

On Top of the World

Stunning views and vibrant hues set the stage for entertaining in a new downtown home **BY KATIE VAUGHN**

FOR LAUREL AND STEVE BROWN and their year-old Havanese, Roxy, home is a traditional English Tudor in the Fitchburg countryside.

Even so, when Steve's company, Steve Brown Apartments, began developing the Lucky apartment complex in downtown Madison, the couple saw an opportunity for a second home. "We thought it would be fun to keep a unit," Laurel says. >>

The Browns doubt they'll ever tire of looking out the condo's windows. Practically the whole of downtown Madison can be seen from their fourteenth-floor vantage point. "You forget how beautiful Madison is," Laurel says. "You don't stop and take pause, but with a view and vista like this, you're forced to. You can't help it." And others seem to agree; even a red-tail hawk has claimed the porch as its favorite lookout perch.

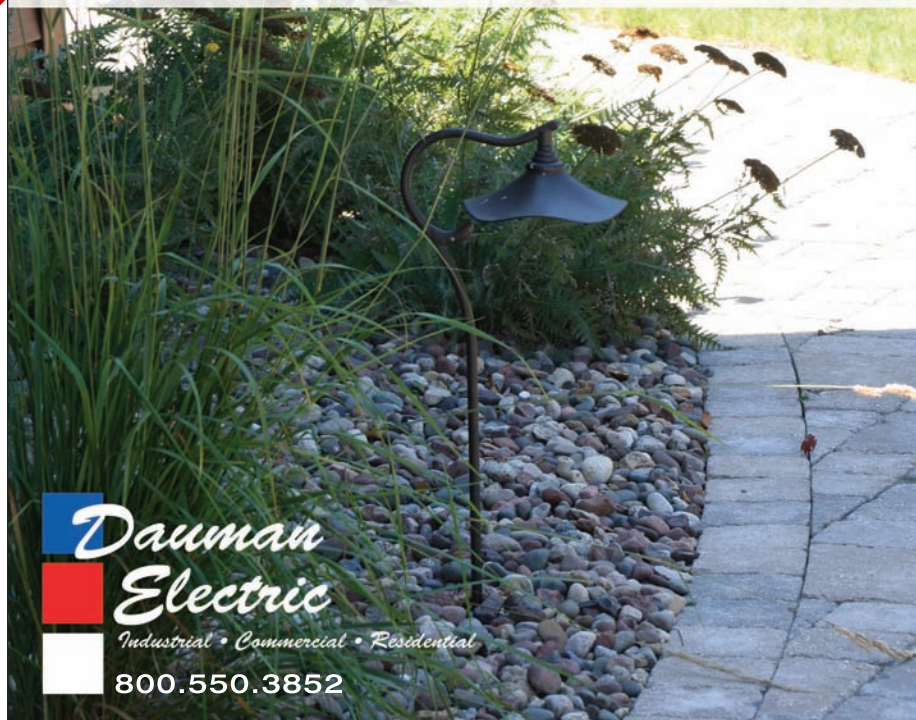
ROOM WITH A VIEW





Looking for ways to beautify your home?

VENTURE OUTDOORS AND ADD SOME "CURB APPEAL"



Dauman
Electric
Industrial • Commercial • Residential
800.550.3852

Window Design Center

A Window to the Future

Improve the performance and comfort of your home year-round with efficient windows and doors. We work with homeowners and building professionals. *Come see the view from here.*



MARVIN
Windows and Doors
Built around you.™

6524 Seybold Road, Madison
windowcenter.com • 271.8002



The Browns chose a four-bedroom apartment on the building's top floor and converted it into an open-plan one-bedroom unit. They envisioned staying there after nights on the town or when they wanted to be closer to their downtown offices. And they knew it would be an ideal spot for entertaining.

Laurel, who owns Brownhouse, an architecture and interior design firm, used these criteria as a springboard for a bold design scheme—one that resonated with them but was a departure from the style of their primary residence. She coined it "contemporary classic."

"We thought, let's make this much more urban, make it feel like a penthouse," she says.

The couple started with a base of high-end finishes: rich timborana floors from South America, cherry cabinetry, granite countertops and travertine accents. But chartreuse pops of color in the furniture, vibrant artwork and glamorous accessories take the condo to a new, decidedly fun level. Laurel wanted the space to be high-impact, much more so than in their main home. "I took more risks here," she says. "I thought, why not?" ➤



EAT,
DRINK
AND BE
MERRY

saibhajan
SPR
galatrad
phab
galibh
igabibh
khaingh
Mdbanna6
ingaitig
atpie

fttābhak
gite
tply
abitad

#5



Can't Renovate?
ILLUMINATE!

QUOTZEL

Includes All New Lighting
SPRING SALE & CLEARANCE MARCH 12-23

We hear it from happy customers everyday, "Wow, we should've done this sooner!" Splash a little light with the help of our Certified Lighting Consultants. You'll see your home in a whole new light.



