



DECO RATING A custom black cabinet inspired by a 1940s piece conceals the TV in the living area. The wool draperies with an embroidered leading edge are from Holland & Sherry, and the artwork is by Enrique Santana.

TAKE TWO

Contemporary and art deco mingle to elevate a luxury pied-à-terre by Lichten Craig Architecture + Interiors.

By Tate Gunnerson // Photography by Werner Straube

"This has been a wonderful story, and it started with one of the most difficult meetings that I've ever had," explains Joan Craig (lichtencraig.com) of the two-bedroom pied-à-terre in The Ritz-Carlton Residences that she designed for her client, an educator from Michigan whose son is currently attending college in Chicago.

Hired based upon her glamorous design of the Woman's Athletic Club in Chicago, Craig and then-design director Gemma Parker set out to transform the blank slate into an urban getaway for their client. "The homeowner loved the lower level lounge [at the WAC] and wanted an apartment that felt like that: a home that was 'pretty, polished and elegant,'" Craig explains, noting that the same architect, Philip Maher, designed both the WAC and the Farwell Building, which is part of The Ritz-Carlton Residences.

But the designers' first presentation missed the mark. "While I love the elegant, symmetrical geometric patterns and colors of art deco, I discovered that I lean toward simple, clean lines," the owner explains. "Instead of being peeved with my responses, Joan asked some clarifying questions, and the second meeting was a home run."

Heeding her client's wishes, Craig conjured up a deco-inspired space awash in a sea of cream and neutral tones contrasted with black and gold accents. "She wanted the focus to be on the cityscape, which is splendid from up there," Craig explains. "She didn't want anything too fussy."

In the living room, matching transitional sofas and a pair of leather swivel chairs create a formal yet comfortable conversation area around a custom

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LIGHT AND BRIGHT Clockwise from left: A rug with a chevron pattern from Ballard Designs adds a deco sensibility to the existing white cabinetry and gray quartzite countertop in the kitchen. The nickel and glass pendants are from Charles Edwards, and the stools are from Hickory Chair; a rippled bowl lighting pendant from Chameleon Fine Lighting illuminates the entry foyer; the dining area includes a custom dining table designed by Lichten Craig and made by Rinck in Paris, a set of chairs from Frederick P. Victoria & Son and a walnut credenza with antique brass hardware from Roman Thomas.



...CONTINUED brass coffee table with a parchment top. "It recalls 1920s style but in an updated way," Craig explains. "All of the furnishings recall an updated version of that art deco language."

Indeed, a rock crystal chandelier from France above the custom dining table adds a touch of period glamour without obstructing the skyline views. "It's beautiful and minimal, but at night, it glows," Craig explains.

Displayed above the nearby dining buffet is a large abstract painting by Francine Turk that depicts images of horses, including one that the owner has owned for years. "We went to Francine's studio two or three times," Craig explains. "She was really wonderful about collaborating."

The piece is one of many equestrian-inspired nods that can be found throughout the apartment. In the front foyer, a Tai Ping rug has bridle bits incorporated into the design. That motif reappears in the design of the Hermès wallcovering in the powder room, which, like the separate family room, trades the neutral color scheme for blue tones inspired by the lake.

Such personal touches made this design a success for everyone involved. "We had an easy and immediate connection, and I was comfortable that I was in good hands," the owner explains. "The design is exactly what I hoped for: beautiful, elegant, comfortable, livable. Having a home in Chicago has been a wonderful adventure for me." ■

