

# *The Hunt for* BURIED TREASURE

It took three shopping trips to the European countryside to truly complete this wine country getaway.

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## VESTIBULE

Custom **Backen & Backen** steel doors, a table from an old saddle factory, and planters created from French oak fruit crates punctuate the grand entrance of this Healdsburg, California, home. **Lanterns:** custom, **Paul Ferrante**. **Flooring:** antiqued Sheldon de brun limestone, **Concept Studio**.



**VIEW**

“The home is in the Alexander Valley of Healdsburg, and looks out towards the Russian River and vineyards,” Harte says. Cabernet grapes grow on the five-acre property.

**IKE A THEATER SET, THE** 20-foot ceilings of this Healdsburg, California, home put every furnishing, accent, and architectural flourish in the spotlight. Doors and windows stretch 10 feet tall (the standard is seven feet). “It gives such a feeling of scale and panorama,

very proper and classic but it has a lot of drama,” Sheldon Harte, Laguna Beach-based designer and principal at Harte Brownlee & Associates, says. Harte refurbished the sleek new house by architect Kirby Lee, formerly of Backen & Backen, for repeat clients: a couple with three grown children who would be spending lots of time there relaxing with family and friends.

Located in the heart of California wine country, where old wine barrels are often converted to cocktail tables and corks into trivets, the house could have easily skewed kitschy. Not in Harte’s hands. **“The owner didn’t want the typical wine country aesthetic,” he explains. “She wanted an interesting mix, which is indicative of her sense of taste and style, and a terrific eclectic way of dressing.** It was really important that the house reflected that.”

Vital in their quest: three buying trips to Europe, where both client and designer dug for buried treasure throughout the English countryside, Belgium, and beyond. “We have an amazing guide in Paris that I’ve used for years,” Harte admits, stopping short of revealing the name of his source. “She’s almost 90!” Among the many finds the team chanced upon during their sprees: an old stable gate (now a headboard) and an early 1900s brass-edged steel table from the Banque de Paris (now in the kitchen). In lieu of dangling pendants over the latter, Harte had a pair of early 20th-century hand-painted zodiac orbs turned into lamps. “We had fun reimagining and redeploying things from what their original use and intention was,” he says. Heavy materials—steel, zinc, and French oak in abundance—form a grounded backdrop and add to a calming palette inspired by the surrounding landscape.

The house is stocked with so many fascinating items that it doubles as a museum. But every piece is personal. One favorite find is a circa 1950 Japanese cryptomeria wood carving of a toad, complete with baby toads on its back; this takes pride of place in the foyer. “She is Japanese-American, and it signifies family and children to her,” the designer says of his client. “It sets the tone for the house, and starts telling the story that it’s a place for family and friends.”



THIS HANDKER-CHIEF-LIKE SHADE IS MADE FROM PLASTER!

**ENTRY**

“We designed the front door on an offset pivot—it weighs probably a hundred pounds,” Harte says of the wood and steel strap jaw-dropper. **Chandelier:** Patrice Dangel, *Galerie du Passage, Paris*. **Planter:** Willy Guhl. **Console:** Philip Stites. **Rug:** Woven. **Plaster foot:** Lee Stanton. **Cryptomeria wood carving of toads:** Japanese, Patrick and Ondine.

