

A luxurious pied-a-terre capitalizes on Boston's green space

# UNCOMMON PERSPECTIVE



Written by ALISSA SCANO Photographed by SUSAN TEARE

Construction by SEA-DAR CONSTRUCTION

**W**HEN A HIGH-END APARTMENT'S SURROUNDINGS ARE A LUSH OASIS amidst concrete and brick facades, the residence's interiors must fit the impressive environment. The homeowners, art-loving real estate veterans with grown children, had a vision for the space but needed a cohesive team to carry out the extensive renovation. The condo was originally two units that had been completely gutted to make one long, large apartment with enviable views of the Boston Public Gardens and Boston Common in the background.

### A true collaboration

"There wasn't a single finished surface in the space, but it was easy to see the possibilities," says architect Steve Hart of Hart Associates Architects, who worked closely with the homeowners and Tony Salem of Sea-Dar Construction to bring the vision to fruition. While it was difficult to imagine the scale of things in such an open, unfinished space, the owners saw the potential to create an urban environment that felt warm.

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This page: The homeowners, who love to entertain, opted for a floor plan that flows gently from room to room. top: Wide-open work-space in the kitchen. In the living room, comfortable chairs are arranged before the floor-to-ceiling windows. A breakfast area was carved out of a walk-thru space.

From layout to construction to interior finishes, the apartment was a group project.



The kitchen was designed for both an avid cook and as a space for socializing. Below: Wide doorways, clean lines and subtle symmetry are a common theme throughout the home.



While the extent of the project and close working quarters might have left some builders scratching their heads, Salem ran a well-organized crew in the raw space, situated directly above the Presidential Suite of the luxurious Taj Hotel in Boston. Added to the relatively quick turn around time of seven months (to be ready for the holidays) and restrictive working hours, Sea-Dar Construction had to keep the work site neat during the construction due to neighboring apartments.

**It's all about socializing...along with those glorious views**

As the homeowners are very social people, the question of how formal the space should be came to the surface quickly. "We went back and

Clockwise from right: Comfortable furnishings in the library call for relaxation. A striking powder room. The master suite's walk-in closet. Crisp white linens contrast beautifully against dark wood.



forth if we wanted the living room to be open to the kitchen," says Hart, who ultimately decided with the homeowners that allowing the rooms to gently flow into each other was the best option. The kitchen, den and living room each have a distinct personality, but the apartment doesn't feel choppy. As they worked to reconfigure the boxy layout and make the most of low ceiling heights, an "adult" but not overly formal apartment emerged.

And what of that priceless view? Hart positioned all the open spaces along the full bay and double-hung windows. "When you are five steps inside the front door you can see through the kitchen to the outside," says the architect. As Salem's crew finished the renovation, the homeowners worked with Susan Csongor of SLC Interiors to develop a subtle backdrop of powder blue, soft, natural greens and cream for the ever-changing natural environment outside.

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Above: Soothing tones were used in a guest bath. At right: The master bath offers spa-like calm after a busy day in the city. Below: A shoe-lover's dream closet.



From the architect to the builder to the interior designer, all eyes were on maximizing the prize... that view.



