



ALL THE RIGHT ANGLES

BOLD LINES AND PRECISE CORNERS MARK THIS ARRESTING NEGATIVE-EDGE POOL, BUT ITS OWNERS DEMANDED THAT FUNCTION PRECEDE FORM

One might be forgiven for mistaking this AQUA Choice award winner for an elaborate ornament affixed to a stately South Texas home.

AQUA CHOICE WINNER

DA VIDA POOLS

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Category: Concrete Pool or Pool/Spa Combination

With its powerful angular aspect, inspired tilework and lush backdrop, it could be just that. But the owners are more interested in its practical side.

“WE HAD TO FIND A NATURAL CLEARING TO FIT AN 88-BY-15-FOOT STRUCTURE THAT WORKED WITH THE LINES OF THE HOUSE.”



“We designed custom curved red railings constructed by Pool Jewels. The railings were not yet installed at the time of these pictures.”

— LISA NORTH



It's a lap pool for a serious swimmer; its appearance as an opulent stage for viewing the luxuriant countryside is just a happy coincidence.

“The client requested a 25-meter lap pool 4 to 5 feet deep that was energy efficient, yet maintained a constant 81 degree temperature year round in Texas, so she could swim laps every day of the year,” says Lisa North, partner in the company that worked this bit of backyard magic.

It wasn't easy, she notes. Merely siting and accessing the

work zone was a struggle. Pool placement was made especially challenging by the client's caveat that no trees greater than 4 inches in diameter could be disturbed. That might be easy enough at many suburban homes, but this house is in the middle of a forest.

“We had to find a natural clearing to fit an 88-by-15-foot structure that worked with the lines of the house,” says partner André Del Ré, “then very carefully dig footings and drop 6 bundles of rebar and about 200 yards of concrete back



there. Our only access was from behind the steep driveway, which drops off 4 feet.”

How’d they get the excavator in there? Very carefully, inch by inch.

“We filled the gap with base and built a wooden ramp, then used a skid steer to steady the mini excavator down/up the steep grade,” says Del Ré. Later, this equipment and supply path was finished with a disk-shaped concrete staircase and custom-made metal planters and flowerbeds.

The pool has a full 186 feet of negative edge, which was poured and tiled so fine it can be fed with one 1.5-hp pump with no ripples or dry spots. (Not even in the corners! Look at the photo.)

The edge is surrounded by a trough filled with black Mexican River rocks. The pool has a blackened onyx Diamond

Brite interior with 750 square feet of 3-inch-by-3-inch Chinese Red iridescent glass tile from Lightstreams, meticulously placed in lipstick red grout, forming the remarkable exterior. A 200-square-foot, plank-cut travertine/concrete deck reaches out from the house over the trough and pool.

Due to the design requirement that the pool be precisely 81 degrees, year-round, a three-part heating and cooling system was installed. The primary component is a solar system on a roof 40 feet above the pool. Alongside that are a heat pump (with cooling capability) and a propane heater to supplement heating on those really cool Texas mornings.

A quad DE system was used for filtration (since there are no conventional skimmers, DE is added in a canister in the equipment area), and a salt chlorine generator together with ultraviolet light provides sanitation. ~

Submit your pool project for the 2011 Aqua Choice Awards at www.aquamagazine.com. Deadline is Oct. 1, 2010.