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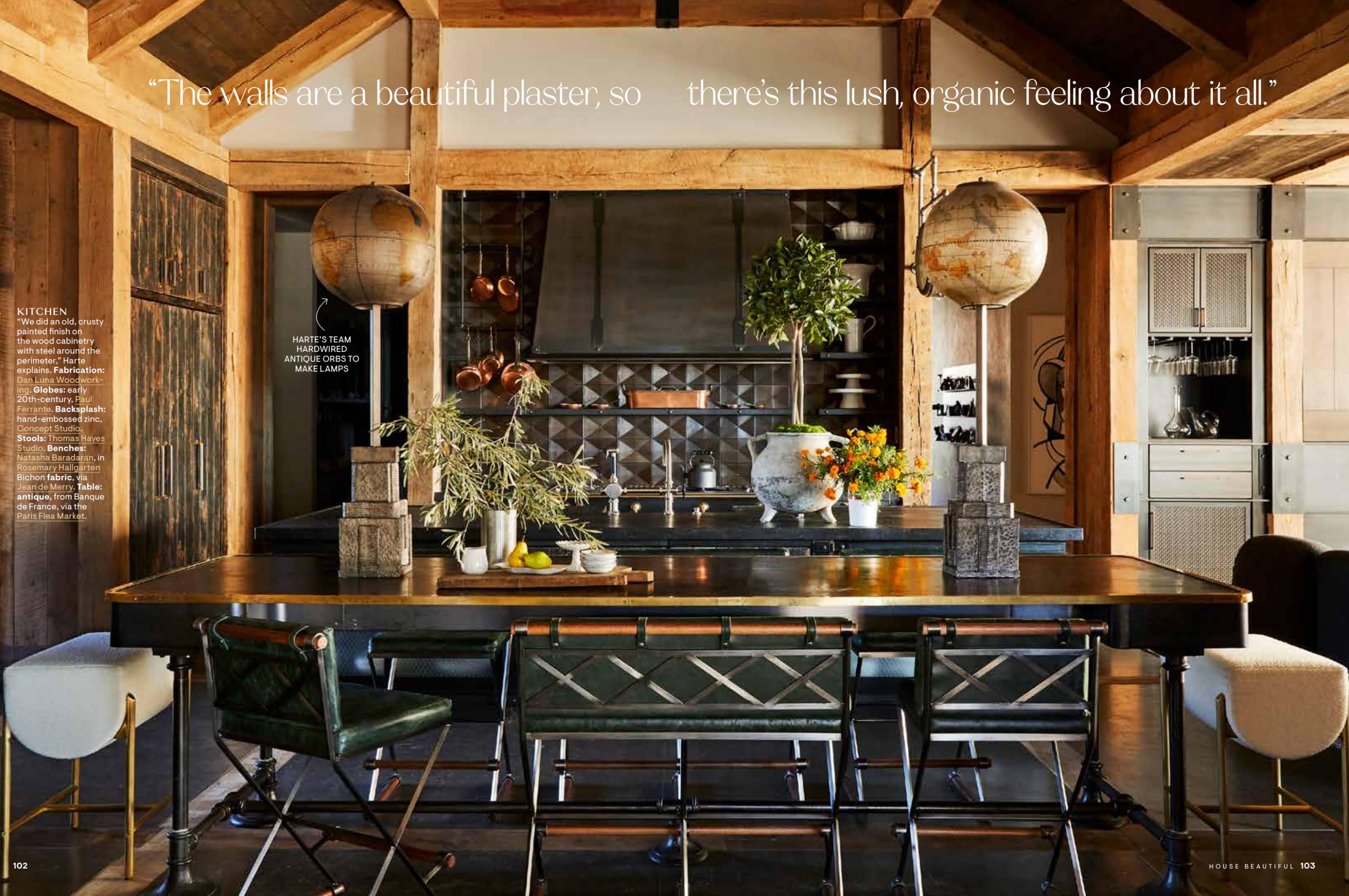
original use to work for the house.”

“The walls are a beautiful plaster, so there’s this lush, organic feeling about it all.”

