

# 2009 Trophy Awards

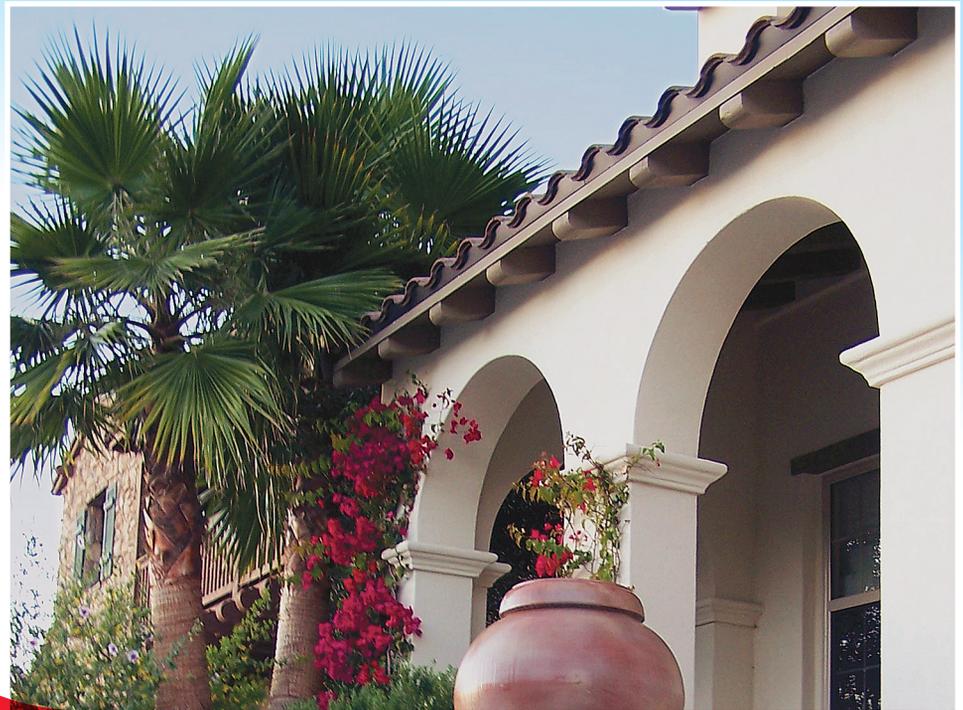
by Joan Waters

**Who won:** *Ciro's Landscaping, Inc.*, headquartered in Escondido. This design, build and maintenance firm with 50 employees works throughout San Diego and Riverside counties. About 60 percent of the firm's business is custom residential. Commercial business includes services to developers and homebuilders.

**The project:** A newly constructed Spanish-style custom home in San Diego.

**Who's who at *Ciro's Landscaping*:** *Ciro Delgadillo* is president of the company he licensed in 1980. *Martha Delgadillo*, *Ciro's* wife, and *Manuel Delgadillo*, their son, each "wear 17 hats," *Ciro* says. *Martha* is office manager and *Manuel* oversees commercial projects.

**What is *Ciro's Landscaping* known for?** "I think we have a good public awareness for the quality of our hardscapes," *Ciro* says. "We're known for our special attention to detail to patios, barbecues, water features, and fireplaces and the whole composition. We excel in residential projects at that level."



## Judges Award

Best Residential Entry  
With A Budget Under \$150,000.



**Who's who on this project:** The project team included *Ciro Delgadillo*, his in-house designer *Henry Hong* and hardscape foreman *Francisco Hernandez*.

**Scope of work:** Design and installation of landscape plantings and hardscape to complement the home's Spanish architecture. The front yard measures 25-by-70 feet, including driveway and veranda, but the back measures a scant 1,500 square feet.

"Because (the site) was so small, that gave us a good opportunity to make it look larger," *Ciro* says. "(The clients) liked the design very much because we utilized the space to its maximum potential. ...They really fell in love with it."

**What are some of the 'Wow' features in the front yard?** Twenty-foot specimen *Washingtonia robusta* palms "skinned" of their shaggy skirts for a smooth,

# Ciro's Landscaping, Inc.



*“This kind of custom residential project gives you a lot of opportunity to use your creativity.” —Ciro Delgadillo*

updated look. “Not a lot of people want to use that kind of palm because it’s not perceived as attractive,” *Ciro* says. “But when you clean them, they become very attractive and we knew they would complement the architecture of the house.”

Other front-yard focal points include a hidden-reservoir water feature, decorative tile work on the stairs leading to the veranda, vibrantly colored plantings and terra cotta tile facing on the porch. The combination of materials—concrete, decorative and terra cotta tiles—offer a classically sophisticated presentation. “We’re really getting known for the way we are able to combine materials,” *Ciro* says.

**What kinds of plants did you use?**

“We didn’t use a lot of plants, but the ones we did use have good color and texture,” *Ciro* says. Included were: bougainvillea, a variety of succulents, giant birds of paradise, lavatera, rosemary and a small lawn.

**How did you landscape the backyard to make use of every square inch?**

“The back is basically three small ‘rooms,’” *Ciro* says, explaining that levels were used to create depth. “We built up the spa to the level of the barbecue countertop, so when the cook is preparing the meal, you could swim over and ask for a hamburger.” The second room is an outdoor kitchen with bi-level countertop, barbecue, storage and bar. A firepit built into a tabletop anchors the third room.

**What’s the backyard’s ‘Wow’ feature?**

A vibrantly colored 12-foot wide, 6-foot tall water wall in the center of the patio featuring three troughs that discharge into two 20-gallon urns and a 20-gallon bowl—all of Italian terra cotta. Because it is a hidden reservoir feature, the urns look as though they are going to overflow, but don’t. The water flow can be individually determined and nighttime lighting sequentially bathes the feature in purples, blues and greens. “There’s a lot of activity in the water wall because water is flowing from a hidden trough filled with Mexican beach stones. ... It’s very active and has a movement that is very nice.” The soothing sound also helps to mask noise from the street. “It was labor-intensive, but very enjoyable to do,” *Ciro* adds.



**Any challenges?** “The small space... forces you to think,” **Ciro** says. “It was an ambitious number of elements in such a small space. We had to be very precise in our measurements. ... Also because access was limited we couldn’t use any heavy machinery. The concrete was pumped, but everything else had to be brought in one block at a time.”

**Anything you learned on this job that could serve as a takeaway for your fellow contractors?** “We learned to maximize the potential of the limited exterior space, and had to take the view from inside the home into account so the homeowners could enjoy the view from the inside as well. This kind of custom residential project gives you a lot of opportunity to use your creativity.” ■

**Anything else?** A grotto of six 10-foot king palms around the spa and a patio floor with bands of multicolored tiles that add a color punch against the concrete floor.

**How long did the project take?** “About four months,” **Ciro** says. “Because of the limited space, we couldn’t really put a big crew in there. You have to take your time.”

**What was the budget?** \$129,000

**What do you think made this project an award winner?** “The unique movement of the water in the water wall and the variety of elements. ... It just feels good when you’re there. Even though it’s next to a busy street, it’s very private.”



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