quiet place for her hobby, jewelry making.

"It's also a great place to read on Sundays," Brian says of the room's outdoor patio.

A cabinet-height table anchors the kitchen (above); a commercial-style range is tucked into an alcove (far left). The master suite (left), added about 10 years ago, features an aromatic cedar ceiling. Each element of the master bath (below right) is in its own room.

### GRACIOUS OUTDOOR LIVING

A detached dwelling in the rear of the property is connected to the main house by a wall. While newly added, the wall features an aged look, complete with faux "old" bricks peeking through "time-worn" cracks. It surrounds a courtyard, giving definition to the outdoor space. Tying the inside to the outside, a door made of pecky cypress leads beyond the courtyard. A rustic brick patio surrounds a serene pool.

"When cooler weather arrives, our favorite 'room' moves outside to the courtyard," Sara says.

The Fureys' 820-square-foot guesthouse is home to Brian's office. Built-in cabinetry provides ample storage space to work, and the separate office ensures focus. Adjacent to the office is a cozy bedroom, designed to warmly welcome guests.

"I have just a great place to work," says Brian, who is in sales. "I'm all set up – it's like a command post."



A walled courtyard (top) offers outdoor living space. Sara and Brian Furey (above) say they like older homes with a sense of history.

"I've been working for years to get my commute down to as close as I can get to home – and this is it. I'm very lucky.

"We use the whole place," he continues. "Sara spends much of her time in the kitchen because she loves to cook. And I spend most of my time here [in my office]."

It's the home's past that truly speaks to the couple. "We like older houses that have a sense of history," Sara explains. "[We love] the balconies that overlook the park and the quirky Sam Stoltz touches." 🍷

#### THE PROJECT TEAM

- ARCHITECT: Sam Stoltz
- COURTYARD RENOVATIONS: Frank Roark