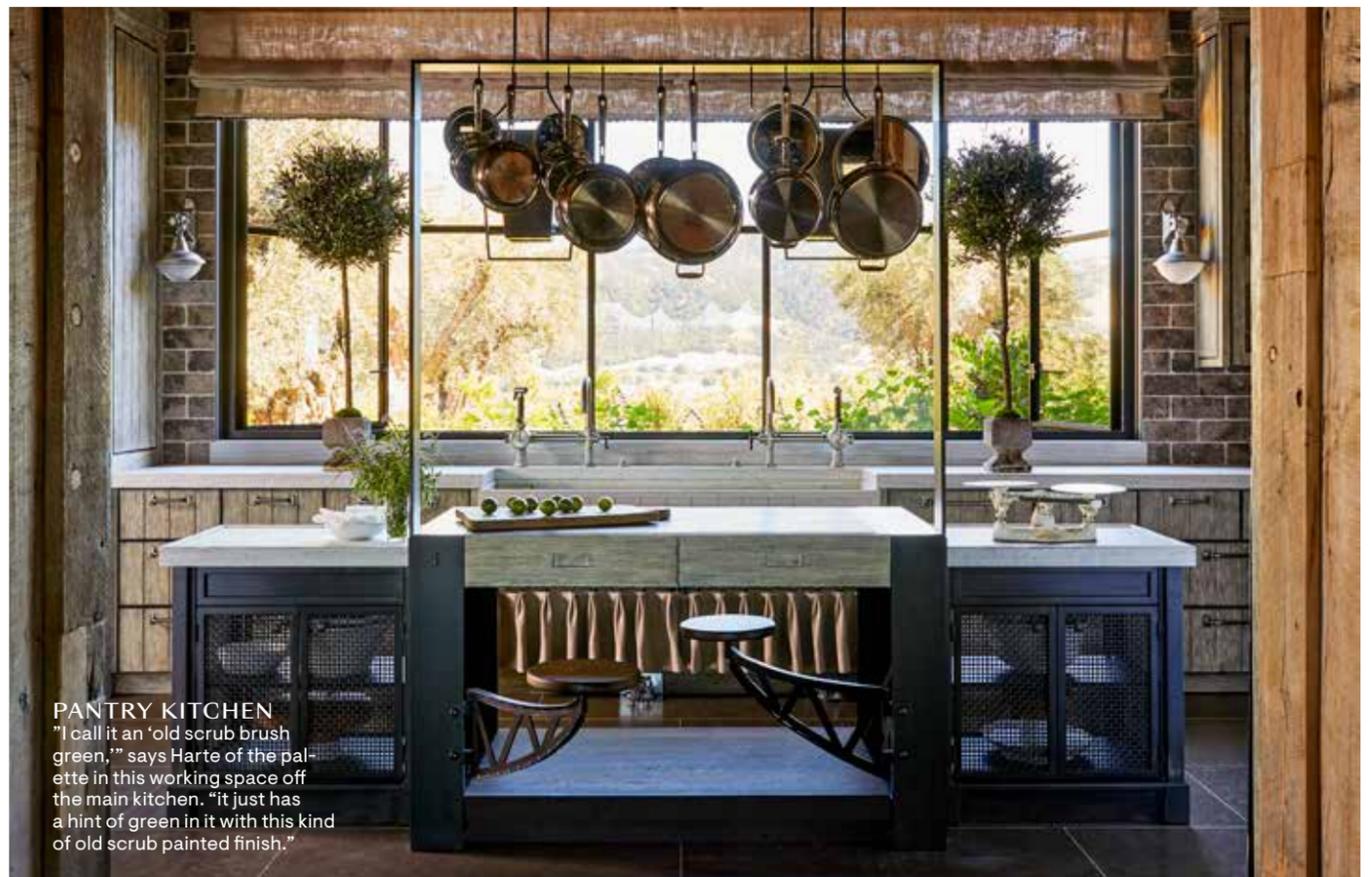
