

# A WORK OF ART

IN PARK CITY'S OLD TOWN,  
DESIGNER SHERI RUSSELL  
TRANSFORMS AN  
ART STUDIO/RESIDENCE  
INTO AN INTRIGUING  
AND INVITING PARISIAN  
LOFT-STYLE HOME.

BY MELISSA FIELDS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN





Artist and previous homeowner Tom Carlson painted *The Cook* in homage to his wife's culinarily-inclined mother. The striking painting hangs in the kitchen today just as it did when the new homeowners, the Gleasons, first saw the home.



In the great room's living area, a circular chandelier affixed with antique bulbs draws attention to high, vaulted ceilings. In the adjacent dining and kitchen zones, a lower, flat ceiling defines these spaces, adding a sense of coziness.



ANTIQUE, EURO-STYLE DETAILS, INCLUDING A CIRCULAR CHANDELIER AFFIXED WITH ANTIQUE BULBS AND AN ARCHED PANED MIRROR, ADD DECIDEDLY FRENCH ACCENTS.



Some people, like native Australians Chris and Bronwen Gleeson, just know what they want. From their first taste of the urban-meets-the-mountains gestalt of Old Town Park City, they were undeniably smitten. “We’re golfers and originally looked into buying something in an outlying development, but when we experienced the walkability and uniquely urban feel of living so close to Main Street, we knew we wanted to be in Old Town,” Chris says.

Four years ago, the couple purchased a rare vacant lot on Park Avenue and began working with an architect to design and build a family dream home. In the meantime, a house owned by Utah artist Tom Carlson appeared on the market. The Gleesons asked local interior designer Sheri Russell to take a look at Carlson’s Woodside Avenue property and give them her impressions. “It was an amaz-

ing space, with high ceilings and these huge floor-to-ceiling windows. Really unusual for Old Town,” Russell says. “But what was most amazing about the house were the paintings.”

Carlson and his wife, Lisa, had built the home 17 years prior, using it as both a residence and studio. They filled the house with Carlson’s work, and many of the paintings were created specifically for the wall space where they hung. Russell recognized that by simply reworking the home’s flow, the house could be a fantastic family retreat for the Gleesons and one that showcased Carlson’s stunning work. “Tom’s art set the tempo for the entire project,” Russell says.

“Parisian loft” best describes Russell’s design scheme. Building on the home’s original white walls with dark stained wood trim, Russell adorned the great room with warm, creamy walls and cabinetry juxtaposed against charcoal black window casings, ceiling beams, countertops and track lighting. Antique, Euro-style details,

ABOVE LEFT: Russell used white walls and black accents to create a bold backdrop for art displayed throughout the home.

ABOVE RIGHT: The kitchen’s raised breakfast bar hides the cooking area from other areas of the great room.

## SPACE SAVER

Designer **Sheri Russell** provides a few tricks and techniques to make small spaces work in big ways.

- » In kitchens with high ceilings, utilize the extra space overhead by installing **ceiling cabinets** and a **library ladder on a track** to access the upper storage areas. The ladder lends a modern, almost industrial flavor to the area, and the **overhead storage** provides an ideal out-of-the-way storage space.
- » Instead of using a step ladder or stool to reach high places, **install pulley or pneumatic systems**. Shelves on a pulley system can be lowered to whatever level the user chooses.
- » Custom-made, **built-in cabinetry** used under stairs can conceal clutter and create an interesting design feature.
- » **Day or bunk beds** with either trundle or storage drawers below are much more space-efficient than a standard bed frame or couch. And rather than a standard mattress, furnish **day or bunk beds** with high-density memory foam mattresses covered with a room-coordinating fabric.



Sheri Russell, In Studio Design, Park City

- » **Built-in desks and shelving** transform hallways and landings into usable spaces.
- » **Sliding or pocket doors** save space required for a swinging door, mitigating the slamming action and allowing a space behind the door for framed art that's visible when the door is closed.
- » Using a virtually zero-emission fuel, **ethanol-burning fireplaces** require no venting and therefore take up less space in a room. Properly placed within a noncombustible surround, these decorative heating elements can be placed just about anywhere.

UPSTAIRS, SKYLIGHTS, SLENDER CEILING BEAMS AND A SOFT COLOR PALETTE ALLOW THE ONCE CLOSED-OFF MASTER BEDROOM TO BREATHE.



RIGHT: Frosted glass-paned doors, skylights and large windows fill the master bedroom with bright, space-making light.

