

# Slice of Italia comes to Belews Landing



BY OGI OVERMAN

**B**obbie Gardner seems to be noticing a few more friends dropping by her house these days than in the past.

“It’s funny because I didn’t have folks drop by that much before,” she says, the twinkle in her eye affirming her bemusement, “but now it’s every Friday everybody comes to my house. I don’t know why that is.”

Well, let’s see. Could it be that she and husband Jay have just moved into their showplace home on the land they are developing around Belews Lake? Could it be the fact that the 12-room villa with Travertine floors, faux Venetian plaster and stone arches, a courtyard complete with a fountain, and flora such as Italian cypress and olive trees looks as if it could be overlooking the Mediterranean rather than a lake straddling four counties in central North Carolina? Or could there be a simpler explanation, perhaps that one of those dozen rooms happens to be a fully stocked wine cellar?

Whatever the reason, the Gardners are on the cusp of realizing a dream that’s been at

least seven years in the making (five to acquire the property and another two to make it suitable for development), but won’t be fully realized for another seven, when the 137 homesites are sold. While the lots are selling out fast, theirs is only the second home in the development, called Belews Landing, to be completed.

“The first was a spec home,” says Bobbie, “so ours is the first custom home to be built. There are only five or six lots left in Phase I and I’ve got a waiting list for Phase II with people ready to put down deposits.”

Belews Landing is in essence three communities within one neighborhood. Crows Nest is lakefront (and gated), Sailing Point is the central section, and Windward is the front section nearest the street. Lot sizes vary from two-thirds of an acre to more than two acres, with prices ranging from \$75,000 to \$335,000.

“Our lot is a little over an acre and is fairly typical of the 35 lakefront lots,” says Bobbie, a Realtor with Allen Tate. “Some of the lakeview lots, however, are quite a bit larger.”

While Jay Gardner’s company, Plantation

Builders, was the general contractor for this 13-month undertaking, Bobbie is quick to give credit to all the subcontractors involved.

“It’s kind of like a jigsaw puzzle,” she says. “Jay and I came up with the ideas, but all the subs played such a big part in it. It’s a rather unusual home, and they have to have faith in what you’re trying to accomplish. Basically, I just showed them pictures of what I wanted and they built exactly what I was looking for.”

Bobbie singles out a few for especially meritorious craftsmanship: brickmason Nathan Kohl, landscape architect Brenda Wrenn and faux painter Diane Hall.

As evidence of the quality of their work and the unique nature of the 5,600-square-foot, four-bedroom villa, Bobbie says, “We had a decorator come out and she wants to use our house and layouts for some catalogues she’s putting together. That’s kinda neat, I thought.”

Indeed. So where’s the vino?

**Belews Landing Development Co.**  
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