



This NYC Apartment Has the Best Storage + Space Solutions We've Ever Seen

Once novelist Philip Roth's home, this chic Manhattan abode is now a family's headquarters — and every inch of it is cleverly customized for them.



An Apartment Renovation Works Perfectly for a Modern Family

This high-rise home on Manhattan's Upper West Side has undergone *major* revisions. Now a conglomeration of three different 12th floor apartments (a 400-square-foot studio, a 640-square-foot one bedroom and a 940-square-foot one bedroom), it once hosted author [Philip Roth](#) (*Portnoy's Complaint*; *Goodbye, Columbus*), who first purchased the studio as a writing space, then bought an adjacent apartment and combined the two as his residence. Its current owners — a young

husband and wife with two little girls — bought that combination and a third apartment, then asked [PJCArchitecture](#) to plot out what came next.

“They wanted to create a home that functioned for their young family,” explains Philip Consalvo, PJCArchitecture’s principal. “The design decisions grew from their needs. With two small children, it was important to have the family room connected to the living room and dining room, but also able to be separated as needed. The open kitchen allows the parents to have a view of the apartment and the children at all times. The banquette space in the kitchen was also a priority, to give the kids a dining nook.” Have a look at how his plan — and the unique character designer Dane Pressner of [D’Aquino Monaco](#) developed for these spaces — added up to happily ever after.



Built-In Hall Storage Replaces Console Table and Mudroom

Tucked into the hallway off the foyer and opposite a closet, this minimalistic stop-and-drop point offers a space to set belongings — and even a spot to tuck outdoor shoes — as one enters the home. In an urban dwelling where every inch of real estate is extra-precious, a less-is-more functional space like this one is downright luxurious.

For the flooring, Consalvo’s team installed [cashmere-tinted oak](#). “We wanted to use something very warm, with a natural color that wasn’t too strong. The lighter color evokes a Parisian floor and balances the busier design elements in the space,” he says. The living and dining areas have a chevron pattern, and the bedrooms feature straight planks.



Warm Cove Lighting Gives Living Room an Expansive Feel

“Lighting helps to define a hierarchy of spaces,” Consalvo explains. “The cove lighting in the living room creates a visual trick to make the ceilings appear higher than they actually are. In the entrance to the apartment, the ceiling is a bit lower, and then it opens up into the living/dining area with the cove lighting and the big windows, which add to the open feeling.”

The effect is a useful one, but it should be deployed thoughtfully. “Cove lights are warm and set a nice mood, but there is a fine line where they can start looking too commercial. We don’t want a home to feel like a hotel, so we are sparing about where we incorporate cove lighting. The color of the light also has to be the right temperature. Around 2700 [Kelvin] is a good color temperature for residential purposes.”



Dining Area Blends Feminine and Masculine Elements

“A [concrete table](#) is the opposite of the [bubble gum pink velvet dining chairs](#), and I think that dialogue is what makes it work,” Pressner notes. “The [chandelier](#) was a client favorite, and we wanted something that didn’t obstruct the city views when standing in the kitchen looking out to the terrace. The chandelier is chic and effervescent, which is a common design idea or thread throughout this space.”



Polished Living and Dining Space Is Ideal for Entertaining

“The living and dining area has a formality to it,” Pressner explains. “We looked at pieces that were sculptural and that were perfect for a party. Think cocktails by the fire and family dinners at the table.” It’s no accident that the eye moves effortlessly from one side of the space to the other. “The daybed in the middle of the space allows for conversation to happen on both sides of the room. I hate when the back of a sofa cuts a space in half.”



