



11

## Bonita

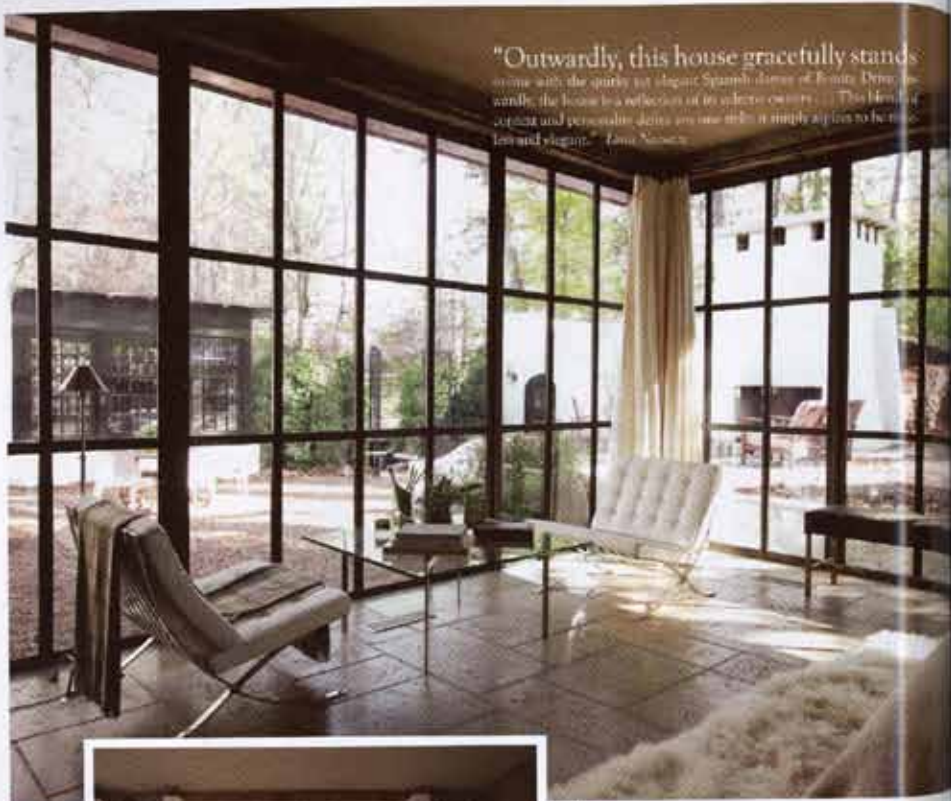
By Mary Ellen Stancill

Photos by

Colleen Duffley

It isn't often that a private home is open for tours, day and night, to thousands of curious visitors. But after John-Bryan Hopkins' doorbell continued to ring with strangers asking to peek inside his renovated residence, he decided to go ahead and swing the door wide open.

"Outwardly, this house gracefully stands  
alone with the quiet yet elegant Spanish flavor of Florida. De-  
wards, the house is a reflection of its eclectic owners. . . . This blend of  
culture and personality details are one thing; it simply appears to be the  
best and easiest." —Lana Nason



Through his blog, [H30.com](http://H30.com), visitors come and go as they please while Hopkins, as their ever-gregarious host, writes and posts pictures of the Spanish Colonial Revival style home he shares with partner Terry Finley. More than a year into the blog project Hopkins proudly says, "I feel like we've created this little beacon, pulsing information about what's going on in the Hollywood section of HomeSweet."

The home and blog combine two of Hopkins' passions and careers. For 14 years he worked as a designer. Now he spends his days as a professional food blogger (Known as the Foodimentary Guy, he consistently ranks in the top 40 of foodie Twitterers). He saw the renovation of 11 Beutta as his last hurrah in design and made a decision to create what he describes as an "honest house," a house true to its origins but renovated using only the best materials to make it livable for today's lifestyle.

Hopkins and Finley worked closely with architect Luis Nequiere during the renovation. Built in 1927, the house had long halls, a remote servers' kitchen and several small bedrooms. Nequiere reworked the floor plan to include a large living room that opens to an elevated kitchen on one side and a cozy, walnut-paneled landing on the other. An original fireplace



serves as the focal point of the living room. Upstairs, the floor plan now includes a large library that overlooks the backyard, guest bedrooms and Hopkins' home office.

Through these renovations Hopkins preserved original details such as thick, textured stucco walls, arched, casement windows, plaster ceilings and Moorish arches while only adding materials and details worthy of inclusion among the originals. "I wanted everything to be tactile and real," he says. "I did not want drywall in this house. I wanted to be able to see it for as long as I wanted."

To satisfy Finley's taste for modern design, Nequette created the master suite as a "glass box" that opens onto the private, rear courtyard. Steel windows, forged on-site and hand-banded beams included from a nineteenth-century church add warmth to the sleek space. A steel sculpture garden, created by Green Bottle Workshop, opens off the master bath.

While the master suite reflects Finley's style, the kitchen is a dream realized for Hopkins. As he does with his food writing, Hopkins dove into a "kitchen book camp," researching and learning all he could about large, European kitchens before designing his ideal space. One result of his study is a beautifully stocked pantry instead of upper cabinets.

It's hard to say which of the kitchen's

features is the most impressive—slit-face copper skylight, the LaConche range with seven commercial BTU eyes, deep fryer, warming cabinet, gas oven and broiler oven, the walnut paneled cabinets that conceal nearly every appliance imaginable, a center island that seats seven to nine people, or the custom-made Traulsen pass-through refrigerator that opens from the pantry and the kitchen.

Off the kitchen, a swimming-pool room, lined with floor-to-ceiling shelves, displays Hopkins' collection of mostly white china. Visible from the interior courtyard and the street, the room glows at night and serves as a pass-through to the driveway as well as to a media room and wine cellar below.

Of the finished project, Nequette says, "Outwardly, this house gracefully stands in line with the quirky yet elegant Spanish homes of Bonita Drive. Inwardly, the house is a reflection of its eclectic owners. . . . This blend of character and personality defies any one style; it simply aspires to be timeless and elegant."

It's this timeless elegance, created by careful attention to house details, that draws people in—and will with a knock on the door or a click of the mouse for many years to come.

Please stop by [www.HBonita.com](http://www.HBonita.com) ■



### Details:

**Architect:** Loui Nequette  
**Durham Nequette Architects**  
**Interior design and kitchen design:**  
 John-Bryan Hopkins, homeowner; Doug Davis, Trecey Interiors  
**General contractor:** Dan Warrick  
**Custom range hood:** Damon Harshbarger  
**Steel garden:** Green Bottle Workshop  
**Kitchen cabinets:** Carlo Cabinets  
**Most appliances:** All-Source Appliances



To read more about why John-Bryan Hopkins loves his custom kitchen go to [www.b-metro.com](http://www.b-metro.com)