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**The design scheme**

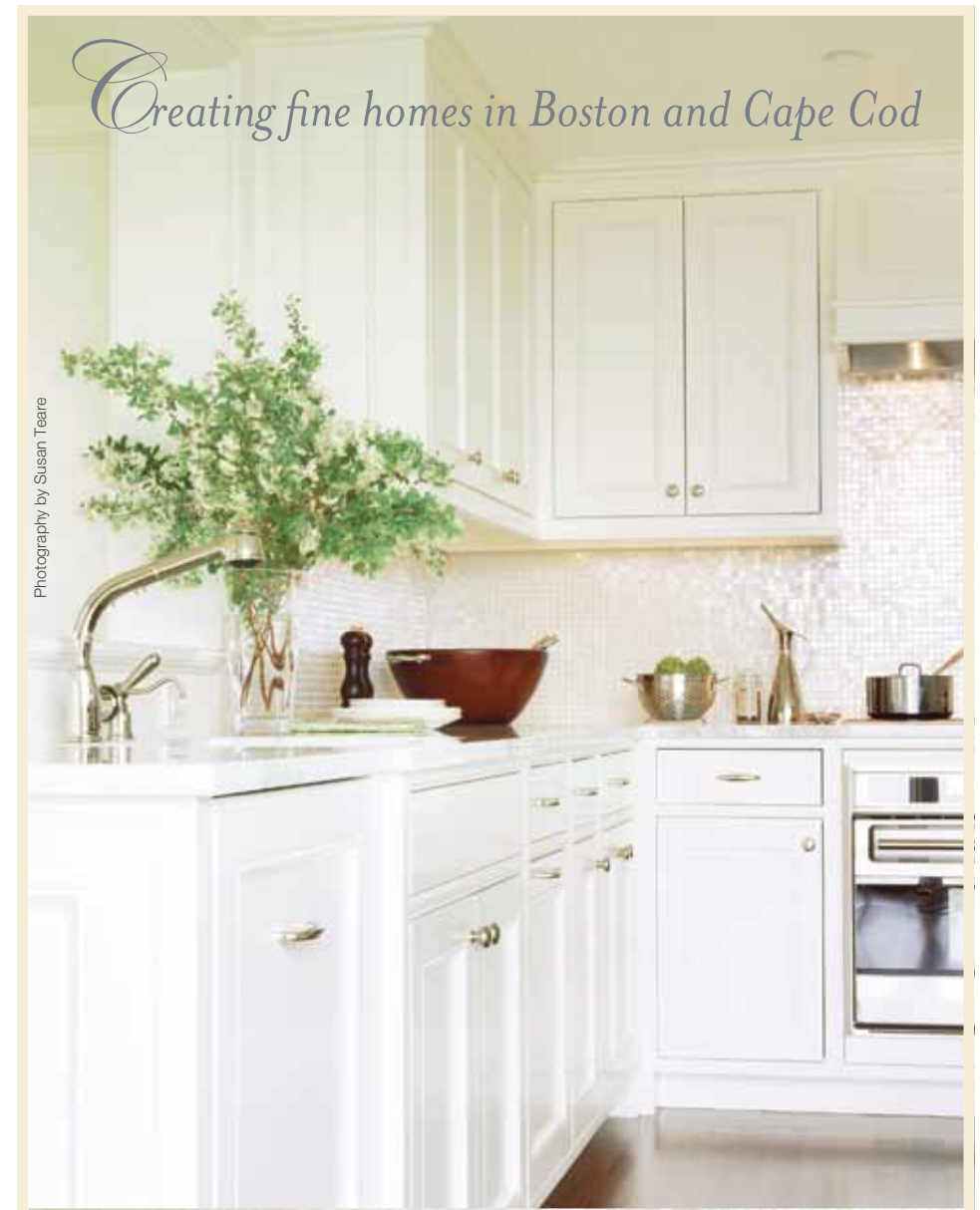
While the majority of the apartment is swathed in neutral tones, the homeowners wanted something warmer for their library. As avid readers, a rich and cozy library is an important component of the residence. The walls are paneled in luxe walnut wood and accented by a rich green chenille sofa and Paul Beliveau's "Les Rencontres LXXVI," an eye-catching painting of classical book spines.

The homeowners opted to make their kitchen both chic and functional and accented crisp white cabinetry with Calcutta Gold marble countertops and a glass mosaic backsplash. Csongor further brought the outside in by hanging the couple's Anne Packard



seascape in the dining room and installing a pair of Dirk McDonnell's black and white photographs of the garden studies of Versailles on the opposite wall.

From layout to construction to interior finishes, the apartment was a group project that couldn't have been accomplished without the distinct vision of the homeowners and communication between Hart, Salem and Csongor. "The collaborative spirit between Sea-Dar Construction and the design team contributed to the success of the project," says Salem reflectively. "We worked well together and that was essential. The architect and interior designer were fully engaged and never missed a deadline." SHOME



Photography by Susan Teare

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