

SHORELINE RESPITE

A New York couple find common ground
– and serenity – in a Miami Beach apartment.

Text Jillian Whitaker **Photos** Robin Hill

On a bright, blue Miami kind of morning, a New York City-based couple with busy careers sat a thousand miles away from the fast pace of Manhattan in their South Beach apartment. It might as well have been a million miles, because their newly renovated home-away-from-home, featuring abundant light and expansive views of Miami Beach, seemed to soak up the sights, sounds and all the sunshine of this particularly beautiful autumn day in South Florida. “This apartment is purely for relaxing,” said one of the owners. The pair, who own a fashion company in New York, split their time between a loft overlooking the Hudson River and an apartment in downtown Hong Kong. For them, Miami is a welcome escape from the frenzy and pretense of city life. “We’ve been coming here a lot since the ‘90s. It’s always been our wish to have a home here,” his partner said.

It was during one of these heat-seeking trips to Miami that they happened to stumble upon their future seaside retreat: the Executive House Apartments, de-



Eye-catching objects in the living room include: tweed sofas from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Brass Teardrop Tables by Jonathan Adler and a Stilnovò chandelier found on 1st Dibs. Macho, the couple's French bulldog, is perched on a pair of yellow stools from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams.

A vintage Borsani dining table is surrounded by Paul McCobb chairs. Limburg pendants from the 1960s, found at a vintage store in Los Angeles, hang in a unique configuration. A diptych entitled *Welcome to Famous 1 & 2* by the Luo Brothers, are seen on the right.

signed by Robert Swartburg in 1959. The mid-century structure “had the personality, the details, that we were looking for,” said one owner. To their excitement, the lobby had recently been beautifully restored to its original condition, however, the unit they were interested in needed a lot of work. The space, which had been redone by the previous owners in the ‘80s, was odd and angular, complete with a diamond-shaped kitchen and four-person hot tub. “But when we saw the view,” one of the owners said, “we decided to ignore the hot tub.”

WHILE BOTH OWNERS HAD STRONG OPINIONS, THEY BOTH AGREED THAT DAVID GAULD — WHO HAD RENOVATED THEIR NEW YORK LOFT — WAS THE RIGHT ARCHITECT FOR THE PROJECT.

They snatched up the two-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath mid-century apartment, knowing it would be a long road of renovations. They each had strong opinions, at times differing, about how the space should look, but they both agreed that David Gauld — who had renovated their New York loft — was the right architect for the project. Gauld is no stranger to Miami Beach: He worked on the expansion and renovation of the Bass Museum in 2001 under the internationally acclaimed architect Arata Isozaki. Additionally, It was recently announced that Gauld’s firm, David Gauld Architect, and Isozaki have been selected for the 2015 expansion of the Bass.

“We totally gutted it and took everything down to the studs,” said Gauld of the apartment. “We tried to take it back to the original layout.” He opened up the kitchen, elimi-



A pair of vintage Asian lamps with radiant, red shades interrupt a uniform palette of neutral tones. The console is by Karl Springer. A glimpse into the master bedroom reveals a tufted leather bed from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams.

nated the servant's hall, created a laundry room and designed a master bathroom that did not include a "big, crazy hot tub," he laughed. It was important to the couple to use materials that were evocative of and practical for Florida, so he used terrazzo tile for the floors as well as glass tile for the walls in the kitchen and bathroom.

Together, the owners collaborated on the interior design, striving to achieve "a dressed cosmopolitan look at the beach." First, they selected the warm, sand-colored terrazzo floors, which set the tone for the rest of the space. For the walls in the entryway and living room, they opted for floor-to-ceiling wood paneling for a cozy, romantic feel. After going back and forth about the right shade — one wanted neutral, the other pushed for a pop of color — they settled on beige for the paneling, resulting in an uncluttered, effortless flow that blends seamlessly with the shoreline outside their window.

The living room furnishings are an interesting combination of old and new: two long tweed sofas from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, four Brass Teardrop Side Tables by Jonathan Adler, a geometric green rug from ABC Home, a pair of Lange and Schmidt Boomerang chairs from 1955, a Karl Springer console and two vintage Asian lamps from the 1950s found on 1st Dibs. "We've always liked vintage pieces. We found some online and others at auction," one of the owners said.

In the kitchen, Gauld pointed out an interesting design feature, "Everything is under counter. They don't even have a full-size refrigerator. It creates a nice, open feeling." The open concept takes advantage of the wide-water views and is ideal for entertaining. Here, the neutral color palette continues with natural, beige cabinetry by Robert Carpenry Custom Millwork in Miami, the Ann Sacks ceramic tile backsplash and eggshell quartz countertops by Caesarstone.

"I'm a strong colorist, and he has such good ideas. He has the vision," said one owner of his partner. "We pulled our resources and hopefully we came up with a good plan." The main living areas are streamlined and simply presented so that nothing detracts from the main attraction: the view of the sea and sand through the large living room window.

The uniform palette carries on in the master bedroom, giving it tranquility. A creamy tufted leather bed from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams centers the space, flanked on either side by rain drum side tables from Pottery Barn. Two



Jonathan Adler's Brass Teardrop side table reflects the Stilnovo chandelier hanging above. The rug is from ABC Home.

vibrant blue and brass Aage Herlow pendants and a rug from ABC Home serve as the main source of color.

A formidable art collection focuses on Chinese Contemporary artists, such as the Luo Brothers and Cui Xiuwen, as well as New York artist Eileen Lang. "We are very interested in art," the owner said. "My partner had a big interest in Chinese Contemporary, and it just kept moving from there."

For two owners who admittedly didn't always see eye-to-eye when it came to design decisions, they certainly found a way to work together harmoniously. So much so, that they recently decided to tackle their next project — an 1895 pied-à-terre in Paris — which should be completed later this month.

When asked which location is their favorite address — Hong Kong, New York, Miami Beach or Paris — the partners didn't seem to have any problem finding common ground. "This is our favorite," one said, the other quickly nodding in agreement.

On that cool, sunny South Florida sort of morning, those other cities didn't stand a chance. ■