



TALAVERA IN OKLAHOMA



The name of Talavera is on display in the center of the United States, it is a neighborhood in Oklahoma City comprised of 200 villas and where 700 neighbors reside. The North American Rachel Odom, some years ago, began thinking about this particular homage to pay tribute to her time spent in the city of Talavera as “one of the best experiences of my life”, as according to her interview to the Tribune.

This community is a tribute to Talavera and its culture. In fact, its advertising image incorporates a tile border that includes the important colors of the local ceramics that made Talavera famous throughout Europe. Odom assures that from the beginning she was interested in the history and the tradition of the Talaveraña crafts. But, mainly, she emphasizes her friendship with the Talaveraña Cristina Sanchez Stares. “I will remember Cristina the rest of my life and



the kindness with which her family and friends gave to me”, remembers now. This industrialist, of 33 years, spent a year in the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Complutense of Madrid and by chance it led her to Talavera. “When I arrived in Madrid I practically did not know anybody. I looked for flats to rent in the newspaper, because I wanted to only live with Spanish girls to learn Spanish and to make new friends. One of them was Cristina, of Talavera”, she indicates. The relationship between both progressed to the point of which the American visited the city practically every weekend. On return to her home, Rachel Odom wanted to maintain the memory of her Talavera experience. “We continued having contact and she wrote to tell us of the project of Talavera. We were very intrigued”, comments Cristina Sanchez Stares, who even jokes on the possibility of making a sister city between the two cities.

The neighborhood is one of the developments promoted by the Odom family, from which the construction concept in Talavera is taken from the decade of the 1930's. Rachel returned to the family business after her stay in Spain and after graduating from the University of Oklahoma.

This residential zone, that will eventually include 2,400 residents with the construction of 700 single-family houses in the next ten years, is considered in the United States a peculiarity by its concept and philosophy. In a news article, CNN money magazine became interested in the concept of `Talavera' and used it as an example of the change that is taking place in the type of houses constructed throughout the USA.

The neighborhood devised by Rachel Odom reduces to a quarter the dimensions of the typical North American villa. They are constructed of about 170 squared meters, 500 less than those than she is accustomed to building and below the national average. As far as the design, it defines it to the industrialist as “style of the Old World, the enchantment of New'. “I remembered some of the castles and the Roman roads that I saw by the highways and I have incorporated this architecture experience in a small structure which we call `the Castle'. In this district, I have wanted to create a beautiful neighborhood, with high quality construction, that is comfortable and is unique when compared with other homes of similar environs”, explains Rachel. The houses in the southwest of the United States, where Oklahoma City is located, are some of the most affordable in the country. “There are houses that can cost 2 million dollars in California and here they are worth 500,000”, emphasizes the industrialist.

A large sign and wall with the name of Talavera is located at the entrance of the community and gives the welcome to the visitor. “I like the fact that I will always have this memory of Talavera ”