ABOVE RIGHT: What might seem like an awkward configuration—the home's main entry opens to the master bedroom suite—is tempered by frosted glass doors on either side of the master bath.



including a circular chandelier affixed with antique bulbs and an arched paned mirror, add decidedly French accents. Thanks to a vacant lot to the north, light fills the interior most of the day. The star focal point, Carlson's large portrait titled *The Cook*, hangs in exactly the same place today—at the far end of the great room in the kitchen area—as when the Gleasons first saw the space.

Organic materials soften the great room's urban-inspired hard edges. Rattan chairs surround a custom-made dining table and rift-sawn, bleached white oak spans the floors. An antique fireplace mantel salvaged from a French farmhouse lends an air of authenticity to the room. Inexpensive, thoughtfully chosen accessories—a bookshelf filled with aged classic French titles and an old framed map of Paris—complete the effect.

Russell's skill for reconfiguring small spaces comes to life throughout the home. Upstairs, skylights, slender ceiling beams and a soft color palette allow the once closed-off master bedroom to breathe. Low-profile, built-in stor-



A trio of skylights on either side of the master bedroom's cathedral ceilings are accented by four rift-sawn, white oak scissor trusses creating a dramatic focal point in this otherwise serene and subtle room.



RIGHT: Throughout the house, Russell strategically uses color, expanses of mirror and glass, and open-framed furnishings to make each room, like this lower bathroom, feel open and airy.

BELOW: Artist Tom Carlson's former studio now performs as a playful guest bunkroom and bath on the colorful home's lowest level.

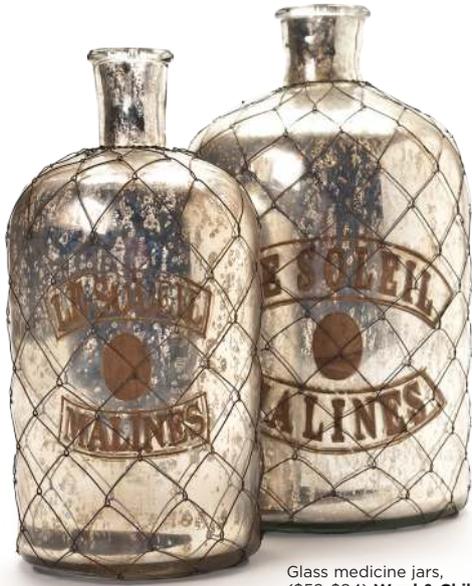


age conserves space while maintaining sight lines, and a frosted glass door leading to the master bathroom helps maintain the horizontal light flow. On the ground level, Carlson's painting studio and a bathroom used to be all that occupied the space. By reconfiguring walls and going slightly subterranean, this level now includes a bunkroom suite, a third bathroom and a media room furnished with a custom-made sleeper sofa to accommodate guests when not used as a gathering space. "I love dealing with space constraints and making old rooms work in new and creative ways," Russell says.

Though Carlson's paintings acted as the catalyst for this Old Town home's unusual design, the result is anything but stuffy or gallery-like. By rethinking the space, Russell created a comfortable and inviting home where family and fine art coexist. ■



Designer Sherri Russell built a large, removable chalkboard coffee table top for the Gleasons' grandchildren. When the children aren't visiting, the cover can be removed to reveal an antiqued finish similar to the bleached white oak flooring.



Glass medicine jars, (\$59-\$84) **Ward & Child—The Garden Store, SLC**

## INCORPORATE STATEMENT-MAKING ART

Artist and previous homeowner Tom Carlson was honored the Gleasons chose to purchase several of his paintings along with his Park City house and thrilled with how Sheri Russell developed the space. "Sheri and the Gleasons took the house to a level we never dreamed of," he says.



# Get the look

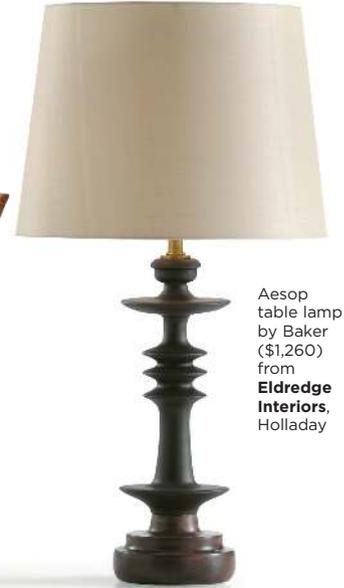


Install sliding doors with tracks ranging from antique to sleek and modern. A sliding door or mirror can be a design statement by itself.



Parisian linen pillow (\$160) from **Details, SLC**

McGuire dining chair (\$1,650) from **LMK Interior Design, SLC**



Aesop table lamp by Baker (\$1,260) from **Eldredge Interiors, Holladay**



Tupelo Tree from Sherwin-Williams



Tansy from Sherwin-Williams



Mineral Water from Columbia Paints



Lucinda Blue from Columbia Paints