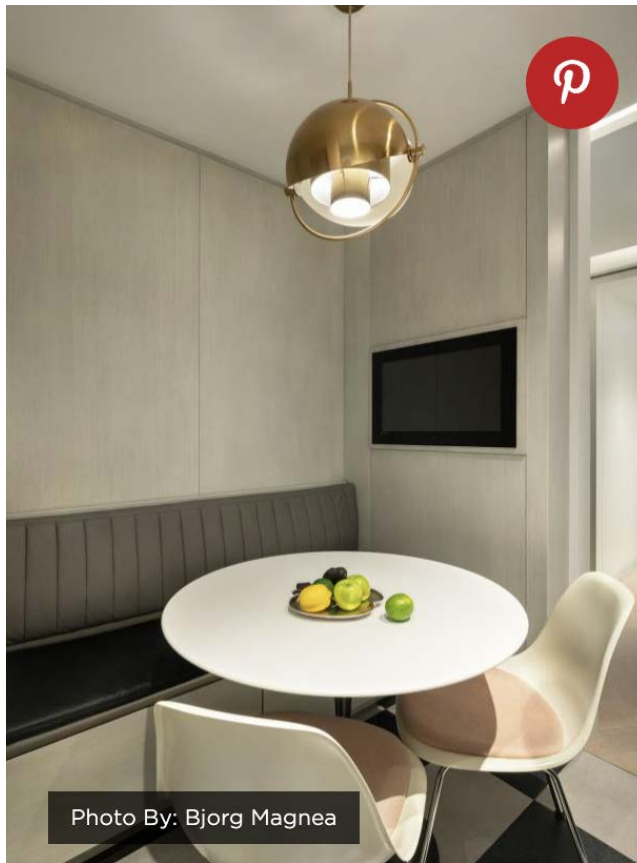
Bar and Pantry Disappear Into Pale Cabinetry

When is a cubic room divider much, much more than a room divider? When all that elegant clad veneer conceals both a home bar and pantry essentials. That same material carries throughout common spaces in the apartment, so it was essential to get it just right. “For the veneer, we had to find something that worked with the kitchen and the living room,” Consalvo says. “It is a neutral, warm material that communicates well with both spaces and even wraps into the foyer just a bit. It becomes a nice pivot point. It was also important to select a material that wouldn’t compete with the bolder colors of the furniture and the artwork.”



Cabinets Reveal Hidden Bar and Pantry

Lined with backlit Sahara Blanc marble and accented with glass shelves that give serveware the appearance of floating on air, this sophisticated home bar can be called into service or hidden at a moment's notice. A pantry storage area to its right, in turn, conceals special-occasion serveware and a narrow wine fridge. All of that is just half of this structure's function; circle around to the other side and it gets even better.



Breakfast Nook Banquette Incorporates Storage

On the opposite side of the pale, veneer-clad bar, an intimate seating area (with bonus storage built into the banquette, naturally) is the perfect spot for casual meals. A pedestal table has a minimal footprint, and a sculptural brass pendant adds a punch of personality. "This is where our family sits and eats together daily," homeowner Megan Martin says. "The banquette is upholstered with a leather-look vinyl that is easier to maintain with two small children and our pooch!"



Photo By: Bjorg Magnea

Checkered Kitchen Floor Channels Classic Bistro Chic With a Twist

The kitchen's graphic floor suggests a Continental eatery, but the look isn't literal. The difference? "We wanted to evoke the spirit of a French bistro without being kitschy, so we abstracted it in a clean-lined way," Consalvo says. "It's a modern interpretation of a French bistro floor. Instead of a traditional black-and-white checkerboard, this is a rectangular charcoal and warm off-white pattern that brings a more contemporary feel to the apartment."

Those slight departures make all the difference. "More than the black and white, it is about the texture for me," Pressner adds. "The finish on the tile itself is almost leather-like. It is incredibly chic, and we all absolutely love it."



High-Contrast Kitchen Features Elegant Stone and Luxury Stove

“The kitchen is another location where we incorporated the homeowners’ love for natural stones,” Consalvo explains. “It is a marbled Arabascato. It has a beautiful texture and gray veining that connects the elements and contrasts well with the lacquered black satin cabinets.”

Most of the room’s appliances are hidden behind those elegant cabinets, which lets one in particular take center stage. “The beautiful [Lacanche](#) range, a French luxury stove, is a piece of art in the space that ties into the French design feeling.”



