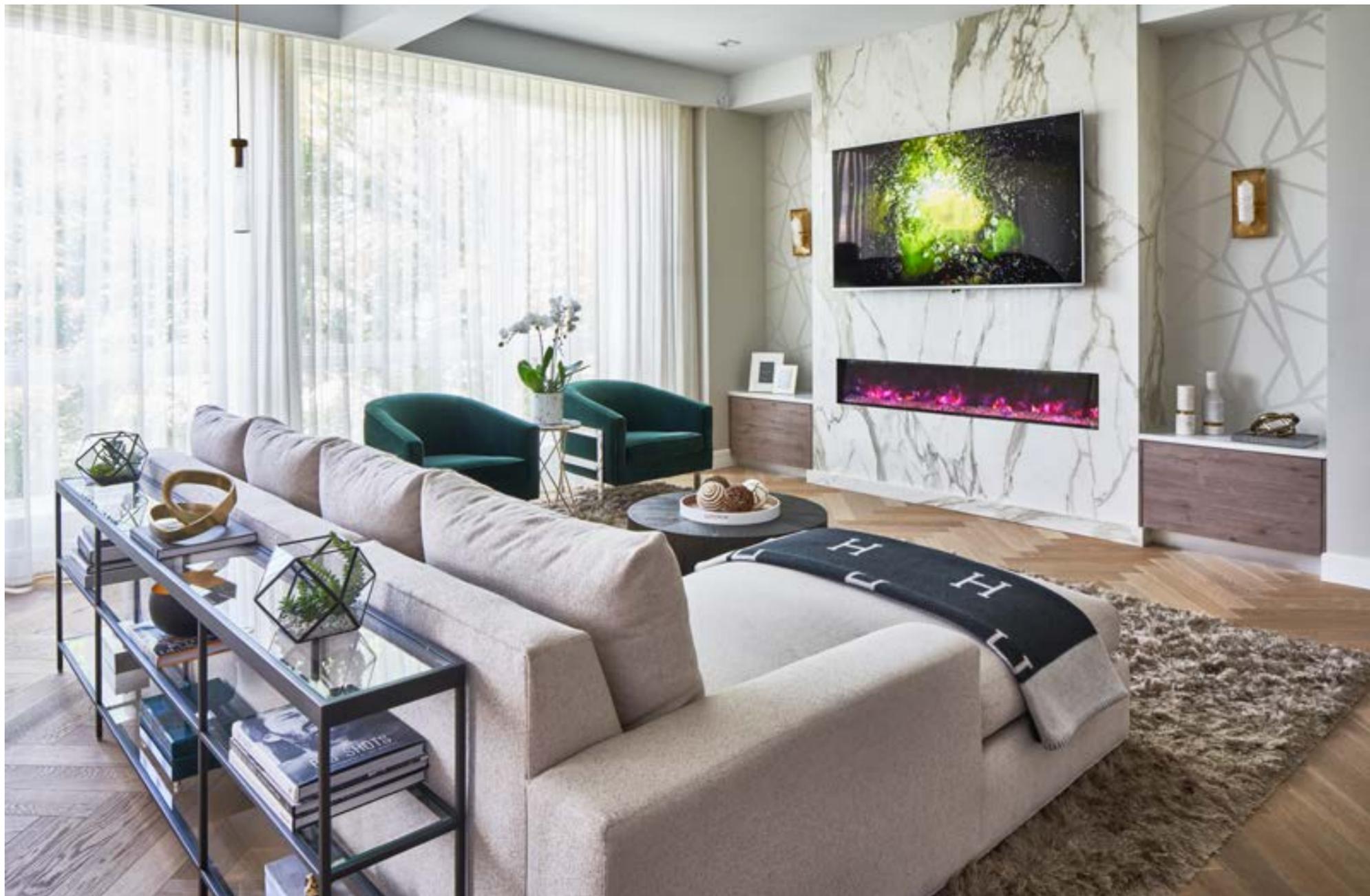


the art of urban living

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A growing family proves that a charming in-town home can be gracious and spacious.

Most of this apartment's first floor is an open, loftlike space with designated living, dining, kitchen and entry zones. A white sectional sofa from Lee Industries dominates the main living area, adjacent to the kitchen, where three very modern Visual Comfort pendants illuminate a quartz-topped island.



The city-dwelling family with a baby on the way had good luck when they teamed up with Holmdel designer Yelena Gerts, and good luck again when they were able to combine a penthouse and the apartment below it into a single grand space. Now they have all the urban sophistication they could ask for—and all the room they need too.

“We wanted the new place to feel like a home, not an apartment—open, airy, with a lot of space for our daughter to run around in,” says the homeowner. To get that, two units were combined into one, featuring 3,700 square feet of indoor space and an 800-square-foot terrace. The first floor, with the exception of a powder room and guest quarters, is entirely open-concept, divided into a variety of dedicated spaces that include an entryway, a living

room, a dining room and a kitchen. An arresting glass-sided stairway leads to the second floor, comprising a master bedroom and bathroom along with a small bedroom and bathroom for the homeowners’ young daughter, as well as several access points to the outdoor space.

