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A Home of Her Own

The interior of a high-rise Boston condominium with dramatic views is suffused with glamour, elegance, and a touch of femininity.

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: In the foyer, designer Dee Elms chose a chandelier with smoked globes and polished nickel stems to complement the custom steel and glass doors that lead to the den. A bench-seat sofa with a flared arm provides visual interest and a comfortable perch in the living room.

Forget who made the game-winning interception, or who brought the killer seven-layer dip, or which commercial elicited the most laughs. For this prospective home buyer, the highlight of the Super Bowl party was learning about Twenty Two Liberty, a luxury waterfront condo development in Boston's Seaport area. In the midst of a multi-year search for a place in the city to call home, she says: "I couldn't believe I had never heard of it. I was so excited to see it, I drove in the next day even though the city was completely shut down by a blizzard."

She booked an appointment to view a model unit on Tuesday and made a same-day offer on a tenth-floor space with a similar layout and views.

Boston-based interior designer Dee Elms had designed the model, and while the homeowner had a different aesthetic in mind, she knew Elms had the talent and bandwidth to execute her vision. That vision included creating a forever home that could be described as "light, beautiful, ethereal."

An open living area with floor-to-ceiling windows and painterly panoramas of the harbor lent itself perfectly to this design directive. Elms chose a soft, creamy white color palette as a backdrop and then introduced touches of pale blue, amethyst, and silver.

A twenty-six-foot wall that runs the length of the kitchen, dining, and living room proved a nice creative challenge. "I thought, 'What are we going to do here?'" remembers Elms. The answer? Quite a lot, in fact. Toward the kitchen end, she designed a built-in cabinet to stow bar tools and glassware, which is in easy reach of a large island, a perfect workspace for shaking and stirring. The barware sits adjacent to an open shelving unit that showcases a pretty collection of decorative objects. Next, she fashioned a silvery-cream-colored banquette that seats six around an oval table, the top fabricated from zinc encased in epoxy resin. A rock crystal fixture above is a refined touch. "I love the idea of doing a rectangle over an oval," says Elms.

An electric fireplace set into the final section of wall helps create a transition from dining to sitting area.

| TEXT BY LISA H. SPEIDEL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL J. LEE |

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The homeowner scored the blue butterflies at a MassArt auction. A rounded swivel-sofa nestled in the corner of the living room is a cozy spot to take in the harbor views. Subbing in a glass door to the den enabled natural light to flow to the foyer. Amethyst blown-glass pendants hanging above the island lend a nice touch of color to the high-gloss white kitchen.

In the living room, Elms played off the oval dining table, again introducing curves to the space in the form of a round rug, side table, and chic swivel sofa—a brainstorm that came to her in the middle of the night—nestled in the corner. “The rooms are very square,” explains Elms, “so I contrasted the angles with more feminine, softer edges.” To ground the space, she opted for some heft, installing a glass-topped, polished stainless-steel cocktail table. “It takes three guys to move it,” the designer admits with a laugh.

Elms strategically dealt with the angular

configuration of the unit in other rooms as well, incorporating softer lines when possible. In the office, a curved desk from the owner’s previous home keeps company with a Lucite bubble chair. Continuing the light palette, Elms opted for a pretty silvery-lavender metallic wallcovering.

“There are feminine features throughout,” says the homeowner, “but I didn’t want girly.” Evidence of this crops up in the den, and especially the master bedroom. In the former, a custom, angled sofa in a deep, moody blue runs along the windows. A cocktail table with

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an amethyst resin top and a nickel base adds a dose of fun and complements the modern artwork, much of which is from the owner's personal collection. Elms swapped out solid doors in favor of steel and glass versions, opening the space to the foyer and making a modern, industrial architectural statement.

The statement-making continues in the master bedroom, where Elms says they "went all in," choosing a striking navy blue as the base color, which appears in the custom velvet headboard, the floor-to-ceiling sateen drapes, and a carpet laced with silver sparkles. Ratcheting the drama is a navy and silver wallcovering that has a reflective quality and amazing raw crystal pendants dangling above the bedside tables that mimic swizzle sticks.

It's a bold room that the homeowner adores. Much like the rest of the space.

RESOURCES : For more information about this home, see page 180.





THIS PAGE, FROM FAR LEFT: A curved desk and Lucite bubble chair are clever foils for the square frame of the office. Elms likes to create powder rooms that are an experience, she says, “so knowing my client’s love for a little glitz, we found this silvery crackle-sparkle tile that runs the wet wall.” **FACING PAGE:** To match the bold blue of the master bedroom, the designer went with high-gloss lacquered bedside tables with frosted-glass tops.

“Every time I walk into my apartment, I’m happy,” she says. “It feels like home, it feels like my home. It feels like me.” And for this, she’s quick to credit Elms. “I knew exactly what I wanted, I just couldn’t do it. She did everything I wanted and more—that’s how good she is.” ■■■