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ELEGANTLY BOSTON





A glamorous apartment overlooking the Public Garden brings the taste of an English country manor to the city

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A CUSTOM TIBETAN CARPET, designed by interior designer Gerald Pomeroy, reflects the drawing room's subtle color palette. The generous mirror-topped coffee table, also his design, is a nod to the homeowner's fondness for Asian-influenced furnishings. The millwork was inspired by the library at London's historic Pitzhanger Manor.



NEVER MIND PRINCE CHARLES'S FABLED GARDENS. FOR A couple starting a new chapter in their lives, the view of Boston's Public Garden from their own windows can be every bit as alluring as the landscaped grounds of an English country estate. Especially when their new apartment has both the advantages of city living and all the comforts of home.

"After years of living in a big suburban house and raising five children, my clients were ready for a totally fresh start," says Boston interior designer Gerald Pomeroy. "They took nothing with them except family memorabilia, which meant new furnishings, even new art. But they also wanted to retain a sense of familiarity and ease, which for them translated to unpretentious, relaxed English country-style comfort, with a certain low-key elegance." His marching orders also required that the space be people friendly and have "no areas off-limits to children."

True to their family ties, the couple bought two adjoining units in a 1920s Back Bay building. Their goal was to unite them into a floor-through apartment big enough to welcome sons, daughters, and 14 grandchildren, all of whom live close by. They gave their design team nine months to come up with the new floor plan, add architectural details, and have decorating in place. The punch list complete, they moved in this past June.

To gut and restructure the 5,000-square-foot space, Pomeroy worked with The Classic Group, a Lexington, Massachusetts, architecture and building company with whom he had worked before. What ensued was a synchronized collaboration between Pomeroy, architectural project designer Nicholas Daveline, and the homeowners. "We all had our input from the start, which was invaluable because each of our ideas served as inspiration for the others," says Pomeroy.

His client candidly acknowledges, "I can't decorate, but I do know the colors I like and the look I'm comfortable with. Gerald read my mind perfectly." From the start, the decorative oval mullions of the apartment's striking Regency-style windows captivated the homeowner, a feature Daveline and Pomeroy replicated throughout. Niches in the foyer and drawing room are important new architectural details with a direct reference to the oval motif. In the master sitting room, new built-in cabinets have glass doors that repeat the oval design.

"Luckily, we had a wonderful subcontractor and site supervisor to implement our version of the Old Boston style of Federal and English architecture, as seen on Beacon Hill," says Daveline. "Walls were back to the studs. We started from scratch, using the entry hall to divide the floor into public rooms at the front and private at the back, all with new Regency-inspired millwork, moldings, cabinetry, and running trim."

Visitors step off the elevator into a sophisticated foyer with citron walls,



THE LUXURIOUS POWDER ROOM features walls covered with hand-painted DeGournay wallpaper and a custom bowfront vanity with gold piping. In the kitchen (FACING PAGE), English pendant lights hang above a long counter topped by one solid piece of polished granite. Interior designer Gerald Pomeroy (FACING PAGE, AT LEFT IN BOTTOM PHOTO) and architect Nicholas Daveline in the anteroom where the mural was painted by Boston artist Susan Harter.



COMFORT AND STYLE meet in the living/dining room, where new Chinese Chippendale-inspired painted chairs with seat cushions covered in practical washable Ultrasuede surround a mahogany table. The gilt-framed mirror reflects the paneled niche in the drawing room at the opposite end of the space.







a graphic floor of tumbled marble and limestone tiles, and an oval recessed niche set off by an antiqued mirrored background. From there, it's a step into an intimate anteroom that opens to the drawing room and living/dining rooms, adjoining spaces that can be closed from each other by pocket doors. New window seats — the wife's idea — cozily corral the spectacular Public Garden views in both rooms.

"Nick and I worked on elevations together and gave the clients several choices of floor plan," says Pomeroy. "They could have had a separate formal dining room but opted not to. That tells you something about how they like to live."

The drawing room is at once welcoming and elegant, distinguished by a paneled mahogany niche flanked by built-in bookcases stained the same tone as the wide-plank walnut floors. Unabashed luxuriousness abounds in deep, comfortable seating and neoclassical elements such as lamps, obelisks, urns, and pedestals. The drawing room and living/dining room share glazed Saxon-green walls set off by cream-colored wood trim. Window treatments and identical English reproduction chandeliers are repeated in both spaces. Closed off, each room is intimate; open, the space is dramatic.

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"Gerald is my genie," says the wife. "Looking at these



IN THE MORE SECLUDED private wing, the master sitting room has cabinets in which the smoked-glass doors are a vertical version of the window detail in the drawing and living/dining room. Curtains are oversize Buffalo-plaid silk with wool sheers.



DESIGN DECISIONS

Taking Details From the Past

Architect Nicholas Daveline of The Classic Group and interior designer Gerald Pomeroy used custom millwork to add a sense of history to the gutted apartment. "Gerald and I thought the location would be a great opportunity to do what we started calling 'Old Boston,'" says Daveline. "English flavor from the Regency and Federal periods, with the architecture of Beacon Hill tied in."

The library at Pitzhanger Manor in London, which overlooks the historic 28-acre Walpole Park, was the inspiration for the drawing room (SEE PHOTO ON PAGE 84), where the view is of the Boston Public Garden. Using rich mahogany, South Shore Millwork Inc. of Norton, Massachusetts, built bookcases and an arched paneled niche for artwork and objets d'art. In the private master suite, they used a lighter pine for the husband's office (ABOVE), which has a distinctly masculine aesthetic. In the adjacent sitting room (LEFT), the look is more feminine. Here, the wife wanted to continue the oval detailing of the building's original windows, and the husband wanted frosted, backlit glass. Daveline and Pomeroy answered the call of both: The custom cabinets painted soft green have vertical oval details set in frosted glass. Daveline and Pomeroy also met their own goals, since the design emulates cabinets from the periods they were hoping to mirror.

empty units gave me no clue that it could all turn into home. Our grandkids can't wait to visit; they think it's the coolest. Even my husband has a new interest in colors."

"Gerald brought his ideas and the trust of his client to the table," says Daveline. "It couldn't have been a better collaboration. That's what took the design to the A-plus level."

For the owners, their new chapter has turned into the beginning of a love story. "Looking out the window is pure theater," says the wife. "It's always fascinating. And it's quiet, too! I walk around with a smile on my face all the time." ■