

# Show & Tell

PARK CITY RESIDENTS  
MIKE & IZZY SEMRAU CREATE  
A HOME FOR AN  
ARRAY OF ECLECTIC FURNISHINGS,  
ACCENTS, AND ART



Homeowners Mike and Izzy Semrau with dog XX.  
OPPOSITE: The eclectic and very Old Town tone of the Semraus' Park City home begins outside. Colorful, Victorian paint colors and blooming flowers greet visitors in the front yard while livestock water trough planters, rustic patio furniture, and the venerable Western Madonna create a whimsical atmosphere on the main floor deck in back.

BY MELISSA FIELDS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN



The kitchen reflects the home's funky design theme and accommodates Izzy Semrau's affection for cooking. Shelving under the large island can be removed to accommodate more seating and the custom-made stainless steel dining table features castors, allowing it to be moved against the island, tripling the culinary workspace. OPPOSITE: Table in front of window and shelves Large doorless cabinets create ample storage space, while allowing the Semraus to show off unique collections of china, glasses, and barware.

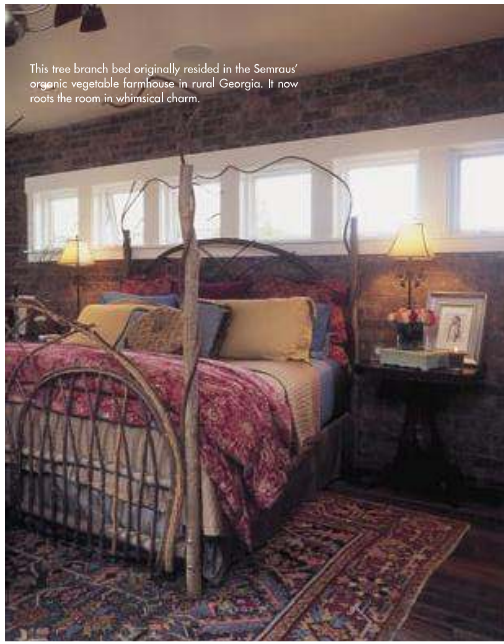


**M**ike Semrau is reminiscing. Around every corner of his Park City home sits a piece of art, furniture, an accessory or antique that reminds him and his wife Izzy of their life together. There's the painting by an artist friend who lived in an Atlanta building the Semraus once owned. There's Izzy's collection of antique dry good canisters stacked on shelves high in the kitchen. And then there's an antique foosball table that hangs on the bunkroom wall. "I used to have a collection of antique games at the farm," he says with a twang of nostalgia. For this couple, home is definitely where the heart is.

In 2002, after spending numerous vacations in Park City and living for a brief period in Deer Valley, the Semraus decided to make Park City their home base and purchased a house in Old Town. Originally they planned to renovate the kitchen and add a couple of bathrooms before moving in. But their plans quickly changed after Izzy met interior designer Sheri Russell, principal of Park City's In Studio Interior Design. "I invited Sheri over to take a look at the kitchen and before I knew it she was knocking on walls and talking about creating the house I knew I always wanted, but didn't know how to start," Izzy says.



Russell employed an auto body shop to create the swirling pattern on the stainless steel wall leading to the home's upper level. At the top of the stairs hangs a piece of art entitled *Falling Angel*, created by Atlanta-area multi-media artist and friend Michael Gibson.  
BELOW: The Semraus installed a vintage phone purchased on eBay, to create a fun, quirky telephone booth on the main floor.



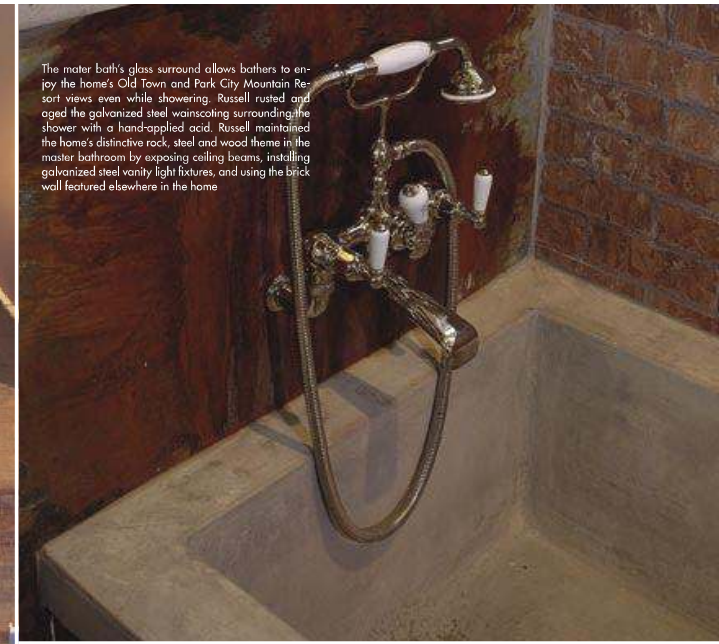
This tree branch bed originally resided in the Semraus' organic vegetable farmhouse in rural Georgia. It now roots the room in whimsical charm.