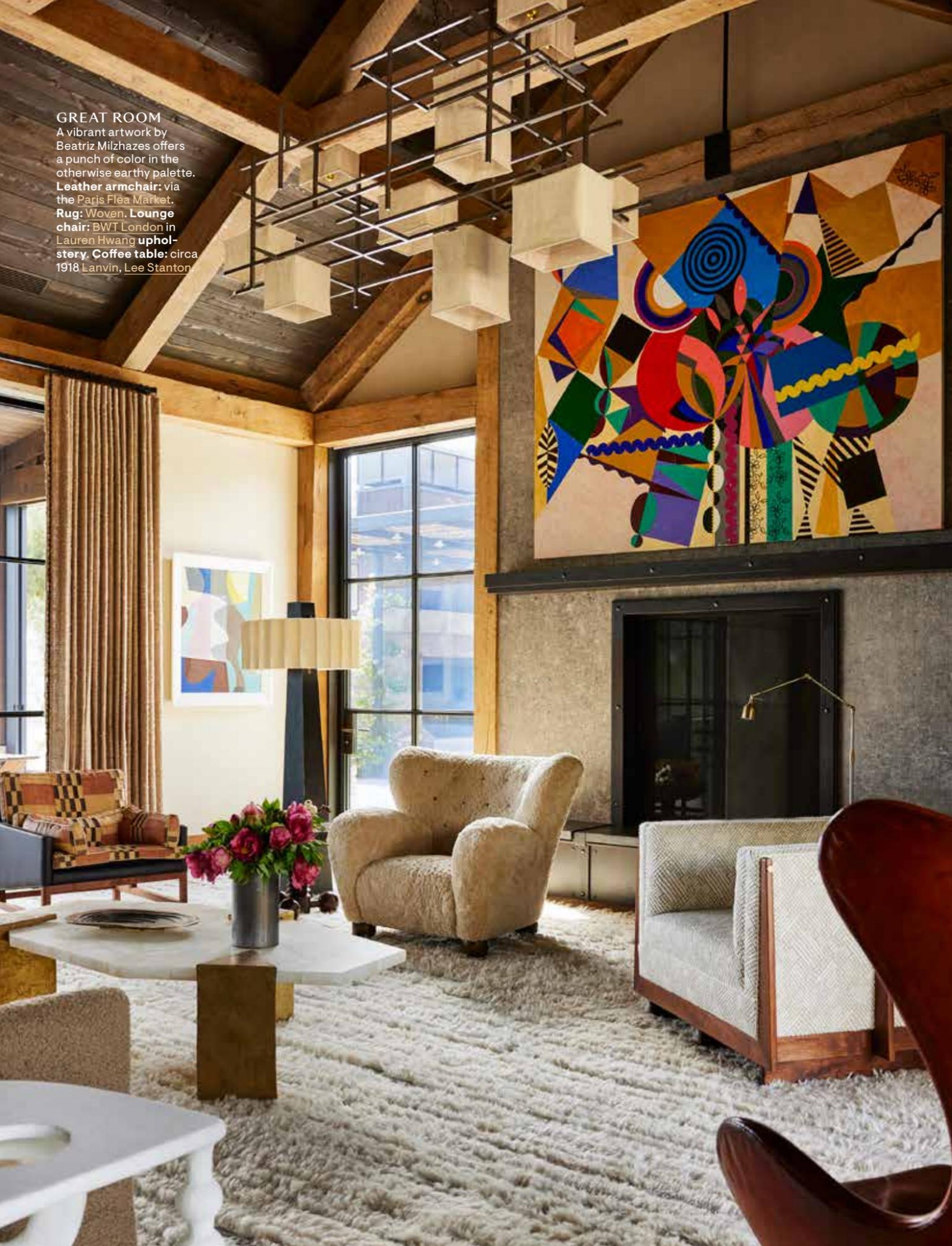
**KITCHEN**