Photo By: Bjorg Magnea

Sliding Doors Turn Room Division Into a Design Moment

The tinted glass doors that slide across the room to divide the den from the living room take this space from elegant to ingenious. “They are a great solution for creating flexible spaces that can be open or closed for different functions,” Consalvo says. “These doors are sourced from a German company called [Raumplus](#). We had initially discussed a solid door, which then morphed into a heavier iron door with clear glass. Eventually, we decided that something with a thinner frame would be more appealing and that a glass with a tone to it would add some warmth into the space.”

The choice was a dramatic and effective one. “From a functional standpoint, you can open the doors completely to the left or the right, and even arrange them in different positions. They work well with the palette in the dining room.”



Pink Art and Accessories Add Coziness to a Polished Den

“The den had to be a workhorse. It is a sophisticated den for the family, but it also needed to be an area for the kids to play in,” Pressner says. “The furniture is comfortable, but scaled appropriately for the space. It is dressy enough to relate to the living and dining room, but cozy enough for the family to pile onto and watch a film.”



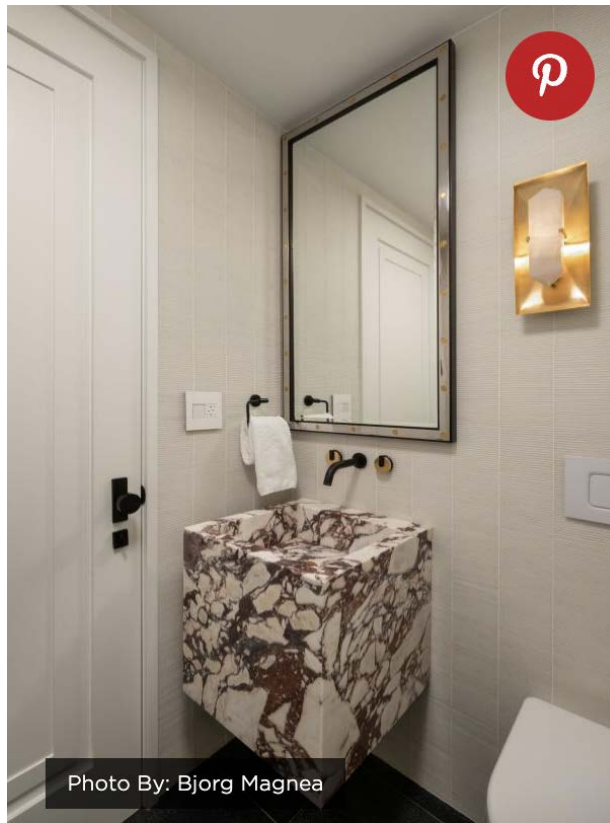
Glossy Gray Wall Unit Gives Den a Contemporary Edge

Consalvo and his team chose a nearly-black polished lacquer to make a statement with the built-in, wraparound cabinets and entertainment unit in this den. The color they selected, [Benjamin Moore's Lead Gray](#), has a suggestion of green in its undertone. "The high gloss creates a different dynamic in the space, compared to the satin matte used in the kitchen," he says. "There is a different mood in the alcove that is a bit more modern. The color is also muted to make it less flashy."



Custom Cabinetry Hides Both the Television and the Clutter

A pair of panels slide to conceal the television and reveal shelving with custom lighting, but that's just the beginning of this clever installation's functionality. "The entertainment center has space for lots of storage," Consalvo says. "The bottom portion is all doors and drawers for the girls' toys. This is a space where they hang out after school, and it can store toys when guests are coming over. The TV can be closed off as needed, so the space isn't always about the TV."



An Understated Palette and Fixtures Balance Graphic Marble in a Powder Room

A spectacular natural material takes center stage in this snug space. “The powder room is so small, but we wanted it to be special. The true statement is the sink, and the rest of the room is neutral-toned with a lightly textured glass [tile] to avoid overwhelming the space,” Consalvo explains. “The stone is a Calacatta Viola. It’s a beautiful product and essentially a piece of art, so we wanted to give it the presence it deserves.” Just-so hints of warm metal add a touch of luxury that enhances without competing with the marble.