Bringing Style to Light

Indoor & Outdoor Lighting | Ceiling Fans | Controls | Dimmers | Bulbs | Home Accessories

Madison • 6701 Watts Road • 271-6911 • www.madisonlighting.com
Mon & Thurs 9-8 • Tues, Wed, Fri 9-6 • Sat 10-5 • Sun 12-4



Compact Fluorescent and LED
Options. See the Difference Here!

Save Energy.
Save Money.

GO GREEN

Please Recycle
All CFL Bulbs

As Seen In
Madison
MAGAZINE

wanted passion.

I found it at Ferguson.



ARCHER™ SUITE

No matter what look you are dreaming of, the consultants at Ferguson can bring it to reality. With their passion for customer service and a huge inventory of the world's finest bath and kitchen products, high style becomes ... highly personalized. Only at Ferguson Bath, Kitchen and Lighting Galleries.

Delivering Your DreamSM

FERGUSON
Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery

THE BOLD LOOK
OF **KOHLER**

MCFARLAND:

4505 TRIANGLE ST

(608) 838-3181

WWW.FERGUSON.COM

© 2008 Ferguson

Savv Deign



While the décor is certainly eye-catching, nothing can compete with the incredible views offered by two walls of floor-to-ceiling windows. Downtown Madison reveals itself, from Bascom Hill to Lake Mendota to the Capitol to Lake Monona. "Obviously it's the million-dollar view," she says.

Together, the downtown atmosphere and contemporary furniture make the condo feel like a true getaway for the Browns. "It's just fabulous," Laurel says. "It's kind of like a mini vacation." But it's better than a hotel because it has all the comforts of home—toiletries in the bathroom, groceries in the fridge—in a style that's completely their own.

"It's a glorified hotel for me," she says. "But it's still home."

Katie Vaughn is associate editor of *Madison Magazine*.

\$500 OFF SPRING SALE! HURRY!
OFFER ENDS 3/16/09



FLOORING PERFECTED. SPACE REDEFINED.

Nature Stone® is the only flooring solution designed to permanently transform concrete floors into natural stone floors



Free in-home consultation! Call Now for Current Specials!

608.437.2221 WWW.GETNATURESTONE.COM

*Minimum 400 square foot standard stone area, not valid with other offers.

TIME
TO
CHILL

the
admir
biste
in
stigaby

the
the
the
the
the
the
the
the
the
the

Home Work

Lucky isn't the only major project on Laurel and Steve Brown's minds lately. In January, Laurel launched a new division of Brownhouse, the architecture and interior design firm she's run for five and a half years. While she previously worked primarily in commercial design, Brownhouse Home specializes in private residences. The business caters to homeowners seeking the wow factor in their living spaces, whether from redecorating or a full remodel. Laurel has hand-selected furniture lines and fabrics—many of which are represented in her own condo—for her business and notes that many are not available elsewhere in Madison. She's keenly aware of how residential projects differ from commercial work and looks forward to their creative freedom and challenges. "It's a different kind of feeling," she says. "You're trying to create a home for someone." brownhousehome.com

BREATHTAKING *Condo*



Free design consultation!

HENSEN
Fine Cabinetry

— hensenfinecabinetry.com —

Sun Prairie 608.837.2099

Minocqua 715.356.3852



Pre-Season Savings Now!

Settle into Tommy Bahama's island living with outdoor sofa-style seating groups, dining and even bar height café seating. Porch and patio ready, exclusively at Benson's.


benson's
patio • spas • games • pools

1 year
interest
free*

HOURS: Mon & Thurs 9-8 • Tues, Wed, Fri 9-6 • Sat 10-5 • Sun 11-4
2905 Parmenter St (Old Hwy 12), Middleton • 831-1855 • www.bensonsspas.com

*1 year interest free with approved credit. Minimum monthly payments required.
Balance must be paid off prior to 12 month term.

Style Upgrades

Style Upgrades
by Shayna Miller



LAUREL BROWN

ner o ronoue
ein an
ronoue oe

IF YOU HAVE \$100:

"Even if you have one hundred dollars, you don't want to waste one hundred dollars! I recommend buying new throw pillows for a sofa. You can even go to Pier 1 and buy fun, bright pillows and completely change the look of a room. Target has cute throw pillows. That's the most effective change for the money."

IF YOU HAVE \$1,000:

"A beautiful bedding ensemble can completely change the look of a bedroom and your mood. In the winter, having a beautiful, inviting bed to climb into is such a nice gift to give to yourself. So many people spend money on areas of the home that guests will see. But we're in our room every day and we spend a lot of time in it, so I recommend people spend money on the bed."

IF YOU HAVE OVER \$1,000:

"When you're going to spend a lot of money on something like a sofa or a buffet, go more conservative. I don't tend to go too trendy on an investment item. When you spend two to three thousand dollars or more, you want to know that you're going to like the piece in ten years. So go for simple fabrics, clean lines and classic looks. That's the philosophy I follow; go conservative and timeless with the investment items and trendier on the accent items. You don't want to get sick of it!"

