



In the ground-floor residence, Spanish-inspired brick groin vaults preserve that "monkish" charm.

RELIGIOUS



CONVERSION

OVER THE YEARS,
THE BUILDING HAS BEEN A CHURCH,
AN INN, A BAR AND MAYBE EVEN A BROTHEL.
YES, THESE TWO TELLURIDE CONDOS HAVE A BACKSTORY.

BY GABBY ANSTEY McDONALD | PHOTOGRAPHY BY WHIT RICHARDSON



T

hey share a rich and eventful history, a vision, an understated façade, even a fitness room. But each of the two residences at 134 North Oak St. in downtown Telluride has a distinct character and charm.

Their story is one of fraternal twins. It began back at the turn of the century (20th, that is), when the First Methodist Church, one of Telluride's most iconic buildings, was erected for a then-whopping \$10,000. In 1915, the church morphed into a recreation and dance hall, next a bar, and possibly a brothel, too. For the ensuing decades, the locale remained renowned, though details of its use are sketchy for much of that time. Records resurfaced circa 1980, when the popular Oak Street Inn and Tavern moved in, an inexpensive lodging establishment that remained for 17 years. (A fire brought the demise of the watering hole portion in 1986.) But it was in 2003 that the century-plus-old, 12,000-some-odd-square-foot structure began its most dramatic change: a conversion into two private residences.

Over the years, the edifice had lost many of its quintessential "churchy" traits, such as a prominent tower, lofty single-story nave and gothic windows. During its time as the inn, 26 rooms were divided into two stories, with communal bathrooms, sauna and TV lounge. The basement, before the fire, had housed the tavern. But even with



Top: Fit for a King: the regal dining table in the Days' penthouse unit. Bottom: Aside from a much-needed facial, the modern-day Oak Street façade is much as it's always been—striking, yet simple.



Above: The kitchen in the Herrick residence presents classic craftsman style with all the modern-day amenities. Below: The Herricks' curved bar offers a casual albeit impeccably made feel.



the edits, modifications and deletions, its house-of-worship soul and 40-vertical-foot street-side presence never wavered.

When the remodel came along, it brought with it a mission: salvage and re-create as much of the original architectural attributes as possible, while constructing a pair of modern-day luxury condominiums.

After about a year's worth of design and approvals (Telluride takes its historic preservation rather seriously), the Oak Street Inn was reduced to a three-walled shell. The town kiboshed bringing back the tower, but virtually all windows were either original or re-created from historic photos; exterior walls, doors and roof lines couldn't be altered; and some interior elements like flagstone flooring and structural "rubble" walls were kept, down to an inscribed cornerstone from 1900.

All the while, living spaces were completely transformed. The multi-generational Herrick family, who purchased the property in 1994 and ran the inn until its end, partnered with Kim and Kim Day (no typo; they have the same first name) as co-owners and renovators. With the help of architect Steve Morton and general contractor Pete DeLuca, the group embarked on a complicated and challenging three-year endeavor.

In an age when virtually everything has gone uber-contemporary, there's something refreshing about the interiors of the Oak Street residences. The single-story, two-bedroom, ground-floor unit, retained by the Herricks, is culled from the craftsman genre, while



CEILING IS RECESSED AND BACKLIT TO ADD VOLUME, WHILE SPANISH-INFLUENCED BRICK GROIN VAULTS AND ARCHED DOORWAYS QUAINLY MARK THE MAIN HALLWAY AND BEDROOM ENTRIES.



Top: A stone and cedar, temperature-controlled wine cellar (one of two) that any bottle would kill to call home. Bottom: The meticulously-conceived mud room is a perfect place to sit down, dry off and warm up.

the second-story unit, owned by the Days, plays off an Old World style of architecture and interiors. “It’s very unusual to have two units with such distinctly different architectural styles,” says Morton.

The Herrick residence was the creative vision of Anne Herrick, the family’s matriarch, who worked with LuxWest Interiors for many of the fixed finishes on her unit to cultivate a classic American artisan beauty that is timeless and comfortable. Light walls and wide-plank wood floors run throughout the main living areas, offset by mahogany cabinetry and green granite in the kitchen. Ceilings are recessed and backlit to add volume, while Spanish-influenced brick groin vaults and arched doorways quaintly mark the main hallway and bedroom entries.