Photo By: Bjorg Magnea

Textural Glass Creates a Feature Wall in the Hallway

This functional passage might have featured solid panels, as the cubic, veneer-wrapped bar and pantry between the kitchen and living room do, or a simple, reflective surface. Consalvo opted instead for something much more grand. “We were originally going to use clear mirror, but had the idea to turn it into a feature wall. The smoked glass makes it feel grander and almost like a dressing room. The antique mirrored material is very typical of a French bistro.”



Mirrored Panels Conceal Even More Storage for a Large Clothing and Shoe Collection

“The clients needed a lot of shoe storage and shelving,” Consalvo says. “There is 11 linear feet of space in this wall of closets in the hallway leading to the primary bedroom.” That space is perfect for finishing touches one reaches for after emerging from the walk-in closet.



Contemporary Principal Bedroom With Tall Custom Headboard

Once a snug studio apartment, the principal bedroom now extends the sleek-yet-cozy theme that carries through the home. “This bedroom is my favorite space in the home,” Pressner says. “The jewel tone of the headboard is both powerful and exciting but also calming. The over scale height makes the room appear larger than it is.” Translucent embroidered-linen window treatments admit natural light and add a bit of texture while providing privacy. “The [fabric](#) for the Roman shade and drapes is from Élitis — they can do no wrong!”



Custom Pattern in Marble Tile Personalizes Principal Bath's Floor

Like many a weekend DIYer, the team had a Pinterest board to focus their aesthetic as they planned out the apartment. “[Megan] was very proactive and brought us a lot of imagery that she liked, which is where the French bistro inspiration originally came from,” Consalvo recalls.

The marble mosaic floor in the principal bath is another nod to that aesthetic — and to another celebrity’s apartment. Megan was inspired by [the intricate bathroom floor in Meg Ryan’s Soho loft](#) after seeing it in a design magazine. “It was a true challenge due to its flowery pattern,” Consalvo says. “It took a lot of careful planning to make this pattern work and feel symmetrical in an asymmetrical space!”

