



Artistic License

A Haverford couple transforms their condominium into a private art gallery.

The vivacious female featured in a large vintage poster by artist Jules Chéret welcomes guests to Elayne and Ron Bleznak's Haverford condominium. It's only a precursor of what's to come.

The Bleznaks took advantage of a hallway leading from the front door to the main living area, turning it into a gallery walk. Lining the walls are works by Toulouse-Lautrec, Steinlen and Mucha, renowned poster artists in their time. An avid collector, Ron can tell the story behind every work and the artist who created it. "I've been collecting these for about 40

years. Posters were the only thing I could afford at the time," he says. "I love them all, but Steinlen is my favorite."

55-PLUS AND FABULOUS

Living in the suburbs wasn't what Elayne Bleznak initially envisioned for her retirement. The couple left behind a 7,000-square-foot log cabin they'd built themselves 25 years earlier in Abington Township. "I always thought I wanted to be in Center City," she says, but her husband wasn't as sold on the idea. "He loved having green around him and looking out at trees."

Despite Ron's reservations, they moved to Rittenhouse Square. They lasted just a year. City living just didn't feel like home.

The Bleznaks' son lived in Wynnewood, and he encouraged his parents to look at Athertyn, a new 55-plus community. "I knew nothing about the Main Line area, but we liked the idea of being close to our son and his family," says Elayne. "The first time we visited, I felt like I was in another state. It seemed so far because I wasn't familiar with the area, but it was beautiful."

Their main priorities were ample wall space and high ceilings *continued on page 55*

Resources

BUILDER: Pohlig, Malvern, (610) 647-4700, www.pohligbuilders.com. **INTERIOR DESIGN:** MM Interiors, Myra Prusky and Marcy Monheit, Philadelphia, (215) 884-4923, www.mm-interiors-inc.com.



(Clockwise from opposite page) Selections from the owners' extensive antique-poster collection cover the walls of the master bedroom and the entry hallway; the contemporary kitchen is outfitted with an array of custom features; art dominates the modern dining area, as well.



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for display. The two-bedroom model also had a den, so it could accommodate visitors. A covered balcony looks out to Haverford Reserve. "We hear the birds, and we also get beautiful sunsets," says Elayne. "We didn't look anywhere else. We feel like it's home."

The Bleznaks are just the sort of buyers Don and Todd Pohlig were targeting when they broke ground at Athertyn in 2009. After decades of building million-dollar residential communities in the area, the Pohlighs recognized the demand for downsized lifestyle options where empty nesters didn't have to worry about upkeep.

And there are plenty of amenities, including a clubhouse with a fitness center, a golf simulator, and recreation rooms for the many on-site clubs and events. There's also an outdoor swimming pool with a Jacuzzi, a putting green, and a tennis court. "We have a dinner club. They have lectures," says Elayne.

FEAST FOR THE EYES

There's not a room in the Bleznaks' condo that doesn't have an antique poster on the wall. "We just love looking at them," says Elayne. "With this piece here, I can be alone and feel like I have company."

She's referring to Steinlen's "La Rue," the vibrant Paris street scene that takes up an entire wall in the dining area. The poster's massive size required expert in-home framing. The Bleznaks used the blueprints to map out where each poster would be hung.

After years in a log cabin, Elayne craved more modern surroundings. "It's an advantage when you're able to work around the art," says interior designer Myra Prusky, who'd worked with the Bleznaks on two other properties. "She had a beautiful Oriental rug from her last house. That and the art were our go points."

CUSTOM TOUCHES

Prusky and partner Marcy Monheit designed all the lighting to accent the artwork in the main living space, which includes a dining area, a living room and a kitchen. They also brought in custom furniture, including a spacious sectional couch and a round, red kitchen table with a laminated fabric finish.

For the dining room, the Bleznaks took the base from their previous home's table and added a new crackle-glass top. In the guest bedroom and bath, the designers chose a bold orange trellis-patterned wallpaper. "During the Art Nouveau period, the Victorians used a lot of wall coverings, with prints and patterns," says Prusky.

Now settled, the Bleznaks couldn't feel more at home. "Our poster collection is very happy," says Elayne.

As for living in the suburbs again: "I definitely love it," says Ron. "And now she loves it, too." **MLT**