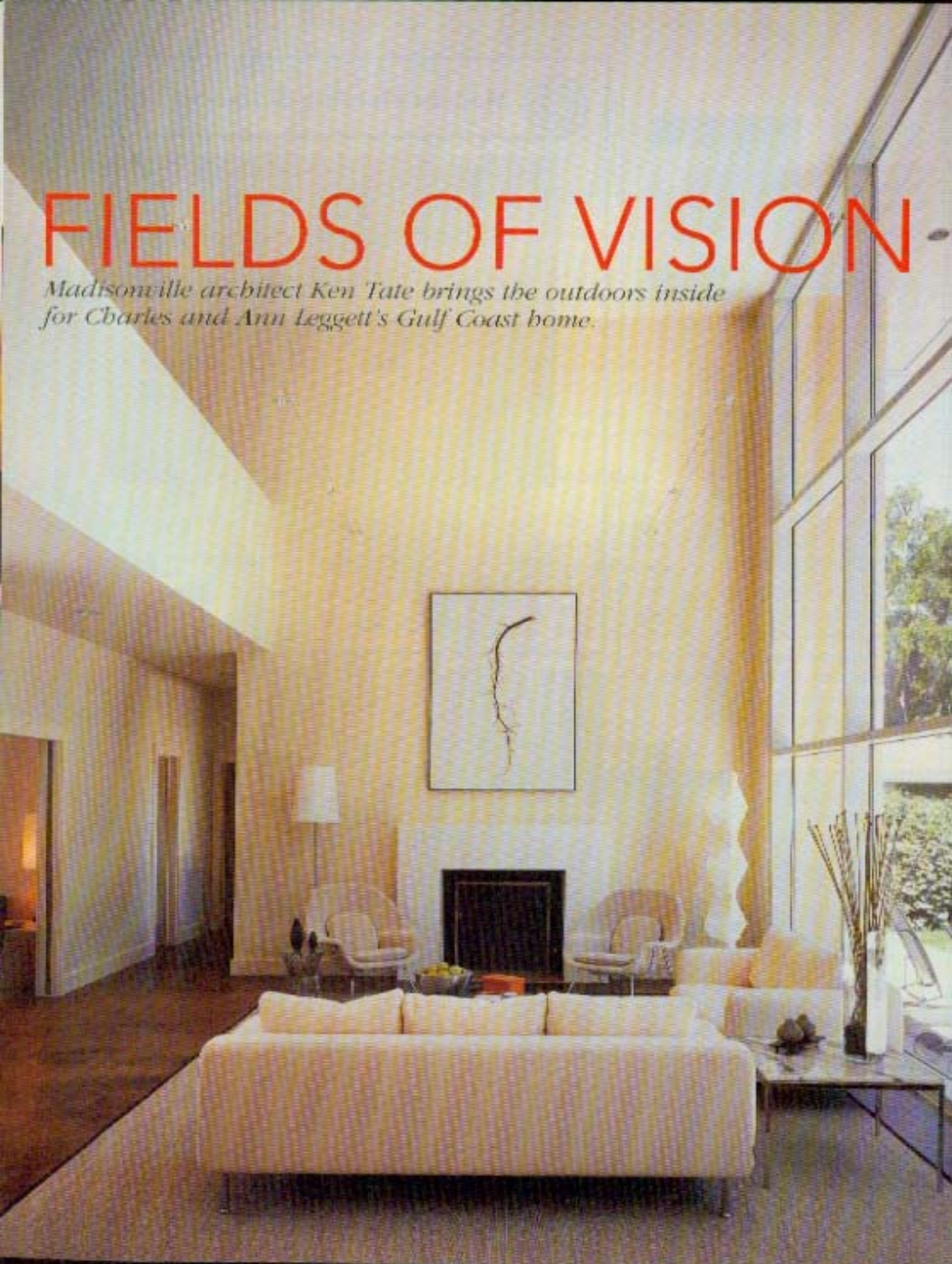


FIELDS OF VISION

Madisonville architect Ken Tate brings the outdoors inside for Charles and Ann Leggett's Gulf Coast home.