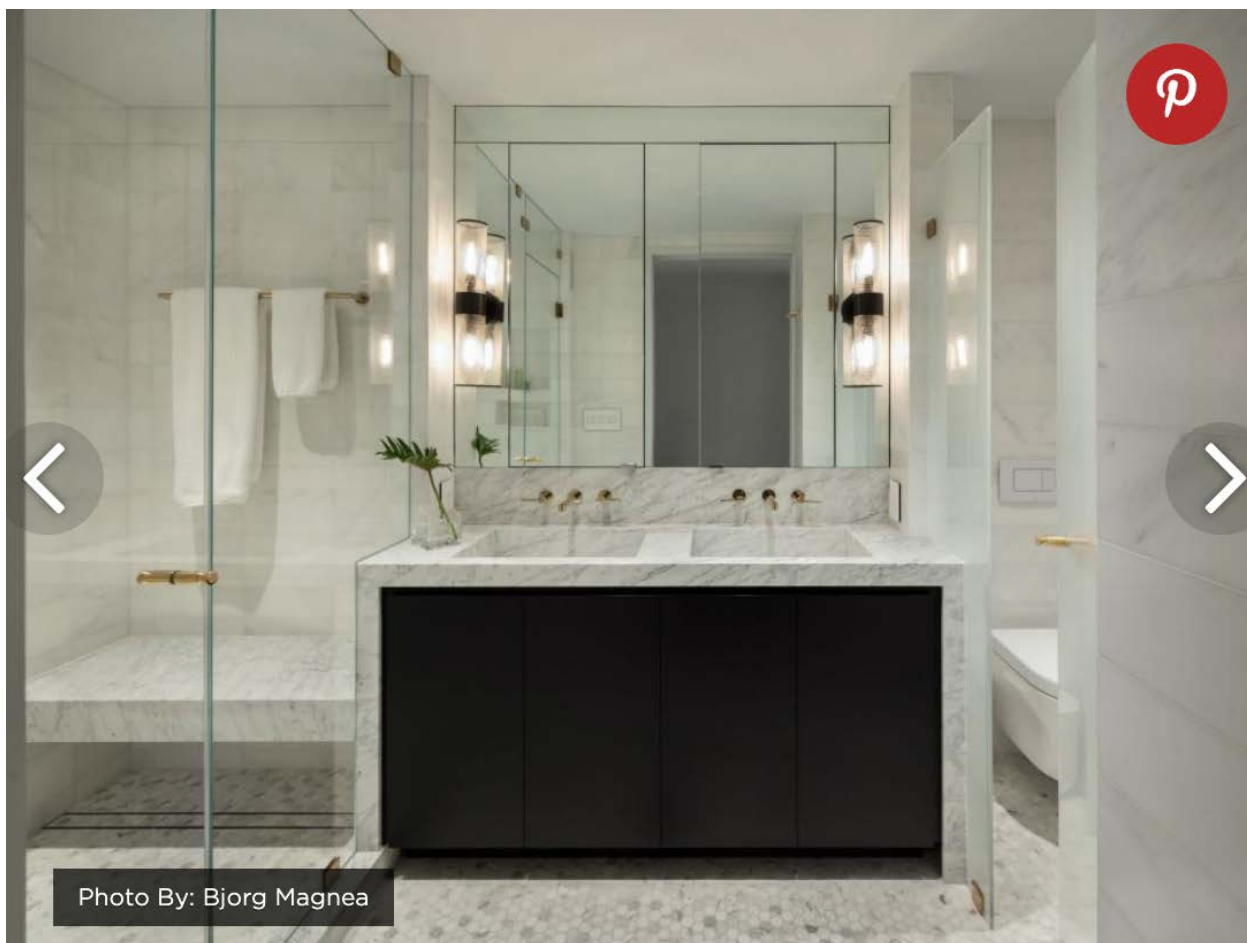


Photo By: Bjorg Magnea

Marble Double Vanity With Dark Cabinets Anchors Elegant Bath

In the principal bath, Consalvo's team installed a full steam shower with a bench that matches the double sink; this time they chose Statuarietto marble, an Italian stone with lots of thin veining. Though the suite looks serene now, it required some fancy footwork. "Because the space was not very deep, we had to figure out how to fit the program of a primary bathroom into a long and narrow space," he recalls. "Because of the existing gas line, we could not make the room perfectly symmetrical, but the vanity helps it appear so. A separate toilet room is partitioned with a glass wall."



Graphic Wallpaper and Classic Furnishings Will Stand the Test of Time

The building blocks of this sweet girl's bedroom will suit her just as well in the years to come as they do now. "Our daughter loves purple and this wallpaper had such a beautiful pattern," Megan says. "The pop is so beautiful and unique. We wanted the kids' rooms to feel cozy and colorful, but also be able to grow with them as they age. We achieved this by using both high-end wallpaper and classic furniture, with rugs and duvets that are durable and easily cleaned and changed as their tastes grow."

"Kid-friendly and design conscious for me go hand in hand," Pressner adds. "I tell my clients that they should always design for 'now.' The wallpaper, in my opinion, is perfect for a child's bedroom, and it is also perfect for a young adult or an adult with a particular flair for color and pattern. My advice is to go with what you love. If you follow your heart with design, it will always make you happy."

