

WHAT'S IS OLD NEW AGAIN

Architect Scott Jaffa transforms a 1922 Federal Heights house, concocting a surprising mix of past and present to create a fresh new home for his family.

BY TESSA WOOLF
PHOTOS BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN



"The house is large but it lives perfectly," says architect Scott Jaffa of the new Federal Heights home he shares with his young twin daughters. In the evenings, he and the girls gather in the living room to read and hang out. The sectional is B&B Italia, the table is Paul Evans, the fireplace is original and the art is from family and Jaffa's travels.



As CEO of the Jaffa Group, architect Scott Jaffa has made a name for himself designing sleek, modern dwellings in the mountains of Park City. So when he relocated from Summit County to Salt Lake City with his young twin daughters, it came as a surprise that he chose a traditional, 100-year-old home on a quiet, tree-lined street in the historic Federal Heights neighborhood, nestled near the University of Utah and just minutes from downtown. Sleek and modern, this abode most definitely was not. But for Jaffa, it was love at first sight.

"I saw it literally the morning it was listed—I walked into the house, and said, 'I want to write an offer.' It just felt right," recalls Jaffa. "There were already 12 offers, so I wrote an offer and a letter. In the letter, I said that I was relocating my children and this would be a great place to raise them. The house just spoke to me, and I wanted to give it back the glory it once had."

Built in 1922, the home was a little dated, but Jaffa saw its beauty and potential. "The bones were great," he says. "I walked in here, and I thought, all I have to do is paint and add new carpet." Famous

TOP LEFT: From the street, Scott Jaffa's charming gray-hued house is every bit the traditional home one would expect in Federal Heights, but colorful Adirondack chairs indicate this house may offer some surprises. "That's why I leave the orange chairs out front: they give a little hint about what's inside," says Jaffa.

BOTTOM LEFT: For the petite powder bathroom located off the stairs leading down to the basement, Jaffa sourced a small slice of marble for the sink and a bold Mylar wallpaper that adds big personality to the small space.



The first pop of color in the home hits when you step through the front door and into the foyer. The console is Paul Evans, and the light fixture and stair rods are original to the home. Jaffa's twin daughters, pictured here, have been known to slide down the stair railing from time to time.

PHOTO ADAM FINKLE





Jaffa chose comfortable but stylish seating, a framed TV that doubles as an art piece, and vintage-inspired venetian blinds for the light-filled family room. The vintage orange vinyl chairs are by Richard Schultz for Knoll.



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last words. “Well ... that’s not exactly what happened,” he says, laughing.

Jaffa gave the home a total renovation, from reconfiguring room layouts and replacing the roof and windows, to refacing the exterior with new stucco. Upstairs, he treated the frumpy master bedroom and bathroom to a makeover, and created a dreamy domain for his daughters. Downstairs, he transformed the basement into a posh but practical playroom for the girls and their friends (complete with a ping-pong table and pool access). But Jaffa was mindful when it came to maintaining the home’s historic integrity and century-old personality. “An old home should feel like an old home,” he says. He kept many of the original details intact, such as vintage metal St. Charles cabinets in the kitchen and floor tiles in the family and dining rooms. He also repurposed materials from the home in new ways as much as possible.

But the real fun for Jaffa came when it was time to decorate and furnish the four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath house. “I wanted it to be bright and light, which is the opposite of what you think an old house should be,” he says. He drew inspiration from the ’60s and ’70s, and from

LEFT: In the kitchen, Jaffa kept the original St. Charles metal cabinets and black soapstone countertops. He breathed new life into the space with sky-blue paint, vibrant '70s-vibes window coverings, and a chic La Cornue stove.

While the rest of the home is bright and colorful, Jaffa kept the dining room dark and moody. "You're always in there at night," he explains of the color choice. Jaffa removed a door that previously led into the kitchen and built a custom dish cabinet that matched the existing wood trim. The table is by Paul Evans.





Jaffa transformed the large basement into a hip playroom for his daughters. The space features white epoxy concrete floors and exposed pipes. "I figured, why not celebrate all of the pipes and make them part of the design and just paint them black?" he explains. The basement also includes a small gym, bathroom, guest room and laundry room.

RIGHT: The large but private backyard features a pool and an outdoor kitchen. "We're always out there—we never want to leave," says Jaffa. "And that was the whole point: to be the house where all the kids would want to come; where my girls can invite their friends over and hang out."



chic Parisian apartments with their palette of clean white walls, classic crown molding and cool, modern furniture. As a contrast to the home's traditional framework, he hand-selected a colorful blend of art and furniture paired with a fresh coat of white paint and stylish wallcoverings. He even let his daughters pick out playful wallpaper for their own bathrooms.

Jaffa's design rule of thumb? "I try to find a good mix of eclectic and new," he says, noting he loves the juxtaposition of modern and vintage—as evidenced by the pairing of his grandma's piano with a custom Lucite bench in the living room. "I don't like suites of things, I think it should be a little more interesting." Jaffa sourced items from the likes of 1stdibs.com and beloved local stores such as The Green Ant and Light Spot Modern Design. Favorite finds include pieces by Paul Evans (one of Jaffa's favorites), B&B Italia, Milo Baughman, Pierre Paulin chairs, and a Pucci rug and pillows. "I was in Italy two years ago and bought Pucci scarves, then I had a seamstress turn them into pillow covers," he explains. As for his admirable art collection, some of it came from his family and some of it came from his travels. "I love buying art when I travel because I can look at it and remind myself of my trip—it's always there, unlike a t-shirt or other souvenir."

When the renovation was all said and done, Jaffa says he enjoyed designing something different from his usual Park City dwellings. "I had a lot of fun with this house; I had a blast. Every project just sort of says something different to me." If these walls could talk, they'd no doubt be singing Jaffa's praises. ■