





Clockwise from far left: An infinity fountain cascades from the 9-foot slate wall behind James Wecker and David Wilson's swim-in-place pool; on the hillside above, the 15-by-40-foot ironwood deck offers city views and space for sunbathing; Portuguese limestone covers the deck by the pool.

SHAPE - SHIFTER

In the Hollywood Hills, a Pool Goes From Mediterranean to Modern

he first time real estate developer James Wecker saw the small backyard pool, he thought it was the "world's biggest bathtub."

"I asked the Realtor, 'If we add water, will it grow?'"

Since a recent remodel, Wecker and his partner, David Wilson, a project director for Walt Disney Imagineering, have grown to love their compact, swim-in-place pool.

When they purchased the 1961 three-story home in the Hollywood Hills above the Sunset Strip 15 months ago, the house and pool had been heavily "Spanish-ized," Wilson says. The pool featured a free-form ledge—"like a big S-curve," with red brick coping and gray tiles painted with small burgundy flowers at the waterline. Saltillo pavers covered the deck. A bull's head-shaped fountain poked out from the rough white stucco retaining wall above the pool, while a pair of steel parrots perched on either side. "At the top of the wall, rebar was sticking out, and there was rotted-out latticework on top of that," Wecker recalls. "It was a mess."

Wecker and Wilson collaborated with friends, interior designers Todd Williamson and James Magni of Magni Design in Los Angeles, on a major face-lift. They stripped the 7-by-15-foot pool down to the gunite, reshaped it into a rectangle with a flared end and then replastered it. Sage-hued concrete took the place of brick coping; Portuguese limestone replaced the deck's Saltillos.



The wall behind the pool, now raised to 9 feet, is covered with ocean green slate set in a staggered vertical pattern. The bull and parrots are gone. In their place is a sleek new infinity fountain, and on the hillside directly above, a new 15-by-40-foot ironwood deck for sunbathing.

The pair say they frequently cool off beneath the fountain on hot summer days. And swimming against the water jets' simulated current is part of Wecker's early-morning exercise routine. "The pool is only 4 feet deep, so if you get tired you don't have to tread water, you just stand up," Wecker says. "It's like being in an oversized outdoor bathtub—with a city view."