

# TRADITIONAL HOME

November December 2011

## *The* Season's Best

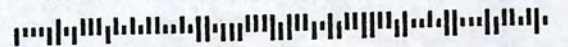
Put the sparkle into your decorating and entertaining

5 CLASSIC WOMEN WHO MAKE GIVING BACK AN ART

### Holiday Ideas

FROM TREETOP TO TABLETOP

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# it's a wonderful life

SHARING FAMILY TIME AND  
NATURE'S BLESSINGS IN A  
HOME SNUGGLED IN THE  
WASATCH MOUNTAINS

**M**olly Morris was sitting on the front porch of the family's Chevy Chase, Maryland, home when her husband, Bill, returned from a hot-yoga class and put this question to her: What would you think if we moved into a condo in Utah for one year?

"I honestly thought he was going through a midlife crisis, so I decided I'd go along with it. I can do anything for a year," Molly says with a laugh. "We both grew up in the D.C. area, and we really had no idea what it was like to live someplace else."

While Molly and Bill and their two sons, Duncan and Christopher (now 15 and 13), had vacationed in Sun Valley, Idaho, they had









**Living room** A two-sided fireplace flanked by steps connects the living and dining rooms. The mirror above the mantel is a 19th-century French antique from Marston Luce. **Preceding pages** A locally grown Fraser fir is laden with favorite ornaments. Hues in the antique Heriz rug from Mark Keshishian & Sons inspired color choices for furniture and paint. Outside, the house shows off its holiday decor.

“

WE HAVE DETAILS SUCH AS THE EXPOSED CEILING BEAMS THAT MAKE THE HOUSE FEEL MORE RELAXED, LIKE A FRENCH COUNTRY HOUSE.”

—homeowner Molly Morris



**Dining room** Tulips and hydrangea blooms spill from silver mint julep cups on the French limestone mantel from Tartaruga Design, while paperwhites emerge from containers on the dining table. Designer Elizabeth Hague relaxed the formal look of the Regency-style mahogany dining set by covering chair seats with flirty skirts in a Lee Jofa fabric.



never been to Utah. But in June 2005, they loaded up a U-Haul and drove more than 2,000 miles to Park City. They chose Park City because the real estate market was favorable to buyers at the time, and it had direct flights from Washington, making it easy for Bill to stay connected with his commercial real estate business.

“We were curious to know what life might be like in another place, and we thought it would be telling for us to slow down and take a step back from our busy lives in D.C.,” Bill explains. “We expected the adventure would confirm that we were blissfully happy back East and that we would be looking forward to re-entry in D.C. to pick up where we left off a year before.”

But that’s not how the story played out. “Once we got out here, it was like a different world. It was life-altering. After four months, we decided we weren’t going back,” Molly says. “And we hadn’t even lived through one winter here!” Bill works from his home office and enjoys dinner with the family every night. “That never happened in D.C.,” Molly relates. “Billy was always at the office or board meetings. We hardly ever saw him.

“Having those family dinners is truly a blessing. Communication is so much better with all of us, especially with the kids,” she adds. Year-round, there’s always some sort of outdoor activity for the family

to enjoy—such as skiing, hiking, biking, and snowshoeing, often right outside their back door. The boys catch a public school bus a few blocks from home rather than their mother driving them nearly an hour each way to attend intensely competitive private schools. “Everything here is within a five-mile radius. Before, we were spending at least two hours every day in traffic,” Molly says. “This is just a wonderful way to bring up the boys. They can be outside 365 days a year.”

After deciding to make Utah their home, the Morrises bought a choice lot with knockout views of Park City and Deer Valley ski resorts. They sold their Chevy Chase house and phoned Bill’s lifelong friend and D.C.-based architect George Myers and another D.C. friend, interior designer Elizabeth Hague.

Molly and Bill’s message to both designers was emphatic: no typical timbered mountain home with a sprawling open floor plan. Instead, they asked for a traditional Eastern aesthetic in keeping with the family antiques, Oriental rugs, and other furnishings that they were moving across the country.

