

LOUNGE ACT

When Footman Hospitality's Chris Haisma and interior designer Karen Herold of Studio K began envisioning the imaginary woman who would serve as inspiration for the look of the West Loop lounge he and his partners were opening, one thing became clear from the get-go: "She wasn't a Plain Jane," says Haisma. One look around **The Betty**, a gorgeous 5,000-square-foot space tricked out with velvet chairs, vintage treasures and a stunning custom chandelier, and we couldn't agree more. Here, some of the design details behind it. 839 W. Fulton Market, 312.733.2222, thebettychicago.com

By Lisa Shames



Raising the Bar

It's hard to imagine looking at it now, but designing the back bar was a struggle, says Herold. Until, that is, she got a call from regular collaborator Jacob Tennant of Egg Toy Studios, who was nearby at a hardware store about to be torn down. There, Herold discovered some "amazing wood cabinets" that would become the back bar for The Betty. "I liked the idea that the cabinets were from a 100-year-old hardware store a half a block away and we found a new use for them," she says. "To me, that's an actual recycled thing."



Shelf Life

Like much of the design process, the curating of the items displayed in the bookcase—a cool mix of antique decanters, albums, vintage radios and music scrolls courtesy of the 1917 player piano they purchased—was a fun collaboration for Herold and Haisma. To wit: "On a Saturday, we had some great drinks and then put some stuff on the shelves," says Herold. "It's nice to know that sometimes things don't have to be so complicated."



Sitting Pretty

"The space is very driven on energy," says Herold, "with the highest amount in the center of the room and less as you move outward." Not convinced? Grab a spot on the long red leather couch on the far end of the room and almost immediately the vibe of the space becomes more chill helped, no doubt, by the subdued lighting. Added bonus: "It has a great view of the whole space," says Herold.



Table Matters

One of the biggest challenges, says Herold, was visually breaking up the large open space in a way that made it just as inviting on a busy Friday night as at 5pm on a Monday. To accomplish that, she incorporated a variety of light fixtures at different heights—"We used the lighting as a design tool, dissecting the room vertically," she says—and types of seating, ranging from freestanding booths for eight and high-tops to cozy round tables for four. Once warm weather arrives, look for the debut of a 40-seat outdoor patio.