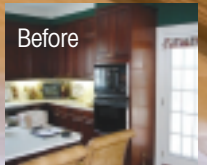


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# southern charm remodel

## European conversion: outdoor living in casual elegance

Lake Norman's Crawford Outdoor Living Area, by Urban Building Group is the 2008 recipient of a prestigious Contractor of the Year (COTY™) award, presented by the National Association of The Remodeling Industry. Each year, the COTY awards are given to contractors who have demonstrated outstanding work through their remodeling projects.

### The Objective

The goal of this project was to transform an ordinary house on the lake into an elegant French

cottage. The homeowners did not need additional heated or cooled spaces; therefore, the focus was on creating a two-story veranda addition that would give the client the high-end, European conversion they desired. The addition provided 2,000 square feet of entertaining and recreation area and enhanced the home's lake-side views, both from the interior and from the lake.

### Unique Challenges

This project posed several challenges. Adding a structure without obstructing the view of the



lake, adhering to watershed guidelines, and creating a sense of openness despite a relatively low interior ceiling, were just a few obstacles to contend with. Designing for function without compromising architectural authenticity and beauty was of the utmost importance. The interior ceiling of the main house was set at 8 feet, so to gain more volume in the outside living area, the grade of the floor was lowered, which created a step down from the main house. This created a sense of openness that is imperative in a luxurious space of this caliber. Increasing the ceiling height of the outdoor space allowed for arches that span from column to column and gracefully frame the spectacular lake view. This is just one of the many details that set this project apart.

### It's in the Details

The new space includes a den with an outdoor fireplace, television and ample room for seating. The fireplace warms the outdoor living space, making the area welcoming year-round. To give an authentic, aged, European look to the fireplace, handpicked stones with a covering of moss were transported by hand and installed with great care to keep the moss intact.





The ceiling of the veranda is constructed of decorative coffers, which hide the structural members, and tongue and groove bead board for texture, which creates a finished look. The exterior veneer and flooring is pre-cast concrete that beautifully mimics the look of limestone, a material that was deemed too heavy and cost prohibitive for the project.

The new living space is equipped with an outdoor kitchen that includes a sink, ice maker, refrigerator and grill. The outdoor bar is perfect for entertaining and provides the homeowners with extra seating for large gatherings.

#### Private Space

The second-story addition provides additional outdoor living and is used as a sun porch for potting

and sun bathing. This space adjoins the intimate, master bedroom retreat, making it the perfect setting for morning coffee!

#### Inspiration

The homeowners took inspiration from their travels and applied particular elements that complemented their needs and desires. The combination of arches, columns, railings and pre-cast concrete completely transformed the rather ordinary façade of the home into a stunning, European-style home. The attention to detail and craftsmanship is appreciated and recognized by the homeowner, NARI and Southern Home Magazine. It is our hope that it will serve to inspire the creation of your own outdoor living retreat.



**John Morgan,**  
**President Urban Building Group**

"This was an extremely challenging project. Anytime you are working with a roof tie-in, multiple level construction and of course pre-cast materials, there is little room if any for error. I couldn't be more pleased with the outcome of our teams' efforts and we are grateful for the opportunity to have worked on the transformation."

Contact him at:  
[www.urbanbuildinggroup.com](http://www.urbanbuildinggroup.com)

Have an interesting project?  
Let us know at: [comments@southernhomemag.com](mailto:comments@southernhomemag.com)