By **CHRISTINE RICHARD** Photographed by **CHIPPER HATTER**



A

long Scenic Drive in Pass Christian, Miss., and amid 200-year-old oak and 19th-century antebellum houses, is Charles and Ann Leggett's home. Although modern in style—with its 26-foot solid-glass living-room wall facing the Gulf of Mexico and expansive wooden decks—the sea-shell-colored brick house blends in harmoniously with the turn-of-the-century surroundings.

"Ken [architect Ken Tate] give us exactly what we asked for ... I wanted a soft, modern house," Ann says, explaining that she and her husband like the modern minimalist look, but with a soft edge.

Tate and the Leggetts became acquainted when all three were living in Jackson, Miss. Since then, Tate has relocated to Madisonville, La., and the Leggetts to the Mississippi Gulf Coast, where on a trip a couple years ago they spotted the acre-and-a-half Pass Christian lot for sale, with its 14 oak trees and one magnolia. The house that once occupied the property was

Opposite page: The living room is a study in comfortable contemporary: Brian Borello's painting 'Root' from Herland-Cimino Gallery is a dominant feature, yet complements the clean lines of the furnishings.

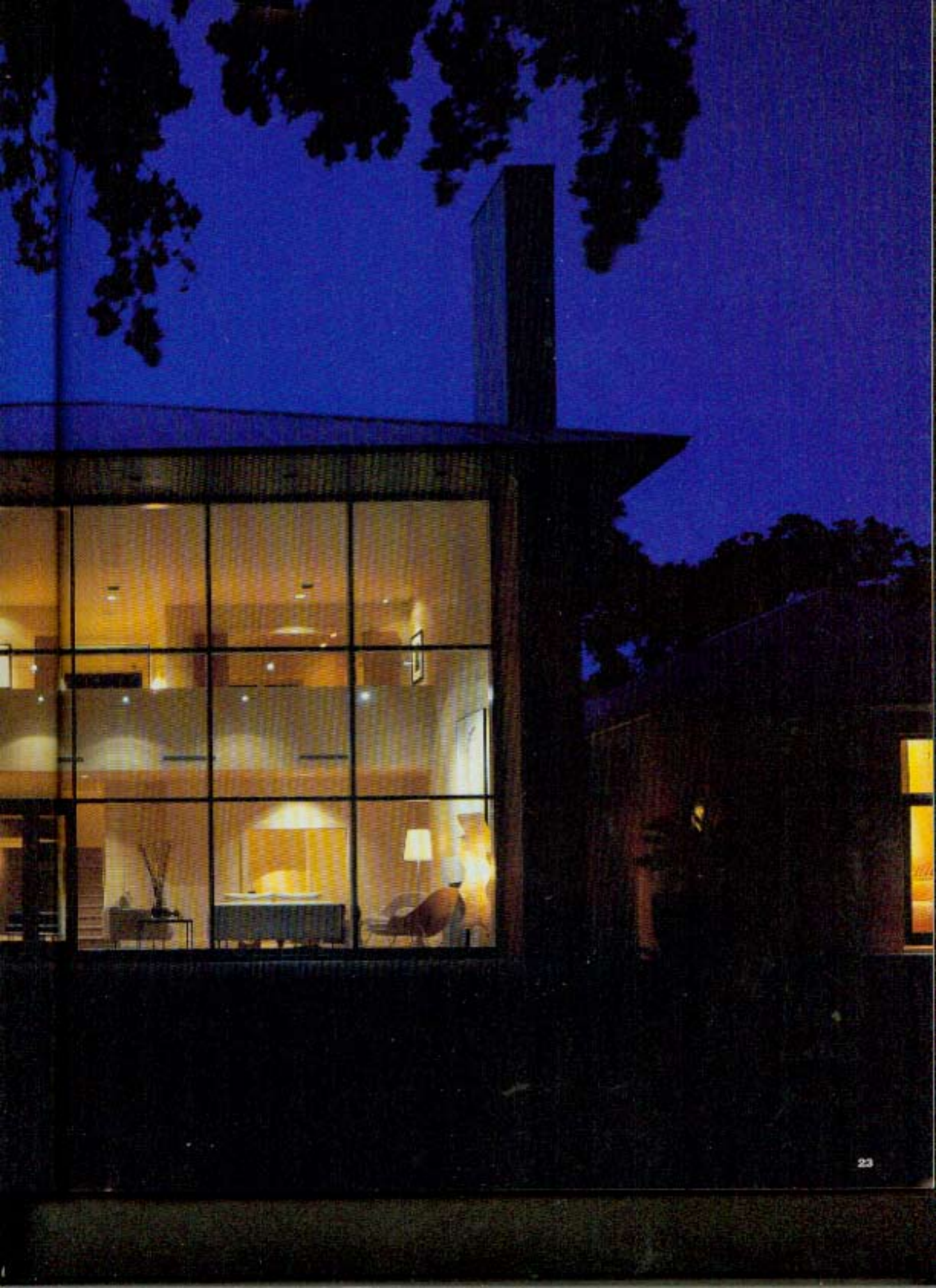
This page, top: Ann and Charles Leggett

Right: The foyer is kept clutter-free, but still holds interest, especially with the graphic Della Robbia area rug.



The Leggett home at twilight. Even though the windows almost go from floor to ceiling, the Leggetts still have enough privacy.







Left: The living room and dining room become extensions of each other, though each have distinctive looks.

Bottom: A view of the old oaks and Gulf of Mexico from the living room windows. The chairs are "Womb" from Knoll, sofa and loveseat from Ligne Roset, and coffee table and lamp are Noguchi.




a casualty of Hurricane Charley. They purchased the land within days, hired Tate and interior designer Susan Noble Jones of Charlotte, N.C., and moved into the house in August 2004.

Tate explains the Pass Christian house as a hybrid between regional and modern styles. For example, it has a tin roof and a delicately painted brick exterior for a regional touch. The cathedral ceilings, glass walls, and stained and scored concrete floors add a modern edge to the interior.

The trees were always a primary consideration for the design, Tate says. This is evident in the living room, where the Leggetts are treated to a view of the Gulf as well as the tangle of Southern oaks.

