



# PURE TRANSITIONAL

Travel 40 minutes west of Orlando to Villa Calabria, and you'll feel as if you have arrived in the Tuscany countryside. Without all the jet lag, of course.

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Villa Calabria's transitional living room mixes sleek modern lines with warm woods.



**A**s you ditch the turnpike for Old Highway 50, the flat, oak-lined streets so characteristic of Central Florida give way to rolling hills and bucolic patches of green resembling vineyards and olive groves. From the first turn into Bella Collina from County Road 455 and throughout the exclusive community, stands of Italian cypress trees and Southern magnolias flank the winding pathways. Decorative street signs, charming roundabouts and sidewalks fashioned from cobblestones make this a place you'd like to call home.

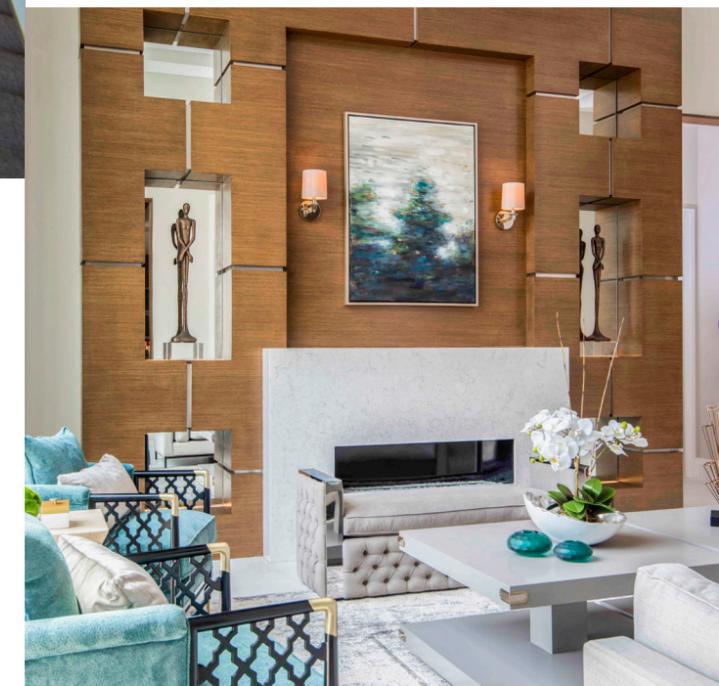
In the Lake County town of Montverde, Bella Collina sprawls over 1,900 acres that offer a variety of homesites and styles, ranging from golf-course-front lots to large wooded preserves to view-worthy parcels along Lake Siena and Lake Apopka. Bella Collina experienced a brief burst of development when it was built in 2003 before standing nearly empty because of the economic crash that followed.

CS Real Estate Investments purchased the community in 2012 and has been breathing new life into it ever since, with more than 35 homes under construction and plans under way for a \$30 million condo hotel. The development's clubhouse — big enough to host a Kardashian family reunion three times over — is set on a high point overlooking the community and has become the Sunshine State's second-most popular wedding venue next to Walt Disney World. The time to buy is now — a sentiment echoed by a prominent local surgeon who recently built Villa Calabria, a 4,500-square-foot gem.

**“KEEPING A COLOR PALETTE OF CREAMY NEUTRALS WITH PUNCHES OF CHARCOAL AND TEAL-SPECTRUM BLUES HELPS CREATE A MINIMAL MODERN SPACE ...”**

—Chris Popovich, Lead Designer, Masterpiece Design Group

From left to right: Massive beams add character to the family room's ceiling; the living room's stylish divider wall boasts a midcentury block design artistically trimmed in stainless steel.



# “JUXTAPOSING

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—Chris Popovich



The bed's textured linen headboard in the master suite is the creative work of lead designer Chris Popovich.

## OLD MEETS NEW

Villa Calabria, tucked in the back of the community for ultimate privacy, is a consummate study in pure transitional design, where elements from styles of the past — in this case, midcentury and Bauhaus — combine with contemporary features to create a fresh and distinctive aesthetic. Custom builder Phoenix Companies worked with Randall Stofft Architects and the local firm Masterpiece Design Group on the home.