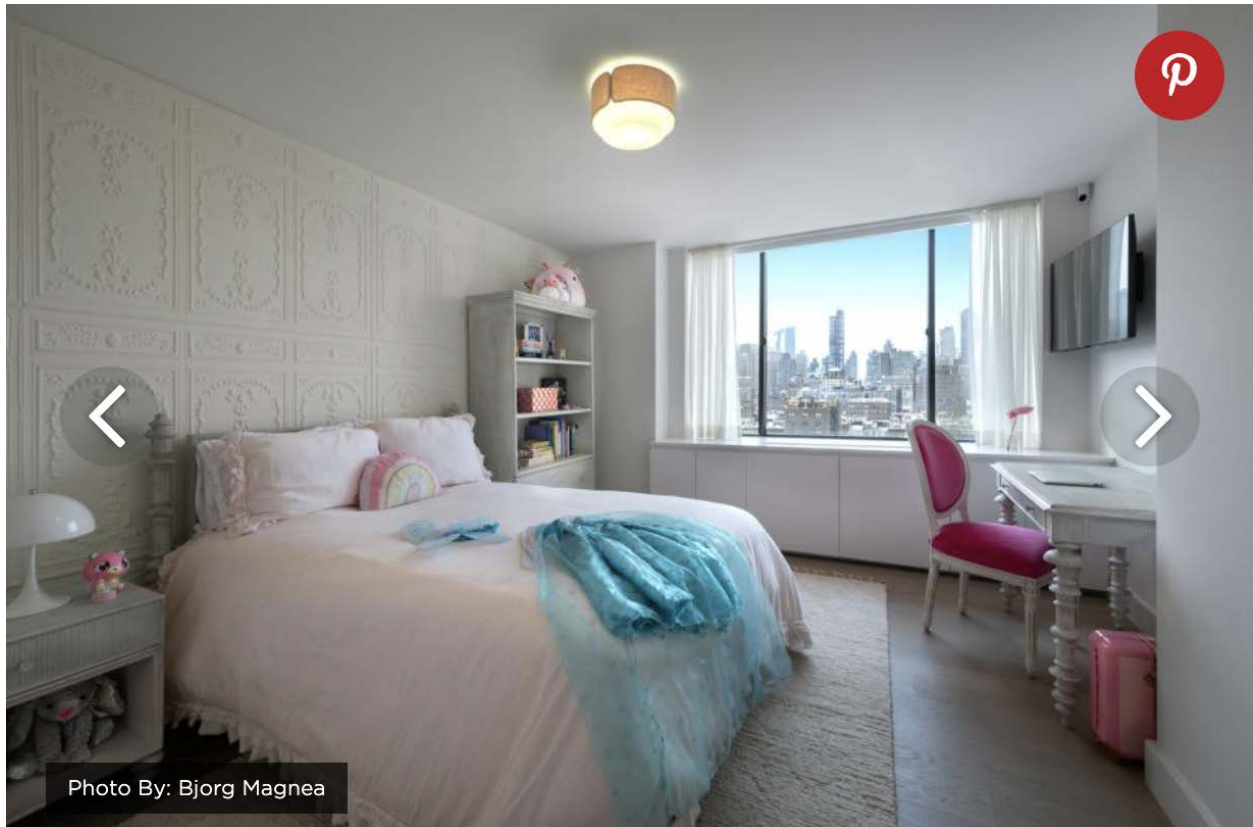


Photo By: Bjorg Magnea

Dimensional Wallcovering Makes an Unforgettable Statement

Megan's love of French bistro style carries over into her older daughter's room as well: "The room has a classic Parisian feel with the writing desk, but is also modern with pops of fuchsia in the custom-upholstered chair."

Both she and Pressner loved this textured, [three-dimensional wallcovering](#) from Élitis, "one of my all-time favorite places to shop for wallcovering," Pressner says. "It is a modern take on French paneling and gives a Marie Antoinette vibe to the room. Rather than traditional paneling, this is padded and actually soft to the touch. It provides sophistication and camp all at the same time."



Girls' Bathroom Wows With All-Out Glamour

Megan's love of bold stone finds its most showstopping expression in her daughters' bathroom, where pink onyx forms an unforgettable floating vanity. "This room in particular is so over the top and is quite the jewel box," Pressner says. "Being the jewel in the home, a gemstone shaped mirror was the only option in my opinion. This custom mirror adds to the specular quality of the room. The rose gold hardware was also important in this 'more is more' scenario and yet it remains unfussy and quite sophisticated."