“We did an old, crusty painted finish on the wood cabinetry with steel around the perimeter,” Harte explains. **Fabrication:** Dan Luna Woodworking. **Globes:** early 20th-century, Paul Ferrante. **Backsplash:** hand-embossed zinc, Concept Studio. **Stools:** Thomas Hayes Studio. **Benches:** Natasha Baradaran, in Rosemary Hallgarten Bichon fabric, via Jean de Merry. **Table:** antique, from Banque de France, via the Paris Flea Market.

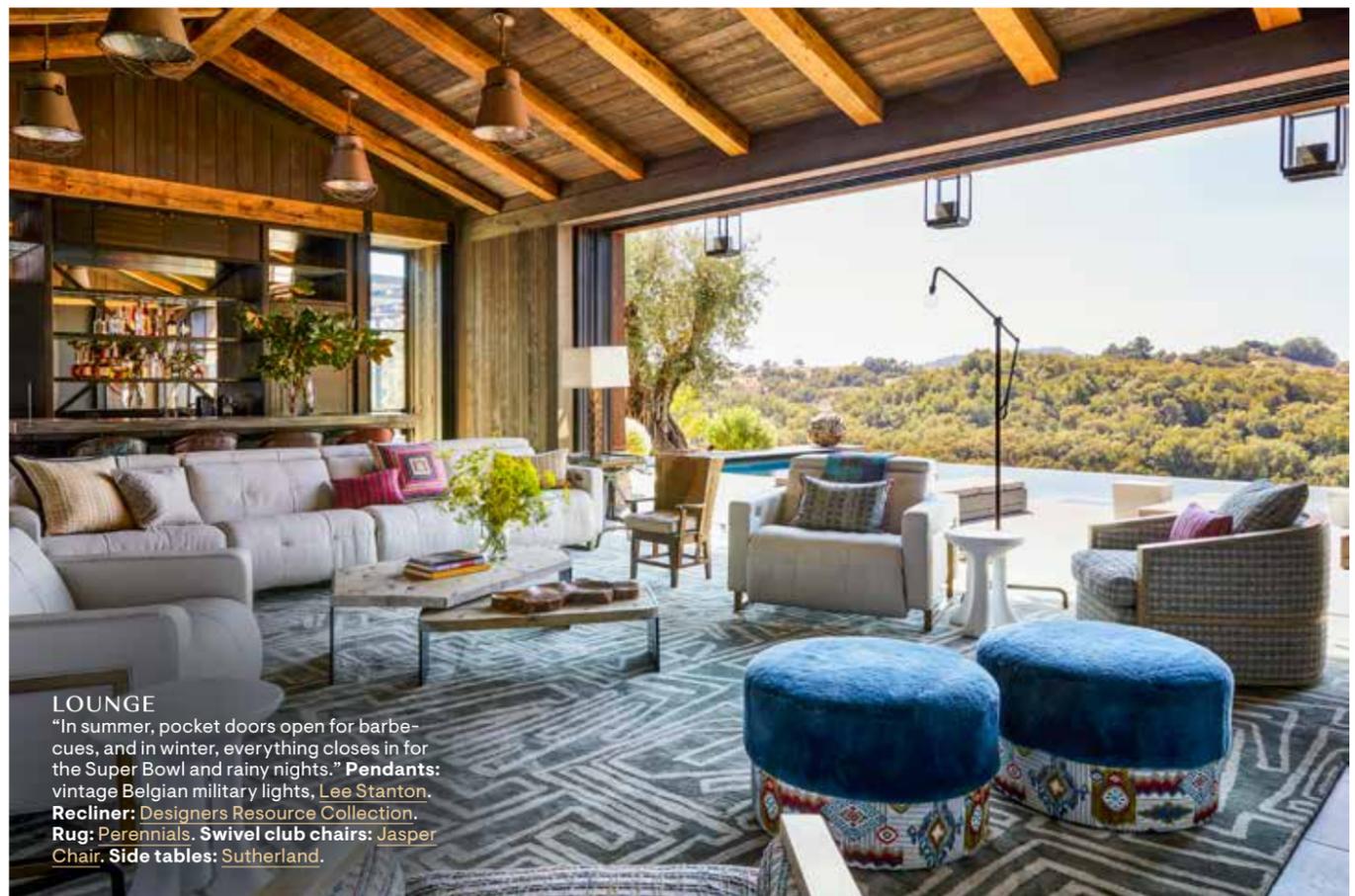
HARTE'S TEAM  
HARDWIRED  
ANTIQUE ORBS TO  
MAKE LAMPS



**GREAT ROOM**  
 A vibrant artwork by Beatriz Milhazes offers a punch of color in the otherwise earthy palette. **Leather armchair:** via the Paris Flea Market. **Rug:** Woven. **Lounge chair:** BWT London in Lauren Hwang upholstery. **Coffee table:** circa 1918 Lanvin, Lee Stanton.



**PANTRY KITCHEN**  
 "I call it an 'old scrub brush green,'" says Harte of the palette in this working space off the main kitchen. "It just has a hint of green in it with this kind of old scrub painted finish."