Villa Calabria's owner wanted a modern space but otherwise gave carte blanche to the builders and designers when it came to everything from the blueprints to the baubles.

"We were challenged to create a warm, inviting transitional interior, both appealing to a modern-minded owner yet still feeling at place within the Tuscan-flavored Bella Collina community," says Masterpiece's lead designer Chris Popovich, whose signature use of assorted textures defies convention.

Open the traditional-style solid-mahogany front door, step onto the sleek inlaid tile floor of polished Asian Carrara marble, and look up for a little bling — a Eurofase Novello pendant chandelier reminiscent of Hollywood glam with its polished rings and subtle metallic-lined cotton shade. In an instant, it all works well together.

To the left a custom-designed divider wall, made from white oak veneer in a pecan finish, separates the foyer from the dining area. Trimmed in stainless steel, the wall doubles on one side as a modern-day china cabinet, with slots for glass shelving. Its midcentury block styling adds warmth and depth to the contemporary dining space where an accent wall stands floor to ceiling in white quartzite stacked stone. "Juxtaposing modern, sleek lines with warm woods, mixed metals and textural elements," says Popovich, "is how we achieved our objective for this home." This concept extends from room to room, as each space opens seamlessly to the next.

## FORM MEETS FUNCTION

Design details executed in varying materials and textures reflect the shrewd blending of old and new and are subtly carried throughout the four-bedroom/four-and-a-half-bath home.

In the kitchen, slab cabinets in a deep wenge finish create a bold focal point as they contrast with the organic-white Caesarstone countertops. The graphic-patterned marble backsplash, with its smooth-rough texture begging for a touch, echoes the tile floor in the foyer.

Not originally planned for in the design, a wine room extends to the right beyond the kitchen, showcasing an extensive collection via LED-illuminated glass shelves and storefront-style doors.

Wandering down to the master suite reveals a textured linen headboard designed by Popovich; gold metallic in color, its curves hug the queen bed just enough to ensure a restful night's sleep. Awake each morning to views of the sun dancing on the lake before hopping out of bed onto the impossibly soft Tigressa iced-ivory carpet inset — rugs are so out! Wallpaper, however, is so in. Behind the headboard, a Zoffany's Anthology Collection wallcovering in oxidized mink silver stretches from floor to ceiling and mirrors the look of vintage mercury glass. The Zen-like vibe continues into the en suite master bath that's more spa than bathroom.



Wallpaper regains its place in the spotlight, showing up on accent walls in patterns like this vintage mercury glass from Zoffany's Anthology Collection.

You and several of your closest friends can fit in the walk-through shower blanketed in large beige-onyx tiles and outfitted with his-and-her benches covered in pearl recycled glass mosaics. Achieving your ultimate "ahh" has never been so easy.

"Keeping a color palette of creamy neutrals with punches of charcoal and teal-spectrum blues helps create a minimal modern space, without the coldness you often find in modern interiors," says Popovich as he points to the library, just down the hall from the master suite. Trimmed in wainscoting, the library features custom bookcases,

polished-nickel double chandeliers, and a honeycomb-pattern ceiling that evoke an old-world sensibility with a modern slant. It's easy to imagine a deck of cards, waiting to be cut, resting on the poker table alongside Montecristo cigars and a snifter of brandy as stories of better days swirl about.

Family is at the center of a home, so it's only natural that the large, inviting family room sits smack dab in the middle of this one. The whole brood can fit comfortably on the charcoal sectional sofa, where no one will be competing for a clear view of the television that's perched perfectly in its nook on the custom-designed entertainment wall. The room's impressive wood-stained beams continue onto the expansive lanai, complete with an infinity pool, summer kitchen and panoramic views of Lake Apopka. Open the sliders that separate the family room from the lanai, and the space immediately becomes an alfresco paradise tailor-made for Florida living, each passing breeze a little cooler than the last.

Homes in Bella Collina start in the \$470,000s, with Villa Calabria to be listed at \$2,350,000. ●



Metal detailing in the table and light fixture work well with the midcentury chairs in the airy breakfast nook.