

# ELLEDECOR

REESE  
WITHERSPOON'S  
12 ESSENTIALS

## CHIC SUMMER STYLE

RELAXING  
RETREATS  
FROM  
COAST  
TO  
COAST



08033  
0 279481 1 08 >

JULY/AUGUST 2015  
USA \$5.99  
ELLEDECOR.COM



# FRIENDS INDEED

*When TV producer Jamie Tarses turns to her friend Pamela Shamshiri of Commune Design for advice, a small renovation blossoms into a top-to-bottom transformation—and an even deeper bond*

TEXT BY DEGEN PENER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD POWERS  
PRODUCED BY ROBERT RUFINO

Here's a novel way to complete a major home renovation: Talk about paint colors and room configurations every morning at the gym during workouts with your interior designer. That's how Jamie Tarses, one of Hollywood's most successful television producers, and designer Pamela Shamshiri, a partner in the Los Angeles-based firm Commune Design, often stayed on top of the details during the complete remake of Tarses's 1920s Spanish-style onetime bachelorette pad in the Hollywood Hills into a larger, more livable house.

The two women met because their kids go to the same school and have become close friends. They were exercise buddies before they started working together. "We would talk about the house while we were on the elliptical machine," says Shamshiri. Tarses jokes, "Pam was trying to get a workout in, and I was making her work."

Shamshiri admits that, initially, she was "terrified" to tackle a major renovation with a friend. "Design projects are always stressful, and this ended up being a massive undertaking," says the designer, whose firm has made a name for itself with its eclectic projects, both commercial (the Ace hotels in Palm Springs and L.A.) and residential. The pair's relationship shifted from personal to professional when Shamshiri offered up her services in a silent auction benefiting their kids' school. Tarses—who spent nearly a decade as an executive at NBC and has produced such series as *Happy Endings*, *Franklin & Bash*, and the upcoming TBS comedy *Your Family or Mine*—was the lucky bidder. "The allotment was to work on one room," Shamshiri notes.

Her client's room choice surprised Shamshiri. "The whole start of this was that I wanted to move a staircase," says Tarses. The stairs

**LEFT:** The living room of the Hollywood Hills home of Jamie Tarses and Paddy Aubrey, which was designed and renovated by Pamela Shamshiri of Commune Design; the sofas by George Smith are upholstered in an Oscar de la Renta for Lee Jofa fabric, the cocktail table is a custom design, and the stools from Hollywood at Home and wing chair are vintage; the ceiling fixture is by Lindsey Adelman, the vintage mirror is from JF Chen, the fireplace is original to the house, and the walls are painted in Benjamin Moore's Hale Navy. For details, see Resources.



Vintage armchairs flank a custom-made cocktail table by artist Alma Allen in the family room; the long table was originally used in a factory cafeteria, and the vintage rug is Iranian. **FACING PAGE:** In the entry, a mirror by Codor Design hangs above a vintage console from JF Chen, the 1960s light fixture is from Blackman Cruz, the floors are reclaimed wood, and the walls are painted in Ivory White by Benjamin Moore. For details, see Resources.





in question—at the back of the house, off the kitchen and leading to the lowest level of the three-story house—“were narrow and steep, and people would hit their heads.” The bigger issue was that the stairs were so hidden that, even though the bottom floor included a screening room, “no one went down there,” says Tarses.

It was obvious where the stairs needed to go: at the front of the house, as a continuation of the main staircase (which leads from the ground floor up), to create a seamless flow. That one change produced a cascade of issues—and opportunities. With the stairs gone at the rear, why not open up a wall into the garage and turn it into a family room? “I didn’t think we needed another room,” says Tarses, “but the irony is that we now spend most of our time there. It all started really casually, and then it kept going from there.”

Terraces were expanded, and windows and French doors were added, all of which increased the enjoyment of the stunning views of the Sunset Strip and beyond. The kitchen was made more family-friendly by opening it up to include an adjacent dining area. “Jamie has a love for Spanish style, and I think she wasn’t sure we could be true to the roots of the house and accomplish as many of the conveniences of modern living as we did,” Shamshiri explains.

Most dramatically, a tiered, largely unusable hillside yard was transformed into two invitingly terraced garden areas, which required “sinking a trillion caissons,” says Tarses.

In the end, the family—Tarses and her restaurateur husband, Paddy Aubrey, who co-owns Silver Lake’s Hyperion Public, have two young children—moved out for almost two years as the plans grew in ambition. “I started to realize as we got into it that redoing a house is an emotional thing,” Tarses admits. “You keep driving home to check on the place you’ve been in for over a decade, and less of it is standing every time. It was basically gone. They took it down to the studs.”



The kitchen features vintage pendants from Obsolete, BassamFellows stools from Design Within Reach, and a sink by Shaws with fittings by Jacló; the custom-made cabinetry is painted in Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue, the countertops are Carrara marble, and the hood by Modern-Aire is custom made, as is the flooring by Granada Tile. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** The terrace's dining table and chairs are custom designs, and the tiles are by Granada Tile. Wyatt and Sloane in the backyard; a custom-made bench arcs around the trunk of a Chinese elm. Custom sofas, covered in fabrics from Diamond Foam & Fabric, and a 1950s cocktail table and Belgian chest, both from JF Chen, in the lower-level lounge; the stool is by Brendan Ravenhill, the ceiling is covered in a wallpaper from Holly Hunt, and the walls are sheathed in tiles by Waterworks. For details, see Resources.

