

# EAST COAST HOME+DESIGN







Laying parquet floors and installing ceiling moldings creates a pre-World War II apartment feel.





*Architect Dinyar Wadia  
Offers Quality in all  
Styles and Sizes*

Story by Diana Sussman  
Photos by Jonathan Wallen  
Styling by Stockon Hall





Hidden behind the wall with the green painting hides a queen size murphy bed like the one on the left - enabling the library to double as a bedroom.





Sanjiv Wadia's signature of refined quality and meticulous attention to detail is clearly imprinted throughout the NYC apartment of Kusum and Sanjiv Das. Given that he and his architectural firm Wadia Associates have built an international reputation over the last 30 years on excelling at all types of traditional styles ranging from Colonial Revival to French Normandy, Georgian to English, and Tudor manor to American shingle home, it may seem that his work should be difficult to recognize. Yet, each of his projects exude superiority, richness and attentiveness to detail that transcend the architectural style of the project and simply say Wadia.

This renowned architect extends his versatility to the sizes and types of his projects. After seeing fabulous homes that Wadia has designed, many mistakenly think that he only designs large homes for wealthy clients. To the contrary, Wadia designs a vast array of smaller projects, such as apartments in New York City and additions to homes. Further, given that Wadia has established a large network of connections and resources, he is able to produce the highest quality results for minimal cost, sometimes





Fabrics used on the dining room and living room chairs are reminiscent of India.





even below market prices. As Wadia notes, “You don’t have to use expensive materials to make a project look good.” Thus, the fine Wadia product is financially accessible to a vast range of clientele.

Kusum Das’ fabulous experience in working with Wadia on her NYC two bedroom apartment exemplifies that regardless of the size of the project, each client feels that their project is a priority. Even though her apartment might be on the smaller end of the spectrum, Das felt that Wadia and his colleagues from Wadia Associates, Phillip Dodd who was the senior project architect and Saranda Berisa who was the decorator, were all very professional, extremely accessible, and gave her 100% of their professional judgment.

Throughout the design process, Wadia met with Mr. and Mrs. Das at his office every other Sunday, where they had tea, went over plans, answered questions and made choices. Mrs. Das referred to it as “the best part of Sunday” since she really enjoyed Wadia’s warmth and humor and found him particularly attentive to what the woman wanted in the apartment. As Das emphasized, “It is not just that he was doing our home, he was a warm, nice person who has your best interest at heart and he is giving 100% to your project at a time convenient to you.” Wadia enjoys meeting with clients on the weekend because he prefers to work with them when they are at ease and not stressed or distracted by the weekday activities.

Wadia’s objectives were to gut the apartment and redesign the space so that it maximized the use of the space given that they had a college age daughter, created the feel of a pre-world war apartment in one built in the 1980s, kept consistent with fung shui principals, and capitalized on the city views. Wadia met each objective brilliantly. With respect to maximizing space, he turned the second bedroom into a library that could double as a guest room by opening the wall to the living room to create an archway with pocket doors and by putting in two queen-sized murphy beds that appear as wainscoted walls between bookshelves when they are not in use. Ingeniously, the lower portions of these bookshelves pull out to become night stands when needed. To create the feel of a pre-world war apartment, he laid elegant parquet floors throughout, plastered all the ceilings, and inserted interesting ceiling moldings of that ilk in every room. He even added a fireplace and shelving in the master bedroom to enhance the pre-war atmosphere. He also addressed a fung shui problem in a clever manner. It is poor fung shui to see doors to the kitchen and the bathroom in the foyer. Unfortunately these could not be changed structurally. Wadia hid the doors by covering them with antique mirrors that also amplified the foyer and fit in with the décor of the home.

Wadia also infused this transitional style apartment with an Indian overtone, to reflect the Dases Indian background. One immediately feels the Indian influence upon entering the foyer and seeing the custom carved niche built to house the 1000 pound statue of the Hindi supreme god Vishnu, which came from New Delhi. Mrs. Das explained that according to Hinduism, the goddess of wealth and prosperity is Laxmi. Laxmi is said to bring wealth to those who deserve it and is also the wife of the god Vishnu. When she is in the home she brings wealth and prosperity and she will be wherever Vishnu is. The wallpaper in the foyer, as well as material covering the dining room chairs and other pieces of furniture around the home, also add an Indian tone. Mrs. Das and her family love their home.

Wadia’s success with the Das apartment and his other works stems in part from the fact that he addresses every aspect of a project with proper planning, attentiveness to detail and responsibility, including obtaining permits, dealing with building boards and planning boards – processes that can impede many but that he usually breezes through because of the deliberateness of his approach. Dodd, Berisa, his office manager and others have all been at Wadia for many years and provide the ability to offer clients architectural and interior design services. Of course, if a client would like to work with an outside interior designer they are happy to do so. Wadia has worked with many including Ellie Cullman of New York City and David Herchik of Washington, DC. As Wadia mentioned to Cindy Reinfert of Greenwich, CT, he is happy



to collaborate with other designers. Wadia, who was actually born in India and educated in large part there, was greatly influenced by the architecture in India. He explains that the English used to view Bombay and Mumbai as their “capital” of the world and put great effort into the architecture of that city as a way to “flex their muscles.” These cities have one of the best presentations of Gothic architecture in the world and beautifully landscaped squares and plazas. Wadia was also influenced by the architecture in South Bombay and in Baroda, where he received wonderful training at the School of Architecture. Wadia loves to travel and while traveling collects ideas and details that he incorporates into his various projects. Fittingly his projects can be found all over the globe. While there is certainly a concentration of Wadia projects in Fairfield County and New York City, you can find his designs in Florida, China, Mumbai, Bombai and Sri Lanka, as well as other parts of the world. Last year he designed six French style homes in China. Looking to the future, he is considering opening a satellite office in Florida, to accommodate his many clients there, and possibly a temporary office space to meet clients in New York City. Despite the mystique that follows such a world renowned architect, Wadia sees himself as an approachable “low maintenance regular person” who you might see on the street in blue jeans. Rather Wadia humbly notes he is “glad to be in Fairfield County,” feels “privileged to be provided the opportunity to design beautiful homes, apartments and gardens, and “continually strives to provide the best services to all [his] clients regardless of the size of their project.”

#### ARCHITECT

Wadia Associates  
Dinyar Wadia  
134 Main Street  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
203.966.0048  
wadiaassociates.com

#### GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Joseph Kusnick  
A.E. Greyson and Company  
45 Main Street  
Suite 538  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
212.337.0929  
aegreyson.com







To ensure the apartment was well lit, Wadia used sconces and lamps throughout and recessed lighting in a few possible spots. Each room is designed to take advantage of the fantastic views