

THE MAGAZINE of *SPLENDID HOMES and GARDENS* • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

# DESIGN

NEW ENGLAND

Historic  
Saves



## VISIT

### *who*

**JILL NAJNIGIER**  
owner and designer at  
JN Interior Spaces, whose  
passions include design,  
city living, biking, and her  
family.

### *design philosophy*

"Restraint. A beautiful home is the result of balanced, well-edited spaces, regardless of the style. My aesthetic is always clean, never jarring or overly decorated. Layering has to be strategic and very well thought out."



JILL NAJNIGIER'S FAVORITE piece of art, *Outlook XIII* by Joerg Dressler, depicts a ship. It hangs next to the windows that afford her and husband, Michael, with views of Boston Harbor.

# *Point of View*

With cityscapes and harbor scenes outside her windows, designer Jill Najnigier was inspired to make a condo in Boston's North End her own

WRITTEN BY ALLISON NEKOLA • PHOTOGRAPHED BY JESSICA DELANEY



**THE RECONFIGURED ENTRANCE** includes a small area with a desk (LEFT TOP). The space became a place for keys, cellphones, and spare change. The custom banquette (LEFT BOTTOM) that fills a corner of the dining space is easily accessible from the living area and seats eight people comfortably.

**L**eft with an empty nest once their sons, Nick, now 24, and Oli, 21, were on their own, interior designer Jill Najnigier and her husband, Michael, sold their four-bedroom house in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and returned to their roots in Boston's North End. "We lived right behind the Old North Church, so close that I could see the steeple from right outside my window," says Najnigier of the years when they were first married and called the North End home. "So I felt comfortable there."

But for all the neighborhood's charms (it's walkable, close to transportation and downtown, and has lots of boutique shops and restaurants), it was the view of Boston Harbor and

**Stay connected**

"Typically with any project I do, especially with my own, the flow is really important. Every room needs to connect but maintain its own personality."

landmarks such as the Old North Church and Prudential Center that sold them on the two-bedroom, 1,500-square-foot condominium in a 2003 high-rise loft building. "There was nothing redeeming when I walked in here other than

the view," says Najnigier. But she found the scene outside the 12th-floor windows irresistible.

As principal of JN Interior Spaces, the firm she founded 14 years ago, she was only further interested by the idea of a complete renovation. "Quite honestly, that's what I wanted," she says. As a designer accustomed to creating her clients' visions, the challenge was appealing. Here,



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## VISIT



she could execute her own vision. The work began in August 2013 and extended through Thanksgiving.

The one thing that would stay was the mint-green steel framework that came with the floor-to-ceiling windows in the living room and bedrooms. Too difficult to change, they served as inspiration for her color scheme, which includes taupe, deep mint, and rust in the living, dining, and kitchen spaces and leans toward deeper blues, yellows, and greens in the bedrooms.

Najnigier's design credo that all homes should be functional and restrained, with a crisp modern twist, is evidenced in the new kitchen, where the original U-shaped space that had blocked two-thirds of the view was reconfigured so that it is open to the din-

### *Leather lounging*

"We have two Grange leather armchairs, which face the view and are the only pieces that made it from the Hopkinton house. I love them. They're super comfortable, the scale was right, and I love the look of the worn leather with the vinyl."

### *Hit the lights*

"There was not a lot of lighting to begin with, and that's something I'm really crazy about. It's important to get it right and have it from every angle."

**NAJNIGIER AND HER husband, Michael, sit below a sphere made of recycled steel mesh by Varaluz that hangs above the dining table. It is one of several unique light fixtures found throughout the redesigned condo.**

## CRAFTING SPACES, CREATING HOMES



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ing and living areas — and the harbor and cityscape beyond. She worked with Rosemary Porto, senior designer and sales manager at Poggenpohl Boston, to build the perfect kitchen area. The textured teak-finished cabinetry, which camouflages most appliances, is free of visible hardware, giving it a sleek look that makes it feel as if it is part of the living space.

Good traffic flow is an important element in designing a home, says Najnigier, so an easy and efficient connection between kitchen and living and dining spaces was key. So was the pared-down sensibility attained by removing the baseboards along every wall. “No contractor wanted to do this,” she says. “It’s a challenge because it requires so much work and you can see every imperfection that baseboards can hide. But I really wanted a clean look. In the end, it came out exactly how I wanted it.” She looked to Randolph Marchetti, contractor at Metropole Contracting in Everett, Massachusetts, to take on the task. Without the mouldings, the walls seem taller and the overall look is more modern.



