

FRENCH CONNECTION

CLASSIC DESIGN CONCEALS PLENTY OF MODERN-DAY CONVENIENCES INSIDE ONE LOFTY HOME AT THE RESIDENCES AT THE RITZ-CARLTON.
BY JOANN GRECO

It was the view that immediately won over the owner of a new 3,000-square-foot condo on the 43rd floor of The Residences at The Ritz-Carlton. With City Hall Tower looming just beyond and busy Dilworth Plaza below, this “right-sizing” buyer knew that his grand vision for a home that evoked luxe-but-comfy French rococo would complement his lofty vantage point in the heart of Center City.



A movable wall separates the master suite and the dining room but both luxe living spaces enjoy priceless views of William Penn atop City Hall.



FROM TOP: The tricked-out kitchen is one of the family's favorite rooms in the house; the column-lined entryway, capped off by a painted trompe l'oeil dome, shows off the owner's climate-controlled wine room.



To execute the coffered ceilings, built-in woodwork, and stunning finishes necessary for creating the Old World classicism he was after, the owner turned to master cabinet-maker David Ramsay of Moorestown, New Jersey, with whom he'd worked on several other homes, and Philadelphia-based architects Kass & Associates.

“He brought a lot of images from magazines, and even had a rough layout,” says Spence Kass, principal. “He wanted a clear division between public and private spaces because he entertains a lot, and he was particularly interested in making the best use of every nook and cranny.”

The homeowners had a clear vision of the home they wanted, says Gary W. Greenip, vice president of sales and marketing for AGC Partners, which oversees the Residences. “They blended their love of art, music, and convenience to create the perfect living space for themselves with traditional styling,” he says. “It’s truly a one-of-a-kind home.”

The results are ingenious. Case in point: Since the master bedroom is unconventionally situated adjacent to the living room in order to take >>

SPACE INTERIORS

“IT’S TRULY A ONE-OF-A-KIND HOME.”

—GARY W. GREENIP

advantage of the view, the designers installed a series of accordion-style doors that unfold to create a paneled gallery wall. Another clever touch shows up in a small corner carved out of the master bath. Draped in a honey onyx imported from South America, this indulgent room centers on a huge bath and what the owner dubs the “car wash,” an enormous steam shower fitted with 10 controls.

Also part of the master suite, a study neatly showcases a crescent-shaped desk and a dramatically undulating bookshelf. Two other bedroom/bath suites spotlight the owner’s affinity for jazz and sports with memorabilia signed by everyone from Wynton Marsalis to Tiger Woods. A balcony suspended outside the living room brings the occupants and their lucky guests this close to Alexander Milne Calder’s iconic statue of William Penn.

To hold the couple’s sparkling barware and audio/visual equipment, Ramsay installed cherry wood cabinetry along one entire wall of the living room. Nearby, in a kitchen outfitted with seemingly acres of dark green granite

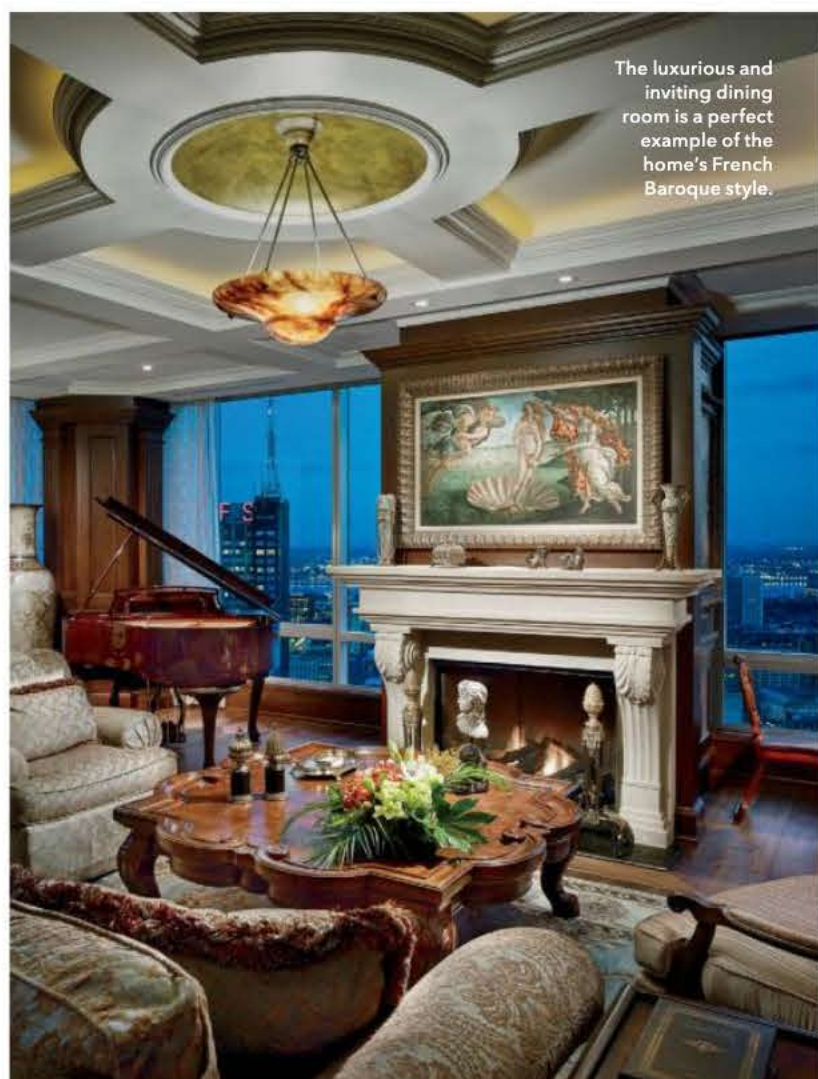
countertops, he tucked two shelves behind a panel of the curving bar to hide small appliances.

For those times when he doesn’t feel like cooking, though, the owner says, “The Capital Grille has become my new dining room.” If he’s in an especially leisurely mood, he simply calls a concierge from his “bat phone”—part of the apartment’s heady array of technological innovations—to request delivery of breakfast and a newspaper; the staff of nearly 30 provides 24-hour assistance.

Residents enjoy other five-star perks of the Ritz-Carlton, which recently underwent a \$24 million renovation, including an upgraded spa, reimagined lobby, and a Latin-inflected restaurant from chef Richard Sandoval. Meanwhile, the second floor of the Residences is outfitted with a 7,000-square-foot fitness center and a well-appointed party space that includes a luxurious lounge, screening room, and outdoor terrace. “Everything I need,” says the owner, “is always a few steps away.” For more information, visit philadelphia.residences.com. ■



Gleaming cherry woodwork can be spotted throughout the home, from the walls to the furnishings.



The luxurious and inviting dining room is a perfect example of the home’s French Baroque style.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HALKIN MASON PHOTOGRAPHY