

New England HOME

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Chic*

VIBRANT NEW LOOKS
ENRICH NEW ENGLAND'S
HISTORIC STYLES





Designer Elizabeth Benedict enlarged this Beacon Hill condominium by rigorously adhering to a unified color palette. The creamy paint color, cranberry-hued upholstery, brown Pullman ladder, and greige of the grasscloth wallcovering are all echoed in other rooms. Benedict had the floors matte finished to keep them from competing with her color scheme.



“My clients wanted a pied-a-terre in the city now that their youngest was off to college,” Benedict says. Perhaps because they had no plans to give up their home in the suburbs, they took a nonchalant approach. “Buying the condo was more like a whim,” the designer says.

Tracy and John met Benedict through a mutual friend. Benedict had designed the friend’s living room, and the Atkinsons liked the result. They hired Benedict and gave her carte blanche, with a flexible “Do what you think is best, we trust you” budget. The only directive was to make the place—a one-bedroom, 1,350-square-foot space with two baths and a loft—“more contemporary and at the same time warm and inviting,” says Tracy.

Benedict, whose company, Elizabeth Home Decor & Design, is based in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, believes in what she calls “cohesive design, with a unified palette” to help enlarge a space. She set the tone for the rest of the home with the kitchen’s countertops of granite in greige and cream with cranberry flecks.

The designer swapped out the kitchen’s

Surprise Ending

The owners expected a casual relationship with the Beacon Hill condominium they purchased as a pied-a-terre. What they got was an unexpected—and welcome—sense of home.

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Moving to the city can make almost anyone feel lost, whether it’s settling into a first apartment post college, or into a luxury pad post suburban family life.

Then, hopefully, there follows one of those casual encounters of the lucky kind that pulls everything together, that makes a person feel like she’s landed somewhere good: a renewed acquaintance, a friend of a friend, or, in the case of Tracy and John Atkinson, a condo on Beacon Hill designed by Elizabeth Benedict.



first-generation recessed can lights for more modern, unobtrusive lighting. Long glass pendants above the counter separating the kitchen from the great room emphasize the latter's double ceiling height.

The pendants' transparency ensures an open feel between the kitchen and the great room, which is one step higher. Benedict says she had to go through twenty-plus manufacturers before she found Fairfield Chair Company in North Carolina to match the chairs arranged around the counter in the great room with the stools in the kitchen lower down. Such are the demands of cohesive design.

A thirteen-foot Edward Ferrell + Lewis Mittman sofa that looks like a sectional but is actually all of a piece anchors the sitting area, clad in a beige-gray fabric from Kirkby Design's high-performance line that's both luxurious and durable.

Facing the sofa is a custom wall unit,

crafted by architectural woodworkers Herrick & White of Cumberland, Rhode Island. A Pullman ladder stained dark to match the kitchen cabinetry stands ready to access the wine-storage area at the top of the unit.

The sitting area also includes an A.

Rudin chair and ottoman whose snakeskin-patterned Cowtan & Tout fabric picks up the cranberry flecks of the kitchen's granite counters. Benedict commissioned artist and college friend Will Day, of Boulder, Colorado, to create the exuberant, super-size oil hung on the grasscloth wall over the sofa.

In the master suite, Benedict papered the coffered ceilings and demolished a slate

fireplace in favor of a vanity with wall cabinetry, again by Herrick & White. With help from Wellesley, Massachusetts-based art consultant Libby Silvia, Benedict placed a canvas by Julia Blake that brings out the bluish-greens of the striped pillows, the throw draped over the arm of an



BELOW: The master bedroom holds a cozy sitting corner. FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The living room's thirteen-foot, one-piece sectional was hoisted by crane and ushered in through a window. Built-ins by Herrick & White in the guest room-loft directly above the kitchen sync with the wine rack below and the living room's Herrick & White shelving. A soft geometry defines the master suite: striped pillows, bedframe, and coffered ceilings. An antique mirror makes up for a lack of windows in the loft.



Benedict sawed the legs off a \$59 table from Target, covered it in faux fur, and placed it before the Ligne Roset chair as a footstool.

art deco–inflected Ligne Roset chair, and the tree pattern in the Mark Alexander curtain fabric.

In a confident demonstration of high and low, Benedict sawed the legs off a \$59 table from Target, covered it in faux fur, and placed it before the Ligne Roset chair as a footstool.

Two flights up in the loft, an antique mirror makes up for the room's windowless state. Herrick & White cabinetry and a pullout Kravet sofa make the space efficient and flexible enough to be used as a guest room or home office.

The loft also serves as a room for the Atkinsons' youngest when she's on college break.

As it turns out, the Atkinsons ended up so enamored of the warm, contemporary look and feel Benedict gave their new place, they sold their suburban house and took up full-time residence in the city. •

RESOURCES For more information about this home, see page 218.