

WEB-EXCLUSIVE HOME TOUR

Inside the Japanese-Inspired Minneapolis Home of NBA Star D'Angelo Russell

It was designed by decorator Tiffany Thompson

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January 24, 2022



When NBA star D'Angelo Russell decided to renovate his rustic home outside of Minneapolis, he insisted on employing a very limited color palette. "He wanted everything in black and white," says interior designer [Tiffany Thompson](#), the founder and principal designer at [Duett Interiors](#) in Portland. She oversaw the redesign of the all-star's two-level, 6,300-square-foot residence. "He was really into the contrasts that those two colors invite so we figured out a way to make that work."

Thompson installed a black, Italian leather sectional sofa in the living room alongside a cream colored Flag Halyard chair with Icelandic sheepskin designed by Hans Wegner. A dark, Belvedere leathered quartzite countertop in the kitchen is surrounded by black leather and brass chairs. Cherry wood flooring runs throughout the home.

Combining the property's rustic, midwestern roots with a calm, seductive feel was the goal, Thompson says. She found inspiration for the color palette through a visit to Yakushima, an island in Japan that is deeply wooded and dense. "A Japanese inspiration and philosophy of openness and exploration," she calls it. The result is an aesthetic that skillfully balances a variety of textures, including injecting Shou Sugi Ban custom treatments inspired by Japanese principles of wabi-sabi that typically employ elements of asymmetry, roughness, and simplicity. The "mood board," as Thompson describes the interior scheme, is meant to accentuate the very nature of fall, generating a distinctive emotional response to the seasonal shift.

"I loved working with Tiffany on this project," says Russell, a Louisville, Kentucky, native who joined the Minnesota Timberwolves in 2020. "This is our second project together, so we have a really good dynamic. She understands my taste and what I wanted and takes chances with the design choices," he says.

Though he began his career in 2015 when he was drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers, Russell had short playing stints with the Brooklyn Nets and Golden State Warriors before being traded to Minnesota. That peripatetic whirlwind helped him appreciate Thompson's hearth and home interior philosophy, he says. "We were able to make Minnesota feel like home in a short amount of time," he says. "On my off days, I'm usually off my feet so it's nice to relax and let the dogs run around." The athlete adds, "She brought peace into my home and I love that."



The kitchen has a Belvedere leathered quartzite countertop and a Shou Sugi Ban curved island custom treatment by [Darril Otto](#). Allure cluster light fixtures are by studio PGRB. Leather and brass chairs are from [RH](#). Allure bookstand in black lacquer is from Assouline. Avalon throw blanket is [Hermès](#).

Of course, designing a home for an NBA star inevitably brings distinct touches that speak to the client's line of work. In this case, it meant installing a half-court basketball gym with authentic NBA dimensions. "The court is accessed on the main level of the home which makes it very proximate to everyday living," says Bill Costello (AIA), chief operating officer at [Streeter Custom Builder](#) in Minnesota. The firm handled interior construction and eventually engaged with every aspect of the home, including sanding off all of the texture of the original, hand-scraped cherry wood flooring that covered the entire home down to the bare wood.

For the basketball court, Streeter installed NBA-grade, solid maple wood flooring and added dark stained oak wood panels over all the walls. Russell's favorite game jerseys—encased in wood frames and safety glass—hang above the court. A lounge area enclosed with floor-to-ceiling glass overlooks the entire gym.



"Loading," a mantra Russell coined to describe his constant striving for success, is emblazoned at one end of the indoor basketball court.

In a testament to the facility's role as a work space, Russell had a television monitor installed to allow for studying game footage while practicing. Low-level mirrors were also added so he could work on his foot and dribbling skills during workouts. "Tiffany understood the work-life balance athletes often rely on at home," Costello says. "The details of the half court underscore that perfectly."

Thompson is no stranger to collaborations with professional athletes. Before moving into interiors, she spent nearly a decade at Nike executing creative projects that often involved input from some of the company's high profile sponsored athletes. Her experience at Nike also informs her approach to communicating with sports world clients.

Because professional athletes are typically transient—traded to a new team in a new city at a moment's notice—Thompson implores her clients to see their home not just as a retreat, but also as an investment. "I'm there to remind them that interior design should also be seen as a way to add value to their homes," she says. "For many athletes, especially those who are younger, this is the first home they've owned."

D'Angelo Russell agrees. "She brought peace into my home," he says. "And I love that."



An NBA-grade half basketball court on the main level has solid maple wood flooring and dark stained oak wood panels over the walls. Russell's favorite game jerseys encased in wood frames and safety glass hang above the basketball court.



In the primary bedroom, a Mags low sofa by Danish design firm [Hay](#) can be seen.



The Floating Divan, designed by [Chiel Kuijl](#) for [Wdstck Studio Dimensions](#), hangs in the primary bedroom.



A leather and brass bench perches in the primary bath beneath a light fixture by [Tom Dixon](#). The ladder in polished carbon steel is by [Zieta](#).