



LEFT: The cool grays the homeowner loves form the backbone of the living room's decor, with blue and gold providing harmony and highlights. The sheer draperies at the floor-to-ceiling windows wear banding at the top, where the opaque fabric hides the window treatments' mechanics. BELOW: The entry foyer got a shot of drama with a recessed ceiling, the ideal home for a dramatic chandelier.

New York," says Neis.

The other draw was the open plan of the living room, dining room, and kitchen. "We have six children between us," Neis explains. "Mostly, they're grown, but it's important for us to have space where we can all come together to watch the game or to celebrate holidays."

When it came to the decor, however, she was stumped. She knew the dark wall colors, which felt gloomy to her, would need to go, and that she wanted a change from her previous home. "I wanted it to be contemporary, and I knew I wanted cool gray walls instead of the warm creams that I had been living with," she says.

When she enlisted Providence interior designer Kelly Taylor for help with color and furniture, Taylor suggested that the apartment's color scheme wasn't the only thing that made the interior feel dark. "We needed more light," Taylor says. "Fortunately, we learned from a neighbor who

Bright Light, Small City

A thoughtful makeover turns a high-rise Providence condominium into an airy, sun-washed space that reminds the owner of her Manhattan roots.

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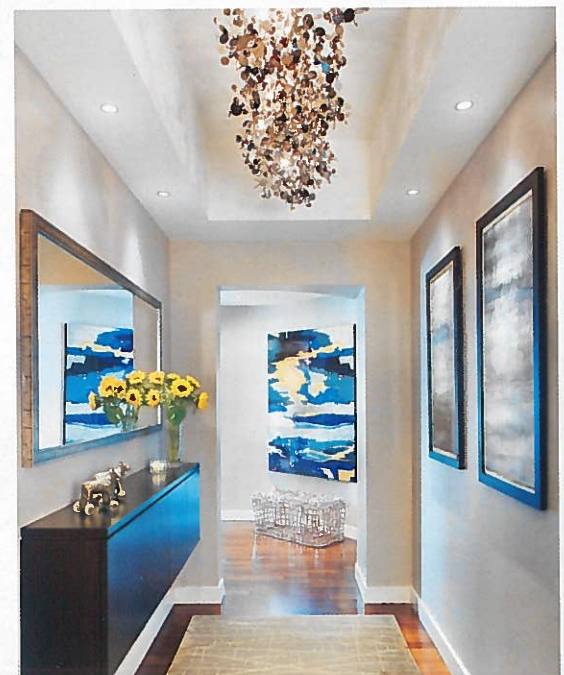
TEXT BY REGINA COLE // PHOTOGRAPHY BY NAT REA

When Nancy Neis began a new chapter of her life, she was determined to start fresh. "Before my husband and I bought this condominium, I had lived in a 160-year-old house with very traditional interiors. Now I wanted something completely different," says the attorney, who works for a law firm in East Providence, Rhode Island. "We brought nothing from where we had lived before."

The fresh start is on the twenty-ninth floor of a residential hotel

building in downtown Providence. "I am originally from New York City, so I loved the idea of living in a high rise," Neis says. "I love the distant views and living with all the conveniences."

They chose this 1,870-square-foot apartment in large part because of the broad terrace that wraps around two sides. Created by a step-back of the building, it makes this one of only four units in the building with such outdoor space—a true aerie in the sky. "The terrace, especially, reminds me of





The terrace “is like having a yard,” says the homeowner. “We eat out here, sit and watch the sky, have a glass of wine. We entertain a lot on the terrace.”



was the structural engineer on the building that the ceiling could be popped up in various places.”

She started by adding a bit of architectural interest and better lighting. “In the entry, we made a deep, rectangular cove and put recessed lighting all around it,” she explains. “The light creates drama while it brightens the space. Then we put

a killer chandelier in the cove.”

The dining room got the same pop-up treatment. From a new cove centered above the table the homeowners hung a wedding gift, a blue multi-globe chandelier by Pawtucket, Rhode Island, glass artist Tracy Glover.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Spot, the orange dog, oversees the terrace, where designer Kelly Taylor covered the concrete floor with tile and maintenance-free artificial turf. Featuring a singular chandelier and lively upholstery fabric on the chair backs, the dining room is at once sumptuous and contemporary. The silvery wall piece is by Providence artist Allison Paschke. An abstract painting by Michael Rich commands the dining end of the open living area; the kitchen countertops went from granite to modern white quartzite.

Taylor guided Neis to clean, modern pieces of furniture and persuaded her to replace the kitchen’s granite countertops with sleek white quartzite. She installed shades and draped sheer fabric at the glass walls, the tops banded with opaque fabric in a warm golden gray for the living room, fuchsia for the master bedroom.

Neis’s preference for grays and navy blues drove the choice of wall, fabric, and furnishing colors. “Nancy really likes gray, so that was our starting point. We added blues and yellows,” Taylor says.

In the master bedroom, the gray background meets a saturated fuchsia, the idea for the color sparked by a rag doll given to Neis by her daughter.

To finish things off, Taylor took Neis and her husband to the Pawtucket gallery of Candita Clayton, where she helped



FAR LEFT: The gray tones of the master bedroom are complimented by saturated shades of pink inspired by a rag doll the homeowner received from her daughter. **LEFT:** In a tiny powder room near the entry, streamlined wallpaper, a sleek mirror, and a contemporary vanity keep the space from feeling cluttered.

in all directions, the views entertain and delight. Spot, the orange dog—a creation by the Finnish designer Eero Aarnio—overlooks the lofty scene.

“We don’t have a dog any more, so Spot is as close as we get to a pet,” Neis says.

them to choose art for their new home. The collection that now brightens the walls brings unexpected pleasure to this homeowner.

Neis’s favorite place however, is out on the broad terrace. “It’s like having a yard,” she says. “We eat out here, sit and watch

the sky, have a glass of wine. We entertain a lot on the terrace.”

Taylor transformed the utilitarian concrete floor with tile and disguised a blank concrete knee wall with a row of planters full of boxwood. Astroturf rugs define dining and lounging areas and,

And a low-maintenance pet Spot is. Unless the wind blows fiercely enough to bring him indoors, the jaunty fellow seems content to spend his days looking down on the city’s bustle. •

RESOURCES For more information about this home, see page 179.



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