While the main floor offers the kind of airiness one might find in a Soho loft, it’s far from minimalist. “I wanted to get that ‘wow’ factor the minute you walk into the space by focusing not on a single point but on the room as a whole and its overall feeling,” Gerts says. And so your eye rests for a second on the gorgeous marble fireplace surround but is quickly drawn to the walls flanking it, covered in a paper whose randomly geometric pattern echoes the veining of the marble. Below it is a pale wood

Top: The marble fireplace surround is flanked by built-ins that echo the kitchen’s wood-grained cabinets. A chrome and glass console from Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams, set behind the sofa, adds visual interest and display space. Right: The custom chest, below a striking abstract painting, bears the same wood grain as the built-ins and kitchen cabinets and serves as a divider between the living and dining spaces.



The simplicity of the dining area is deceptive: Velvet chairs from RH set off a sleek modern RH table. Modern candleholders from Z Galleries offer a striking counterpoint to a pair of brass and crystal chandeliers from Visual Comfort. The wallcovering from Harlequin can also be found in the living area and the foyer, and the Siberian oak flooring in a herringbone pattern stretches throughout the open area of the main floor.



herringbone floor and a shag carpet that complements the nearby kitchen cabinets, some clad in a sleek white lacquer and others in an almost rustic wood grain.

Even small details are visually compelling, such as the multilayered metal handle on a clean-lined modern chest of drawers, an inset in the kitchen island that serves as both storage and display case and three gold-banded throw pillows on the sectional sofa. No wonder Gerts refers to her design as “eye candy.”

It’s not just that she’s served up a feast for the eye, but also that her design allows each designated space to flow naturally into the next. The wood grain on the kitchen cabinets, for instance, is continued in a console table that functions as a separator between the living and dining spaces; the wallpaper next

to the fireplace surround is also a backdrop to the sleek dining table, and it covers a wall in the foyer as well, echoed in the patterned frame of a large round mirror next to the front door. Visible through the glass railing of the stairway to the second level, the wallpaper effectively carries the eye upward.

The homeowner aptly describes the apartment as “a work of art that we live in.” And like any compelling artwork, it derives some of its power from creative contrasts. Consider the dining area, with its minimalist, modern table surrounded by chairs upholstered in a luxurious velvet, and the simple but dramatic halo-style candleholders that sit beneath a pair of solid-brass and crystal chandeliers. Or the kitchen, where a trio of mid-century orbital pendant lights descend in front of a vertical preserved-floral arrangement that

Top: Custom cabinets from Absolute Kitchen offer a study in contrasts, some clad in white lacquer and others in a subtle wood grain. Soft touches include the upholstered stools and a striking three-dimensional custom botanical artwork from Flowerbox Wall Gardens. Right: The glass “railing” of the stairway lets the wallcovering, echoed in a large mirror from CB2, sweep the eye upward.





looks like a lush dimensional painting.

Upstairs, the space is less open but no less a visual delight. In the master bedroom, for instance, the upholstered headboard extends beyond the bed to shelter a pair of nightstands as well, and a small electric fireplace is inset into a wall covered in a custom wallpaper studded with silver rivets. The adjoining grass-cloth wall adds to the textural interest. The flat-screen TV, however, is nowhere in sight, hidden in the ceiling and lowered through a lift-drop system.

Eye candy abounds in the nursery, even though it's the smallest room in the house. (It was intended to be a closet, but the homeowners wanted the bedroom of their daughter to be immediately

adjacent to their own, so Gerts carved out a tiny jewel box of a room and bath.) Blush pink predominates on the walls, a dragonfly-patterned throw, a geometric pink-and-cream carpet and a dimensional artwork featuring pink and white flowers. There's a pink and gold velvet ottoman next to a snowy white wingback chair, and a series of open shelves in gold-rimmed white bearing books and whimsical artworks, including a diminutive Jeff Koons balloon dog. A small Parsons chair, upholstered in lavender velvet, sits underneath the shelving. The homeowner's daughter, now a toddler, can often be found riding her motorized car throughout the house. Given the early formative impact of such a creative space, her need for speed is likely to go with a heart for art.

Top: The cozy nursery was carved from a large closet and includes a small bathroom as well. The blush pink on the walls is carried over in the custom velvet stool, the Kate Spade rug, and the custom dimensional artwork. Right: An RH shelving unit holds books and baubles above a custom child-size velvet Parsons chair.





Arresting textures abound in the master bedroom, including adjacent walls covered in silver-studded paper and grass cloth, both from Philip Jeffries. The custom upholstered headboard stretches beyond the bed. The RH night tables would set a minimalist note except for their eye-catching metallic insets. An electric fireplace and a pair of crystal pendants add warmth and visual interest.