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[THE RESTAURANT ISSUE 2011]

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TASTE MAKERS

Paul Allen Design's Shannon and Paul Allen Wehsener have been antiquing the globe to outfit a boutique hotel in Park City.



The New School

A La Jolla dream team is tapped to reimagine a Park City boutique hotel. | *By AnnaMaria Stephens* |

Luxury boutique hotels are about to get schooled in Park City, where a San Diego-based interior design duo is helping the renovation of an iconic historic landmark. By the time ski lifts open this winter, the new Washington School House (washingtonschoolhouse.com) will be Utah's hottest haunt.

"New" might be misleading. The original Victorian limestone schoolhouse—one of the last in the country—was built in 1889. Tapped to save it from its most recent incarnation as an '80s-trapped B&B? Shannon and Paul Allen Wehsener of Paul Allen Design, who are collaborating with La Jolla architect Trip Bennett.

"The idea was to preserve the structure and restore it to its original simplicity and glory," says Shannon, who grew up in midcentury masterpieces of her uncle, famed Point Loma architect Loch Crane.

To achieve this, the Wehseners—a married pair who

bonded on a camping trip over their dislike of camping—transformed 15 cramped rooms into 12 lofted suites with dormer windows that look out on the slopes.

Some of the couple's design touches, such as reclaimed wood flooring, are nods to classic schoolhouse style, while the furniture, lighting and artwork reflect their eclectic aesthetic and love of juxtaposition—think French and Gustavian antiques paired with modern accents.

"It's as sophisticated as a chic Parisian apartment, but maintains the authenticity of a 120-year-old schoolhouse," explains Paul, an avid skier.

Washington School House guests can warm by the fireplace in the exposed-brick lounge or soak in the heated lap pool, which has mountain views.

The Wehseners look forward to enjoying the place for themselves. When they see the hotel's famous belfry from their favorite run, they'll know they're almost home. **B**