There is an informal formalness to the place: A circular dining room table is surrounded by eight handsomely upholstered chairs; the spacious master bedroom features garden toile drapes, a private study, and both his and hers bathrooms; and the Parisian-inspired powder room sits beneath a window-paned ceiling and views of a blue, cloud-filled painted sky. “Anne loved how that [powder] room



STONEMWORK IN THE DAY UNIT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE, FROM THE LOCALLY HARVESTED, UNEVEN DRY-STACK IN THE LIVING ROOM'S STATELY FIREPLACE AND ENTRY, TO THE FIRED GRANITE IN THE KITCHEN AND BAR COUNTERTOPS.



Top: Rich colors and floral patterns epitomize the Old World feel of the Day unit. Bottom: Modern or medieval? Locally harvested, uneven dry-stack stone marks the entry to the Days' penthouse residence.

turned out," says Anne's daughter-in-law, Jan Herrick, "It was one of her favorites."

The Days' three-bedroom penthouse unit, on the other hand, could be described as "medieval castle meets French Renaissance, meets art deco, meets modern comforts."

"I knew instantly that an Old World feel would be the appropriate choice for the interior of [what was originally] an historic church," says Mrs. Kim Day. Among the most striking details are the windows, particularly those in the living and sitting areas, which consist of just the top, arched portions of the gothic re-creations. This detail was done intentionally but also out of necessity, as the one-and-a-half story walls of glass had to accommodate two units. "It was difficult, but it worked and actually ended up being quite charming," says Morton. True indeed, as those looking out are provided with a one-of-a-kind perspective, while the rooms themselves elicit a hobbit-house coziness, despite the windows being deceptively large. There is also the repetition of the lancet arch—a narrow and elongated, pointed arch—found in windows in both the master bathroom and one of the guest rooms, as well as in the fireplace enclosure in the master suite and most of the doors and doorways. Mrs. Day designed the interior doors herself; Santa Fe Door brought them to life. Additionally, several antique doors and headboards, many of

which came from Santa Fe's Seret and Sons, add to the chateau feel of the place. "Our very first purchase was an antique [wood-carved] door set that now covers our audio equipment," says Mrs. Day. "I had no idea where it would go, but it was my inspiration for the entire project."

Stonework in the Day unit is impossible to ignore, from the locally harvested, uneven dry-stack in the living room's stately fireplace and entry, to the fired granite in the kitchen and bar countertops. Lighting and the use of space bear edgy details: The powder room is encircled in fantastic palm-sized mirrors; a flat-screen TV hides behind a vanity mirror in the master bathroom; and the kitchen's funky, art-deco-esque crystal chandelier juxtaposes brilliantly against the regal candelabra over the dining room table and contemporary glass pendants above the bar. "I had great fun with the lighting," says Mrs. Day. "Some is very contemporary, but I believe in little surprises to keep a design fun and unexpected." Lastly is the custom-designed upholstered furniture, whose velvet tassels, floral patterns and lush hues of reds, golds and greens exude a palatial royalty.

The basement level brings even more uniqueness to the Oak Street property. Not only does it resemble a medieval underground vault, it provides a "common" common area, featuring a spacious, mahogany-and-stone mud room, full bathroom, billiards room, media room, workout room, ample storage, underground garage and twin stone-and-cedar wine cellars that are as conceptually stunning as they are physically awesome. A shared stone stairway connects the two residences and basement level, as does an elevator, which is intimate in size but big in personality. With its mahogany lining and jade-hued quatrefoil mirror centerpiece, the elevator feels like something from an uptown Manhattan apartment building in the mid-1960s.

But surely one of the nicest things about the design, or redesign, of the Oak Street Inn is that the preserved exterior, though large, is entirely unassuming. Aside from the gothic windows, it yields traditional lines and angles with a monochromatic surface of cappuccino trimmed with espresso (save for a generous garnishing of colorful nasturtium and petunia flower boxes). Nothing is given away, and, in turn, one would never expect the level of detail, amenities, warmth, richness, and dynamic elegance of the sibling residences found within. ■