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# Bonesteel Trout Hall

This Design Team Raised The Bar In Residential Design With Their Serious Background And Whimsical Approach

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY KARYN R. MILLET

Two of them met at UCLA design school where people often got them confused with one another. Blonde, stylish and nice, Heidi Bonesteel and Michele Trout are today the creative team behind Bonesteel Trout Hall Interiors.

Post graduation, Trout headed off to work on luxury hotels at Wilson & Associates and James Northcutt Associates, while Bonesteel focused on high end residential projects for a prominent builder in Orange County. Both women know a lot about construction with Trout having built three houses of her own. Their partner, Jill Hall, has also built several custom homes. In fact, it is Hall's bottom line approach that makes her ideal for overseeing the operational side of the business. As Trout says, "Jill gives us our wings. She keeps the creative process tight and organized."

The clients of Bonesteel Trout Hall come in two typical types: their piers—young families designing a home to grow into; and sophis-



ticated couples working on their third or fourth home. Regardless of their station in life, their clients continually inspire Bonesteel and Trout who relish the "ta da!" at the end of a job. Trout recalls a project in Newport Beach, California where the children came home from school and ran throughout the house from room to room with gigantic smiles across their faces. What more can one ask for?

Interestingly, it was the childhood ambitions of both Bonesteel and Trout to become designers. As a young girl, Bonesteel continu-





ally redecorated her bedroom time and time again, while Trout was making miniature houses out of shoeboxes.

When asked today, what well appointed room inspires them they reply, the lobby lounge at The Peninsula Beverly Hills designed by James Northcutt. Trout recalls how "Its butter yellow sofas and exquisite surroundings exude comfort and luxury, something we strive for in our own work."

Based in Pacific Palisades, Bonesteel Trout Hall is nearing com-

OPPOSITE Michele Trout and Heidi Bonesteel of Bonesteel Trout Hall are ladies in waiting as their new office space is under construction in Pacific Palisades. ABOVE Artwork by Zoe Zoł Hershey adds a focal point to this punched up living room in Pacific Palisades where Bonesteel and Trout used drapery by Hable Construction, chairs by Brenda Antin and John Robshaw sofa pillows for a bit of formal fun.



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pletion on their ideal new office space; a contemporary studio perched on a hill with open views to the ocean. Crisp white walls are set off by vaulted ceilings and sea grass floors. It is no surprise that sea grass and grass cloth are forever favorites as both designers claim they couldn't live without their box of over two hundred much used samples in their office.

Regardless of time demands and deadlines, Bonesteel and Trout agree the most important thing any designer can do is travel. And that they do together, too. Bonesteel says, "Our trips to London, Paris, Venice and Mexico have not only influenced our style but also inspired entire projects." This summer the pair will be sticking a bit closer to home with a design trip to The Hamptons.

When approaching a residential project, their first step is selecting a random image for its palette and theme that will carry through to completion. The image is used as a constant reference point for the designers and clients alike. In the past, a picture of a gorgeous bowl of fruit has been chosen as has a grouping of beautiful garden roses. Trout says, "We very seldom are asked to redo a presentation. We get inside our clients' heads and don't force our own style on a project."

ABOVE Bonesteel and Trout used leafy greens and deep browns accents to play off the crisp white of this formal, yet comfortable living room. OPPOSITE TOP LEFT Valances with fabric by Victoria Hagan let in the morning light to this family kitchen while the Farrow & Ball painted cabinetry anchors the room. A pillow with Donghia fabric provides a comfortable spot for reading. OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT Bonesteel and Trout created custom lighting fixtures with Raoul Textiles fabric for this casual dining area. Arne Jacobson antique chairs sit around a Jonas Hardy antique barn wood top table on a Shelby Williams base. The colorful banquette is covered solid blue and striped fabrics both by Donghia. OPPOSITE BOTTOM A young girl's bedroom has a grown-up feel with its chocolate paint by Benjamin Moore and custom headboard with Manuel Canovas fabric. The bedding is by Kerry Castle.

The finishing touches are everything to a Bonesteel Trout Hall project, and it is flowers that seem to make the best lasting impression. To get it just right, they create custom swatch and texture cards for their flower designer, Elizabeth Bailey of Barrington Florist. Perhaps people might still get these two confused from time to time, but make no mistake, Bonesteel and Trout have set themselves apart in the design world. □





## Some of Bonesteel and Trout's Favorite Things

Similar in looks, style and fashion, Bonesteel and Trout rarely disagree on important elements for the home

CH: What is your favorite way to bring a little light into a room?

BT: John Roselli shellback scones.

CH: What is your favorite accent item for the home?

HB: Objet d'art in the shape of birds.

MT: Anything Green.

CH: What is your favorite scent?

BT: Fracas by Jean Picquet. We have both adored it for years.

CH: What is your favorite paint color?

BT: Norwood Green by Martha Stewart's Fine Paints of Europe.

CH: What is your favorite must-have for the tabletop?

BT: William Yeoman crystal dazzles any table.

CH: What is your favorite signature wardrobe item?

BT: We love to collect vintage Vera scarves.

CH: What is your favorite gift?

BT: Anything silver is always a cherished keepsake.

CH: What is your favorite resource for antique accessories?

BT: Kier Antiques in Pacific Palisades, California. Their collection of Murano glass is always quite beautiful.

CH: Who is your favorite architect?

BT: William Hefner for his pure style, perfect proportions and gentlemanly refinement.

CH: What is your favorite way to keep your energy up?

BT: Dark chocolate covered espresso beans.