Before long Russell and the Semraus developed a plan to renovate the house from top to bottom, focusing on expanding the kitchen, creating a master suite, and showcasing the surrounding views of the Park City mountains. They installed floor-to-ceiling windows on the main floor and 24-inch-square windows at eye-level around the second level, and added patios and decks to every floor.

Once the pieces of the home's revamped structure were in place, Russell's challenge became incorporating furnishings and accessories from the Semraus' two previous homes—one in downtown Atlanta and the other, a farmhouse in rural Georgia—into a residence satisfying Mike's desire for a mountain retreat and Izzy's longing for a colorful, contemporary abode. She succeeded with a one-of-a-kind home reflecting the Semraus' effervescent personalities and Park City's eclectic mining town-turned-ski resort persona.

"Both Mike and Izzy are extremely creative individuals," Russell says. "I would present an idea to them and then they would take it one step further." This creativity, and the obviously symbiotic relationship Russell achieved with the Semraus, is evident in unexpected details throughout the home. Rather than with the typical chimes of a doorbell, for example, visitors are announced by the nostalgic ring of an antique school bell. Antique doorknobs serve as pulls on the custom cabinetry in the kitchen and operational truck tail lights serve as handles on a stainless steel, pull-out pantry.

Victorian-style furniture takes center stage in the living room, where a favorite rug provides the floor-level foundation for a muted, multi-colored palette. To make the Semraus' old furniture fit into the new space, Russell reupholstered the sofa, chairs and ottoman in a variety of richly hued textured fabrics and added contrasting throw



The master bath's glass surround allows bathers to enjoy the home's Old Town and Park City Mountain Resort views even while showering. Russell rusted and aged the galvanized steel wainscoting surrounding the shower with a hand-applied acid. Russell maintained the home's distinctive rock, steel and wood theme in the master bathroom by exposing ceiling beams, installing galvanized steel vanity light fixtures, and using the brick wall featured elsewhere in the home.





The lower level family room offers guests a comfortable place to enjoy conversation, watch movies, and admire more of the Semraus' art collection. On the far wall, a painting by WhiteHawk—a Taos, New Mexico artist—is a commissioned work representing Izzy's aura. ABOVE RIGHT: One of the first pieces the Semraus purchased as a couple is this abstract portrait, located in the downstairs family room, entitled Chicken Lady by Atlanta-area artist Carolyn Carr. The entire piece is actually made up of multiple paintings of chickens.



pillows for softness. She completed the setting by using a glass-topped, antique casket carrier as a coffee table.

The home's underlying steel, stone, and wood theme flourishes on the second floor, where the master suite and home office are located. Reclaimed barnwood floors, also used on the main floor, complement the master bath's cast concrete tub and rusted galvanized steel wainscoting. Other unique elements include Mike's office desk, purchased from an Atlanta-area artist, and a tree-bow bed transplanted from the Georgia farm master bedroom.

Russell and the Semraus let their unconventional ideas and creativity truly blossom on the lower level. In the kitchenette, rubberized ski lodge flooring serves as a backsplash while nearby shelves are suspended with climbing rope and carabineers. A bunkroom features bed frames made from metal scaffolding.

Like the rest of the home, the bunkroom also contains personal touches, most imaginative of which are the closet curtains. Here, Izzy hung yards of heavy white fabric with a handpainted border that matches the bed linens. It's unlikely however, the large white spaces on the curtains will remain blank for long. "Every time we have young visitors stay with us we ask them to attach a picture of themselves from their visit to the curtains and then paint us a message," Izzy says. A very appropriate practice in newly remodeled home that is solidly designed, full of stories, and an artistic illustration of the owners' personalities.

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Sheri Russell, In Studio, Park City ARCHITECT: Jonathan DeGray, Park City CONTRACTOR: Jim Clifford, Boulder, Park City

A lower level kitchenette provides a place to serve guests. Unique, mountain town touches include ski-proof red rubber flooring serving as a backsplash material, and shelves suspended with climbing rope and carabiners.

RIGHT: Russell commissioned a metal fabricator to expand a desk Mike Samrau purchased from an artist in Atlanta. A few coats of paint, a couple of pieces from the couple's art collection, and new lighting for an antique armchair completed this tranquil workspace.

BELOW RIGHT: XXXXXXXX TK



## MATERIAL INTEREST

### NEW USES FOR EVERYDAY ELEMENTS

Interior Designer Sheri Russell loves Home Depot. But you won't find her where you would expect—perusing the floor coverings, window treatments, or even paint departments. More likely she will be found in the plumbing, electrical, and hardware aisles. "When I was younger and didn't have the budget I do now, I experimented a lot with materials like metal and wood," Russell says. "There are so many interesting mechanisms out there. If you look at them just a little differently they can really be made into something special." A few of Russell's favorite ideas for using ordinary items in new ways include:

- Using antique doorknobs as unexpected, yet traditional alternatives to new hardware on kitchen cabinetry.
- Featuring any durable waterproof material as a functional and unexpected backsplash in a kitchen. Pirelli rubber flooring is one of Russell's favorite options.
- Creating bunk beds from metal scaffolding and plywood for a contemporary and durable look.
- Filling galvanized tubs and water troughs with soil and blooming plants to accent a rustic outdoor space.
- Using climbing rope and carabiners, rather than traditional brackets, to secure shelving and create an outdoorsy look.



Sheri Russell