**NAJNIGIER'S GOAL WAS** to hide any appliance or hardware that screamed kitchen. Her Miele vent hood slides from underneath the cabinets when needed, and each Poggenpohl cabinet opens with hidden touch latches so there's no bulky hardware.

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## VISIT

In the living room, a Phillip Jeffries wall-covering called Quartz in the Lost City of Silver shimmers, sending small reflections of mica through the room. A Varaluz recycled steel-mesh spherical light fixture hangs above an Eero Saarinen dining table. The custom television console combines a white lacquered top with a weathered wood base that balances modern sleekness with a rugged element. The sectional sofa has shades of deep mint, rust, and taupe, as does the shag rug. Both play off the deep-mint steel frames of the windows and the teak tones of the kitchen.

A hallway leads to the guest bedroom and bath and master suite. Here, again, Najnigier reworked the existing space into a more efficient layout. By reconfiguring the hall, she created a larger laundry room and extended the guest bathroom.

The guest bedroom was to welcome the Najnigiers' sons when they visited, so it holds two full-size beds. To accommodate them, a bulky walk-in closet was replaced with a narrower wall closet that had been part of the adjacent master bedroom.



**BECAUSE THERE IS no headboard, the wall behind the bed in the master bedroom needed to make a statement. Najnigier chose Intertwined, a wallcovering by Phillip Jeffries, to add the texture she craves.**



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**Extra organization**

"I actually have more storage space in this condo than I did in my four-bedroom house in the suburbs. A small space forces you to get creative."

**Custom contrast**

"What I really love about our custom TV console is, it's all touch latch, so no hardware detracts from the style. It is modern, but the finishes differ with a highly lacquered white top contrasting with the weathered wood finish on the bottom."



To the right of the guest room, a frosted-glass sliding door separates the master suite from the rest of the unit. At night, the bedroom lights up with the sights of the city; during the day, the light enhances the bright colors of the room.

Najnigier wanted to turn the master bath off the bedroom into a larger space that opened to the hallway, but a utility stack caused her to put two small bathrooms there instead. One has a vanity and shower, the other a vanity and toilet, and both open to the hallway — a design that works well when her husband, who is president and owner of TotalOffice, a company that provides office furniture solutions and services, gets up before her and can get ready without reentering the bedroom.

**A SLIDING DOOR with frosted panes separates the master suite from the rest of the condo. To accommodate the bedroom and dual baths, Najnigier redesigned the original three-bedroom unit into a two-bedroom space.**

**COME MEET THE ARTIST! "PETER ROLFE" - Friday, September 18th**



A solo exhibition of famed New England impressionist Peter Rolfe. Featuring over 60 new paintings depicting Boston, Maine, Italy, France, and many other locations. Peter will be in attendance from 5 - 9pm to talk about his travelling and painting experiences around the world.

**"NEW COLLECTORS" - Friday, October 16th**

Meet Elizabeth Hunter. An art consultant and former executive director of the Cape Cod Museum of Art. She will offer advice for new collectors and will be showing paintings by Robert Douglas Hunter and his former students and friends; John Terelak, Marie Fischer & Marieluise Hutchinson



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### THINK TEXTURE

Each room in Jill Najnigier's redesigned condominium has a unique aesthetic, yet the interior designer has kept the overall style of the residence clean, but warm and inviting with the deft use of textures on the walls and in the furnishings.

In the guest bathroom, for example, Ona Natural tiles from Porcelanosa that mimic ocean waves (TOP) line the shower walls, adding not only texture but also a sense of movement to the room.

A chandelier (ABOVE) over the bed in the master bedroom is made of recycled steel. The ribbonlike metal pieces are coiled to resemble multiple pinwheel toys. The fixture invites imagination and adds an intricate, playful accent to the room.

Not only is her passion for design reflected in the renovation, but Najnigier's skill and creativity also mean she now has exactly what she wanted. "It's about getting the right craftspeople and getting the right team to get the right direction and planning it out," she says.

"It's done by mixing textures, finishes, colors, and creating something that's unique. It takes a long time, but it's worth it. You know who lives here." ▲

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