“They really wanted a more East Coast home with defined rooms and traditional spaces,” says Myers. After visiting the site, the architect sketched a French country, stone-and-stucco home, lining up main living areas to take advantage of the mountain



**Kitchen** The kitchen is the home's center and has ample space for Molly and Bill to cook side by side. Since their move to Park City, the Morris family nearly always eats dinner together, gathered around an antique French table. Evergreen wreaths hang at the windows, which offer stunning views of Park City's ski resorts.



Family room Walls are painted "Bryce Canyon," a warm coral hue from Benjamin Moore. A window seat with checked fabric in sand, red, and gold offers a cozy reading niche.



Master sitting room Walls painted Benjamin Moore "Serene Breeze" and armchairs covered in an aqua-and-cream fabric from Vervain invite relaxation.



views. The topography of the site did present challenges. "We had to gradually step this house up a slope," Myers says. "We tried to make it seem seamless so you weren't really aware of that."

Two- and three-step stairs connect rooms in several areas, suggestive of an old house that has been added to over the years. The multi-paned windows, gables, stair balusters, and door and window casings painted off-white reflect Eastern architecture, while rough-hewn ceiling beams (salvaged from a Utah railroad trestle) are a nod to the West.

Molly worked long-distance with Hague to pull together the family's existing furnishings—coming from both the Chevy Chase home and the Utah condo—into the new house. "Most all the furniture pieces are things we already had," Molly says. Even fabrics were reused. Hague creatively (and economically) re-sized draperies, adapting those from the previous dining room for the master suite's sitting room. "That's where that wonderful color of blue we used in the bedroom came from," Molly says.

The mahogany dining table, chairs, and sideboard were also from the Chevy Chase house. In keeping with the more relaxed living out West, Hague dressed down the chairs with flirty skirted slipcovers for the seats.

Molly's love for rugs is obvious, with richly patterned Orientals warming nearly every room. "Not only are they beautiful, they're very forgiving and don't show dirt or soil," she says. With two teen-aged boys, a Tibetan terrier, and outdoor activities playing such a big role in their lives, "forgiving" fabrics and surfaces were required. Hague selected updated chenilles and heavy-duty cotton and cotton-linen blends for upholstery that could withstand the wear and tear.

The fabrics and rugs inspired the designer's paint choices, which numbered more than 30—most in subtle variations on blues and corals. "Beth's taste in colors is exquisite, and the way they transition from one room to the next is really awesome," Bill says.

"I selected wall and ceiling colors that would most complement the various textiles that I specified for the space," Hague says. "I



**Master bedroom** The white *matelassé* coverlet from Peacock Alley looks crisp and dreamy with bed skirt, shams, and a slipper chair covered in a floral from Colefax and Fowler. The headboard is upholstered in a linen from Peter Fasano.

frequently choose a less dominant color from a textile and use that on the wall so the color is pulled out of the fabric and made to pop.”

In the kitchen, the designer finished white cabinets with a gray glaze that echoes the weathered hues of the ceiling beams. Fabrics on the seating pieces in the dining nook are grayed-down greens plucked from the room’s rugs. Molly, who loves to bake (especially during the holidays when she goes into pie- and cookie-baking mode), made sure there was plenty of room in the kitchen to gather. “The kitchen is my happy place,” she says.

While Park City is their home now, the Morrises haven’t lost touch with their D.C. friends, many of whom visit. “The quality of the time we have with them is so much better than if we were back East. They’re on vacation and relaxed,” Molly says, sheepishly adding, “We’re lucky. We always feel like we’re on vacation.” ❧

**Architect:** George T. Myers

**Interior designer:** Elizabeth Hague

**For more information, see sources on page 140**



**Family** Molly and Bill Morris and sons Duncan (standing) and Christopher, with Tibetan terrier Sammy.