BY SHAYNA MILLER



LAURA GROENIER

ner o Sier
ea aer

IF YOU HAVE \$100:

"If you want to freshen up a room but not spend a lot of money, change the hardware on your kitchen cabinetry or dressers, or update your lampshades. For

hardware, oil-rubbed bronze is popular.

Or buy one statement piece for the room in an accessory; you could get some pillows. Paint, if you're doing it yourself.

Hollywood glam is in style right now. That might be a white lampshade that has silver embellishment, or a crisp satin ribbon on the bottom in black, or a hanging light fixture might have crystals in it."

IF YOU HAVE \$1,000:

"Pick up a new area rug (an 'off the shelf' one).

I'd also recommend a nice piece of artwork for a focal point in the room, or purchasing nice lamps.

You could reupholster a piece in the room (a chair, not a sofa).

Change countertops in the kitchen to a laminate product that looks like granite.

Or you could do all new bedding and change the look of the master suite with paint and new bedding."

IF YOU HAVE OVER \$1,000:

"You could buy new furniture.

I'm also seeing people reinvesting in their home. The kitchen and bath immediately date a home—if it looks twenty years old and [a homeowner] is looking to invest in the resale of their home, that's where they

HOME PRODUCTS SHOW™

See the newest products, services and trends
in home building and remodeling

EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS:

visit www.homeproductsshowmadison.com
for times and topics

Get advice from hundreds of building industry experts



FRIDAY – SUNDAY
MARCH 6 – 8

Exhibition Hall at the
Alliant Energy Center
Facility parking fee applies.

should look. The kitchen really is the hub of the house, so it sets the tone of the space.

IF YOU HAVE \$1,000: You have a little bit more flexibility moneywise, but not a whole lot where furniture is concerned. You don't want to change your big pieces out but you can change a side table, ottoman or coffee table for their counterparts. There are some recycled countertops material that are out there and there are also some great salvage places for decorative tile backsplashes."



SHANA LAFORE

senior interior designer
at a firm

IF YOU HAVE \$100:

The easiest way to change a room is with paint and accessories. Bring in a different color through pillows, plants and greenery. You don't even have to do an overall paint job; just use an accent color on one wall that plays off the other walls. That can enhance the space.

Vary the texture in the space: faux fur is really popular at the moment. Or accent with metallics. These are easy changeouts and you're not spending a ton of money."

New light fixtures and lamps can help, and rugs are a nice way to change the room. You can add inexpensive artwork—Rubin's has a customizable art program. You can pick the patterns and the colors you want. The pieces are really inexpensive, and anyone can stop in at any time to look.

It helps to talk to a designer. People think they're going to spend a lot more, but they actually spend more money trying to piece meal things together themselves. Having an overall vision helps. We offer free design consulting, and that's a nice way to start."

IF YOU HAVE OVER \$1,000:

Small objects are an easy changeout, like the side chairs in a living room space, or the chairs around the dining room table if you don't want to change out the table.

You can think inexpensively and refinish the table or get a nice tablecloth, too.

If you've got a larger budget to work with, change the style of the sofa, bed, or get a new dining room table.

Try out new color palettes: find something in the same color family in a more saturated shade. I'm seeing a lot of purple. Purple isn't such a wild color; it's become a new neutral. And using complementary color is one of the tricks of the trade: pairing red with green, orange with blue, or yellow with blue. In the appropriate shade, it'll add enough 'pomp' to the space without becoming monochromatic.

Using chocolate brown is a nice way to update a room. Black isn't the contemporary color it used to be, and chocolate is the new black. We've moved away from black; it's a little too harsh. Chocolate is an easy color to work with: it can be used with warm or cool tones and it looks really nice. Purchasing a nice chocolate brown sofa will withstand the test of time because it's the new neutral!"

Shayna Miller is associate and style editor of *Madison Magazine*.

COZY COTTAGE

What do many Wisconsinites prefer as their ideal vacation? While some imagine a picturesque oceanfront tropical location, those from the state of around 15,000 lakes prefer escaping to their cottages up north. Fortunately, imagining your getaway is even easier if you attend the annual three-day **Lake and Cabin Show** at Alliant Energy Center, which exhibits the latest interior décor, furniture and outdoor equipment to enhance your new or existing cabin home. Numerous builders, as well as cabin and nature experts, will be on site to give recommendations on how to liven up your cottage. See you lakeside!

March 27–29. Friday, 2–9p, Saturday, 10a–7p and Sunday, 10a–4p. \$10 adults/\$4 kids/free under five. More info: lakehomeandcabinshow.com/wisc.

— Kimberly Ecker



SPONSORED
IN PART BY: ProBuild & Wisconsin State Journal

www.homeproductsshowmadison.com