

ON TIME'S SIDE



A DEEP AFFINITY FOR ANTIQUE AND VINTAGE FURNITURE LIES AT THE HEART OF THIS FAMILY HOME IN GREENSIDE, JOBURG

TEXT **TESS PATERSON** STYLING **TIAAN NAGEL** PHOTOGRAPHS **ELSA YOUNG**



Pots by Le Creuset (lecreuset.co.za) on freestanding shelves in Saul and Carmit Bamberger's home in Greenside. The Smeg stove is from Hirsch's (hirschs.co.za). OPPOSITE The buffet and Victorian chairs are from Miller's Antiques (millersonsiemert.com). The oval mirror was sourced at Saul's former store, Olde 'n' New.



An oak haberdashery cabinet from the original Miller's store in Doornfontein doubles up as a room divider in the eat-in kitchen. The stove is by Morso (morso.co.za). OPPOSITE Carmit's blue and white crockery collection includes dinner plates bought in De Rust in the Karoo, and soup plates that were a gift from a friend.



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e're Jozi folk,' says Carmit Bamberger, cheroot in one hand and a mug of coffee in the other. 'Our home is close enough to our business in Doornfontein, yet it's also an escape from the city – a peaceful family haven that we've enjoyed for 27 years.'

Carmit and her husband Saul own Miller's Antiques, an established family firm that specialises in reproduction English and French furniture. 'My grandfather started the business, and in the 1970s, when my father had the business, it was the biggest antiques store in the southern hemisphere,' says Carmit. 'I took over from my late father in 2010 and we shifted the focus to custom-finished pieces. We didn't want a generic look; most of our furniture is hand-polished or -painted solid raw mahogany. You can crank it up or down, from French provincial to edgy and modern – anything is possible.'

The couple share their home with varsity-going son Noah, and daughter

Neela, who lives in the airy garden cottage. 'When we first bought the house I couldn't see the potential at all,' admits Carmit. 'It was orange face brick with different wallpaper in every room and fluorescent lighting above the pelmets. Fortunately Saul saw through all of that, and after two renovations we've achieved an easy flow that suits our lifestyle and personalities.'

Saul and Carmit describe their home as a combination of the original Miller's and the new Miller's. Throughout, painted furniture is juxtaposed with vintage and antique pieces, including some favourites from Saul's former store, Olde 'n' New. Familiar and comfortable, there's nevertheless a note of elegant restraint – a distinct Karoo-farmhouse flavour in the leafy heart of Greenside. 'Each December we take a road trip though South Africa,' says Carmit. 'We've tried to visit as many small towns as possible and are continually inspired by the history and quirkiness >



behind these dorps. Prince Albert has long been a favourite; we've bought several pieces there over the years.'

This family home revolves around social gatherings, from Friday night suppers at the generous dining table to spontaneous jamming sessions in the living room. 'It's an open house; you'll always find good food and music, and a steady flow of visitors,' explains Carmit. The kitchen has its own eat-in space and doubles as a family room. 'Thanks to the wood-burning stove, we spend a lot of time here in winter,' says Saul. 'In summer we make the most of the kitchen's easy connection to the garden; there's always a group of friends around the pool.' The couple's discerning eye is perhaps most noticeable in this room, where a Victorian oak haberdashery cabinet functions as a room divider. 'As a child I'd watch enthralled as crates of blue and white crockery from England were unpacked on the pavement outside my father's shop. I've loved this combination ever since and filled the cabinet with our collection of blue and white china.'

In the living room, a Steinway grand piano takes centre stage. Saul is a gifted pianist, arranging regular concerts with professional musicians, while Noah's forte is jazz piano. 'I call this the rehearsal room,' says Carmit. 'Noah plays in two bands and Saul often brings out artists from overseas. I never know who I might run into when I get home.'

This space has gently evolved with its owners in their almost three decades there. 'When our children were toddlers we were real minimalists - there was enough space for them to ride their black bikes from one end of the house to the other. We've realised that a home should be the embodiment of your life's journey. We enjoy the city and we enjoy getting away. It's been a happy place to be.' ◻ millersonsiemert.com

ABOVE Three Pierneef woodcuts and an ink drawing by Tinus de Jongh are a focal point in the passageway. They were originally hung in Carmit's father's office. LEFT Musician Saul practises in the living room. The carpet is from Paco (pacorugs.co.za). OPPOSITE Saul found the glass and timber doors years ago and added brass handles from the original Miller's bathroom. The platters above were found at the Prince Albert Country Store (princealbertcountrystay.com). The slim cabinet in the kitchen is from Miller's Antiques.



The main bedroom features a day bed from Miller's French Collection 2014. The chandelier was bought through Russell Kaplan Auctioneers (rkauctioneers.co.za). OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM In the main bathroom a plant stand and carved mirror from Miller's Antiques add textural detail; the white tiles are from Italtile (italtile.co.za); Saul converted a discarded outdoor water feature into a basin for Neela's bathroom by adding white enamel along with copper piping and spigot.



CARMIT'S HOME TRUTHS

My advice for designing a kitchen to leave room for at least one freestanding antique, vintage or retro unit to create atmosphere and character. **My can't-do-without kitchen item** is my Morso fireplace. I always look forward to winter and those cold highveld evenings around the fire. **The best thing about living where we do** is that good old-fashioned neighbourhood feeling. **Style** is in your blood – aesthetic, instinctive and eternal. My own style leans strongly towards the past. **I've always loved** fashion and interiors-wise I'm strongly influenced by Karoo style right now – collected pieces and an eclectic look. **My interiors motto** is to keep it uncluttered and simple, and don't be afraid of empty spaces. **My most treasured piece of furniture** is our Victorian oak and glass haberdashery display cabinet filled with my blue and white china collection. **My signature dish** is fillet and I believe my roast potatoes aren't too shabby. Spinach cannelloni for the veggies. **My favourite restaurants?** Locally, Seven Arches in Prince Albert. Or any pizza place along the Amalfi Coast. **My favourite getaway** is Cape St Francis beach with my boogie board. **My secret talent** is to make things happen on a tight budget. **My worst impulse buy** was a really expensive, beautiful Rundholz jersey. I didn't read the label and discovered it had been made with a raccoon hair blend – freaked me out totally. **The soundtrack to my perfect weekend** includes the best of Burt Bacharach – 'This Guy's in Love with You' on repeat.