Although the view may diminish slightly at night, Ann is partial to the living room after dark, because the small interior lights, strung along a wire from the ceiling 26 feet above, look like stars, she says. And because the house is set back 300 feet from the road, the room—despite all the glass—feels very private.

"You can get a view of the ocean from all the rooms," Charles says. His favorite, though, is the breakfast nook, where he can see the ocean in one direction and, in the other, a beautifully landscaped Asian-influenced walled garden with violet agapanthus.



A little color on a dining room wall punches up the rest of the furnishings, as well as the painting, "Pentimento," by Deborah Polias from Hebard-Casino Gallery. The dining room table and chairs are from B&B Italia, chandelier from Artemide and sideboard from Domi Nova.

"Architect Ken Tate
gave us exactly what
we asked for ... a soft
modern house,"
says Ann Leggett.



A baroque simplicity makes the bedroom an oasis
of calm respite. The photographs over the Holly Hunt
Collection bed are "Lampights" by Frank Jackson
from Herford-Crane Gallery.



The breakfast room looks out over the Gulf of Mexico as well as a walled-in Asian garden. The stained and scored concrete floors add a warm luster to the room. The painting, "White," is by Mark Davis from Herland-Cimino Gallery.

"It's like being outside but with A/C and without the bugs," he says of the nook.

The bedroom-to-bathroom ratio of the entire house is a little unusual at two to four-and-a-half. Instead of two extra bedrooms (in addition to the master and guest bedrooms), the Leggetts, who are retired, opted for separate work spaces upstairs. Ann's art studio faces the ocean and has a small balcony, so she can take fresh-air breaks from sketching. The room is outfitted with everything an artist could want, she says: wonderful views and full-sized drawers to store art work. Charles' study faces the brick-walled garden.

A walking tour of the house can take a while, not necessarily because of its square footage but because "everything in here has a little story," Charles says of the furniture, the lighting and the hanging art, mostly acquired from the Herland-Cimino Gallery on Julia Street. Designer Noble Jones helped carefully select the other pieces, so that each was a work of art in itself, Ann explains. About 97 percent of the contents are new, and that was intentional.

Tate agrees that the house is a backdrop for the furniture and the art. It also successfully brings the outside in: a perfect retreat for a retired couple living on the beach. ♦