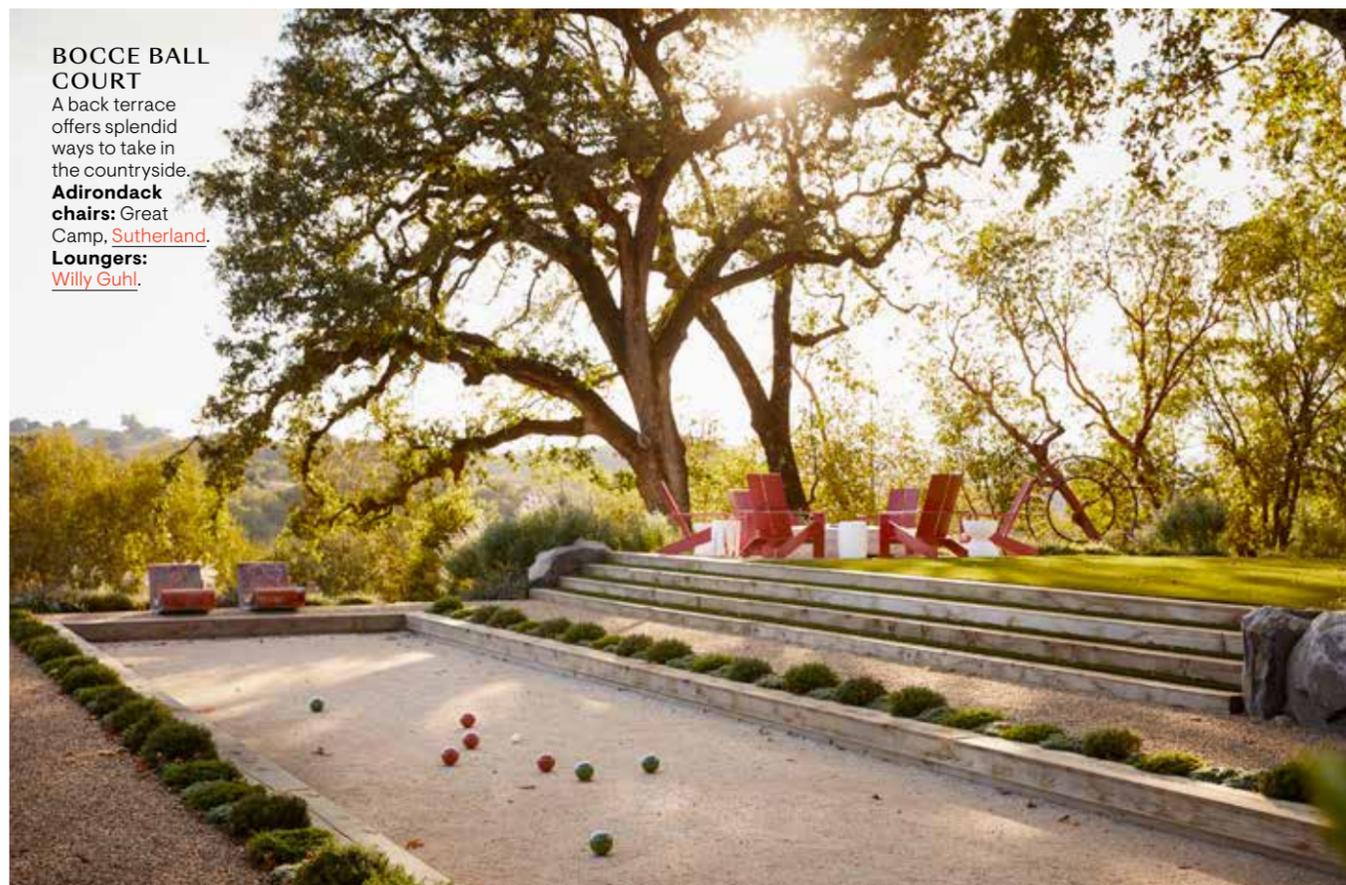
**LOUNGE**  
 "In summer, pocket doors open for barbecues, and in winter, everything closes in for the Super Bowl and rainy nights." **Pendants:** vintage Belgian military lights, Lee Stanton. **Recliner:** Designers Resource Collection. **Rug:** Perennials. **Swivel club chairs:** Jasper Chair. **Side tables:** Sutherland.



**PRIMARY BEDROOM**  
 Keeping it relatively small ensured the common spaces were as large as possible. **Light fixture, chest, and bed** in Zak+Fox Manchu fabric: Paul Ferrante. **Chair:** John Pomp, Thomas Lavin. **Bedding:** Barbara Martin Custom Linens.



**PRIMARY BATH**  
 "Approachable, textural, yet attractive," is how Harte describes the soaring space. **Light fixture, sconces, and mirrors:** Paul Ferrante. **Plumbing:** The Bath + Beyond. **Vanity:** custom turtle quartzite, Concept Studio.



**BOCCE BALL COURT**  
 A back terrace offers splendid ways to take in the countryside. **Adirondack chairs:** Great Camp, Sutherland. **Loungers:** Willy Guhl.