



Rooms With a View

Designer Stacy Stone transforms an unspectacular bachelor pad into a stunning pied-à-terre.

BY THERESA GONZALEZ

A NOB HILL APARTMENT untouched for nearly half a century had two things going for it: a view of Grace Cathedral's French Gothic towers and central spire on one side, and the San Francisco Bay and Coit Tower on the other, leaving owner Jeff Houston with some interior work to do. "I wanted the design to respect the building's midcentury roots," says the Silicon Valley-based commercial real estate broker, who planned to use the one-bedroom apartment for weekend jaunts. Houston enlisted Pacific Heights-based designer Stacy Stone to treat the pied-à-terre with her sculptural, soulful style.

Stone started with the elephant in the room: "I mean you can't deny that there's this French Gothic spire right out that window," she says. "It was fun to play against the view with Jeff's passion for midcentury modern and go a little more sleek and simple in contrast to this beautiful architecture through the window, which [is] very ornate."

Knowing the apartment would be used mainly for entertaining, Stone paid special attention to the dining area, custom designing an oval-shaped gray glass table back-painted in a deep-red maple leaf color and set



From top: Vintage black leather Cleo Balding bar stools and a Calacatta d'Oro marble backsplash serve as a focal point in the kitchen; a bronze console and shaped-walnut frame mirror, both custom from Stone Interiors, grace the living room entryway. The Holly Hunt sofa is covered in Zimmer + Rohde Tunis flax-cotton fabric.

atop two Saarinen bases. "At night, you can see the depth of color in the tabletop. It's gorgeous because the light shines down on it and it's very warm," says Stone. Capturing that warmth was key for a room partially outlined in glass, without a fireplace and in a city that can feel cold any day of the year. Walnut and black leather dining chairs from Thomas Hayes check the midcentury box, while the Serge Mouille ceiling lamp does not obstruct the view for guests.

The French Gothic spire inspired other choices too. In the entry, a custom bronze console with metalwork hints, in a simple way, to the spire, as does a vintage Edward Wormley chaise, the plush mohair of which serves as a cozy middle between the concrete cathedral behind it and the custom Chista coffee table made from ebonized teak tree trunks in front of it.

The antique Turkish Sivas rug that Stone spotted at Woven in Los Angeles anchors the cinnamon- and eggplant-hued room. "I called Jeff and said, 'Can you jump on a plane tomorrow and go look at this rug? Just have a look, I think you're going to love it,'" the designer recalls. Houston purchased it on the spot.

Few challenges came up during the design process—save for taming an enthusiastic client. "I would show up with 10,000 pictures and Stacy would say, 'I think we could do better,'" says Houston. "She moved me in the right direction." Stone describes the design process as a symphony. "Not everything can be the main piece. I told him, 'We have to get supporting roles in here!'"

Take, for example, the understated kitchen, which is finished mostly in Calacatta marble with a dash of oak. "Everything is really about not distracting your eye from the art and the view and the cathedral," says Stone, referring to Houston's growing collection of contemporary art. "So it wasn't about upstaging anything with some crazy kitchen design."

Instead, Stone meant to keep the conversation flowing with an open design and used vintage pieces to turn design-minded heads, such as leather Cleo Balding bar stools in the kitchen and leather sling-seat safari chairs in the bedroom. "I think vintage pieces take everything to a whole other level," says Stone. "I like to have a little soul in the place, and that's one way to do it." ■



Clockwise from top:

The dining room table, custom from Stone Interiors, is flanked by vintage walnut and black leather dining chairs from Thomas Hayes. The light is a Serge Mouille re-edition from Guérison; next to the custom Stone Interiors bed, which is covered in Holland & Sherry Savile Row Mid Gray wool, is a vintage leather sling-seat safari chair from Wyeth, a vintage Paul Frankl bedside table and a Vibia I.Cono lamp; the Chista coffee table is made from pieces of teak tree trunks. The chaise is vintage Edward Wormley.

