



THE JAMES LEE HOUSE

LOCATION

Memphis, TN

SERVICES

Architecture, Interior Design, Construction Administration

SIZE

8,021 SF

CONSTRUCTION COST

\$1,724,098

CONTRACTOR

Montgomery Martin Contractors

COMPLETED

2014

REFERENCE (CLIENT)

Jose Velazque, Owner

AWARDS

ABC Excellence in Construction Award –
Historical Restoration/Renovation - \$1-\$5
million

Memphis Magazine's 2015 Home Design
Award (Home Renovation)

Jose and Jennifer Velazquez, along with their investment partners JW and Kathy Gibson, worked with Fleming Architects to completely restore and transform the historic James Lee House in Victorian Village into a five-star Bed and Breakfast. The mansion, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, consists of the original 1848 two-story farmhouse built by William Harsson, and two additions, one in 1853 and one in 1873, by Charles Goyer. Charles Goyer sold the home to James Lee in 1890, and later, Lee gave the home to his daughter, Rosa, who donated it to the city of Memphis to create the James Lee Arts Academy. The Arts Academy became the Memphis College of Arts, and the house served as the original location of the school. The College relocated to Overton Park in 1959, leaving the James Lee house vacant for 55 years until its restoration in 2014. For Fleming, the highest priority throughout the transformation was to maintain the historical integrity of the structure, yet incorporate state of the art energy efficiency, modern amenities, and meet current code requirements. Historic decorative elements such as the plaster moldings, ceiling frescos, original hand-carved wood doors, tall windows, and the grand staircase were repaired and restored to qualify the home for Historic Preservation designation by the National Park Service. Once the restoration was complete, the 5 suites in the Bed and Breakfast were named after the mansion's previous owners or members of Velazquez family.

Jose and Jennifer bought the James Lee House from the City of Memphis for \$1.00.