

FIRST PHOTOS

INSIDE THE MANSION THE MAIN LINE IS BUZZING ABOUT

Philadelphia

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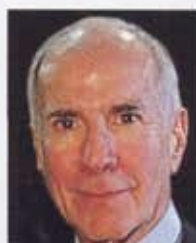
#40 \$200,000,000



#8 \$850,000,000



#1 \$2,000,000,000



#35 \$270,000,000



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WHY PHILLY GUYS ARE "GROSS!"

STEVEN LAGOS: OPRAH'S
CENTER CITY JEWELER





VERSAILLES OF THE MAIN LINE: The living room, featuring 10-foot one-inch ceilings, showcases the owners' burgeoning art collection. "We started with the Old Masters," says interior designer Barbara Eberlein, "and ended up with the Impressionists and contemporary artists." The cabinet, a Regency mahogany clothes press, was retrofitted with a flat screen television.

OPPOSITE: The circa-1910 house, originally designed by architect Horace Trumbauer.

The HOUSE That ATE BRYN MAWR

It's big. It's Barbara. It's causing buzz all over the Main Line. A peek inside the gazillion-dollar resurrection of a Horace Trumbauer estate

BY MEG COHEN RAGAS

An exquisite drawing by Matisse hangs above the fireplace in the bar. A Renoir graces another wall. There is a \$400,000 antique English Axminster rug in the vast ballroom; outside, the Roman mosaic-style pool, hand-tiled with 400,000 one-inch glass squares, cost \$250,000. Gianni Versace's Empire daybed, auctioned from his South Beach mansion, anchors a clubby, masculine gold-and-brown guest bedroom.

The buzz on the Main Line is that the cost of the gorgeous, eye-popping renovation of this 25,000-square-foot, 12-bedroom, circa-1910 Bryn Mawr mansion—including art, furniture, structural work and landscaping—was as much as \$50 million. It may well be Philadelphia's most lavish private home, filled with antiques selected by interior designer Barbara Eberlein and bought in Europe and at New York galleries and auction houses. The owner's art collection includes several Old Masters, a Rodin marble, and a Pissaro Paris street scene.

"I guess you could say the project kind of snowballed," the owner of the



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM CRANE



HAVING A BALL: Eberlein fashioned the 40-foot-long Continental salon-style ballroom (above) around the centerpiece of a 19th-century English Axminster rug. The nude on the far wall is by Pierre Bonnard.



DINNER IS SERVED: None of the furniture in the neoclassical dining room dates from before 1810 or after 1828, including the horsehair-upholstered chairs. The carpet is Indian, made in the early 20th century.

house says, with a wry smile. "I originally was going to update the kitchen and put in four new boilers." The house, which sits high on a hilltop and has eastern views, was originally designed by architect Horace Trumbauer, who also designed the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Scott estate, Ardrossan. It is the sort of mansion the Lords rambled about in *The Philadelphia Story*. The owner, who prefers to remain unnamed, is in his early 30s, but despite his youth, he fell in love with the home's crown moldings, African mahogany doors and elegant, oversize rooms.

Eberlein shared his enthusiasm. "There's a logic to Trumbauer's layouts," she says. "His scale was grand, and he understood how spaces flowed together. I saw a structure with amazing details and huge, exciting potential." In between shopping around two continents, Eberlein worked with a dream team of experts, including contractor Marty Snyder of QED Construction, who updated the HVAC systems and repaired plaster, wiring, plumbing and woodwork. He supervised the installation of



CHEERS: The bar features hand painted Chinoiserie wallpaper, 17th-century chairs bought at auction in England, and drawings by Matisse, Picasso and Modigliani.






ÜBER WATER ELEMENT: *The design team's Marty Snyder and Barbara Eberlein by the 25-by-60-foot pool that features three depths, including one shallow enough to put furniture in, inspired by Philippe Starck's pool at Miami's Delano Hotel.*

the stereo system, the high-speed Internet cable, and the new Belgian-block motor court, and built the pool house, designed by architect Spence Kass as a perfect miniature of the main house. Kass and landscape architect Chuck Hess designed the 60-foot-long pool, which will be heated to 90 degrees year-round, and its 16-person Jacuzzi. Hess is still working on the grounds' intricate plantings of mature trees and bushes, intended to hide neighboring houses, that include an English-style "secret garden." The three-plus-acre grounds hold fountains, a conservatory and an orchard.

Certainly, the house would function well as a small luxury hotel. After all, the Tuscan-themed basement, which Eberlein has dubbed "Party Central," contains a Marty Snyder-built luxe screening room, a wine cellar, a tasting room and a bar. The circa-1815 American dining room table, which the owner found at Hirschel & Adler in New York, seats 14; the ballroom, with its \$120,000 pair of console tables, could easily hold 100 friends, and the new Belgian-block terrace has room for 100 more. (Eberlein's clients hosted their own wedding reception here—before moving in last August.)

With all its art and antiques, you could argue that this house is one very beautiful investment, and one that's surely no riskier than the stock market. 



DECK THE HALLS: "In hallways, you have to vary the element heights to give you lots of different sight lines," Eberlein says. **OPPOSITE:** *The Louis XV sofa in this feminine guest room, found by Eberlein through a dealer in Paris, is framed by exuberant drapery, including a shirred Austrian shade. The carpet is Aubusson, circa 1900.*