

GRACIOUS LIVING IN LAKE AND SUMTER COUNTIES

LAKE

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Defining Interiors

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In the Garden

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JAMES HOPE

*At Home in
the Courtroom*

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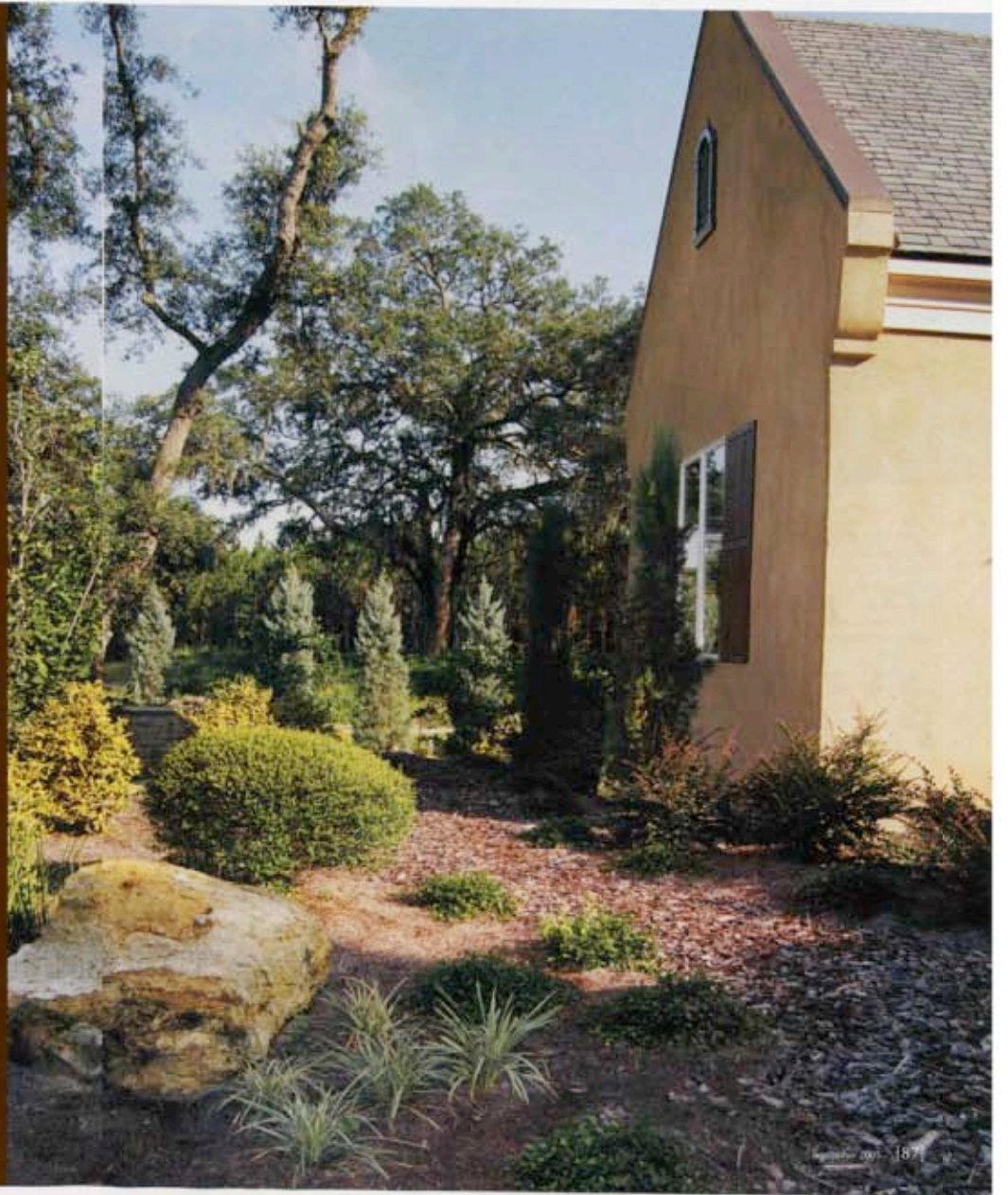
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[in the garden]

European Charm

Phil Mastrosimone, owner of Mastrosimone Construction, is in the process of building a European-style home with exquisite detailing and casual elegance. Some of the fascinating features of this six bedroom, six-and-half bathroom home in Lady Lake include a gym, library, tropical pool area and game room. The front porch is surrounded by small ponds of water on each side, allowing water to drip down the steps.

By JAMES COMBS
Photography by Kimberly Ford



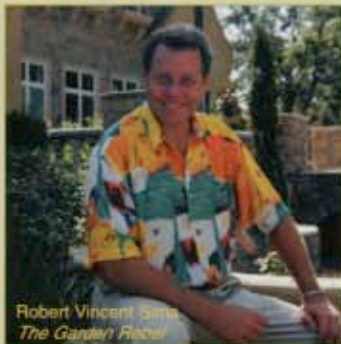
Magnificent



An innovative builder, Phil masterfully interpreted the character of an Old World home while blending in modern functionality. Patterned after magnificent estates found throughout the European countryside, each amenity is crafted to reflect European ambiance.

"Everyone who walks through the home says they've never seen anything quite like it," said Phil, a native of Jamestown, N.Y. "Building a home of this caliber is something I've envisioned for a long time, and I definitely tried to think outside the box. I refer to this as a castle-like estate."

Of course, Phil realized the importance of extending the same sort of grand style to the outside. He wanted the yard to blend perfectly with the home, amid a lush



Robert Vincent Sims
The Garden Rebel

beautiful European landscaping scene. Lucky for him, he knew the perfect candidate to help him achieve such a look.

Enter Robert Vincent Sims, a.k.a. 'The Garden Rebel.' Described by World Book Encyclopedia garden editor Jerry Baker as "an American success story that rivals that of Johnny Appleseed," Sims was more than willing to assume the task. "This house is simply a masterpiece, so I felt it was a privilege to try and match the landscape with the home."

Phil said: "When you do a home like this you only have one shot to get it right. I needed an experienced landscaper who could add to the overall beauty of the property. I had dealt with Robert before, and it's a pleasure to watch him work. He's very detail-oriented and doesn't like a lot of noise."

To keep in line with the home's classical look, Sims had to choose appropriate flowers, trees and plants. "We definitely weren't going for the tropical Florida look, so palms were out of the question," he said. "I decided to go with bright red roses, colorful yellow hollies, Italian cypresses and evergreens. When you come here, you certainly don't feel like you're in Florida."

"This is really nice and convenient for me because I'm not a landscape guy," Phil said. "Robert chose certain varieties that would adapt to the dry, sandy soil here. To help me maintain it, he presented me with his popular Garden Rebel Notebook. It provides me with all sorts of information: when to water, what problems to watch for, when to prune it, and problematic bugs."

They say that a picture says 1,000 words, and instead of me rambling on and filling these pages up with text, we'll allow you to see the beautiful landscape through Kim's photography. ■



Beautiful

