



higher

A design team proves
that solid surfaces

Text by
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ground

can add just as much
warmth as soft furnishings.

Voluptuous Vladimir Kagan sofas and cocktail tables seem to float on top of a 100 percent silk rug from Steven King Decorative Carpets in the living room's conversation area. On just the right days, the furnishings mimic the clouds that hang in the sky over the city of Boston.



It started with the stone.

Designer Paula Daher took her clients on a fieldtrip to Cumar in Everett, Massachusetts, before the couple even began pondering a color palette for their new Boston high-rise. Daher had good reason for beginning the design process at the renowned stone fabricator. “The wife was very concerned about living in a high-rise,” she explains. “She wanted to feel a connection to the earth—to feel grounded. It can be unsettling to live so high up, especially at night or when it’s foggy. It’s almost like being in a plane.”



LEFT: A natural quartzite from Brazil surrounds the fireplace in the living room. A sculpture from the couple's existing collection, the five-foot-tall *Ophelia* by Michael James Talbot, found a home on the mantel. Sliding panels conceal the television. **RIGHT:** De Gournay wallpaper and onyx vulcano stone, featuring ribbons of copper, green, ivory, and cranberry, lend drama to the powder room. **FACING PAGE:** A bas-relief inspired by a favorite poem greets the couple when they enter the condo's foyer.

The homeowners spent hours at Cumar with stone designer Dawn Carroll. They were drawn to unusual, vibrant specimens that suggested ocean sunsets and Walden Pond birch trees. Once they made their choices, the three-bedroom apartment began to materialize. Blue-and-copper Van Gogh quartzite became the fireplace surround in the living room. Agate was paired with anigre for the guest bathroom's backlit vanity, and cranberry-colored onyx vulcano from Turkey offers a jaw-dropping moment in the powder room. A serene quartzite clads the kitchen island.

But the showstopper just might be the nearly eight-by-six-foot slab of Tunisian Sahara Noir marble set into the anigre-paneled walls of the dining room. The clients, who both have a passion for art (she paints, and he does leather-work), equated the slab to a painting,

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—DESIGNER PAULA DAHER



In the living room, designer Paula Daher sought a light fixture that would not interrupt the skyline views, so she landed on this one from Apparatus. To hang the heavy four-piece fixture, the team at Adams + Beasley Associates had to anchor it to the structural framing of the high-rise six months before the ceiling was finished and the light was installed.



RIGHT: In the dining room, a six-ton slab of marble from stone fabricator Cumar acts as artwork; stone designer Dawn Carroll says the pattern reminds her of the birch trees surrounding Walden Pond. **BELOW:** Builder Eric Adams says it took three people roughly 170 hours total to realize the high-gloss ceiling in the dining room. "And ninety percent of that time was just doing prep work," he says. **FACING PAGE:** At a touch, the dining room's anigre-paneled walls open to reveal storage for china and serveware.



which made Carroll's heart skip a beat. "I'd had that piece of stone on hold for myself for ten years," she recalls. "I just couldn't let it go, but these clients loved it as much, if not more, than I did. It was bittersweet, but now when I drive by the building, I can wave to it."

Of course, installing a six-ton hunk of marble took highly skilled craftsmen—and a little luck, says Eric Adams, principal at Adams + Beasley Associates. In fact, to realize the overall vision—streamlined yet warm, understated meets sophisticated—required an extraordinary level of precision and detail. "There are only a few times in a career where you get to work with clients and design professionals on such an ambitious project," says Adams. "It was like being part of an orchestra. All of the instruments had to play the same music at the same time or there would have been discord."



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: The husband's studio does double duty as an office and workshop where he focuses on his leatherwork; the desk was designed by Virginia Seherr-Thoss from Daher Interior Design. In the studio, the workbench can be closeted away thanks to riveted metal doors fabricated by Kochman Reidt + Haigh Cabinetmakers. In the wife's north-facing studio, where she escapes to paint, soft floor-to-ceiling ombre curtains crafted from alpaca bring a sense of hushed serenity.



The music analogy is apropos. Daher recalls the day her clients sent along a favorite poem, *Mantiq al-tair* (Language of the Birds) written by Farid al-Din 'Attar in 1487. Because the poem was so meaningful to the couple, the design team devised a way to incorporate it into the space. Today, when the elevator doors open into the condo's foyer, a

plaster bas-relief from Brooklyn-based SuperStrata featuring flora and fauna inspired by the poem greets the homeowners. A striking rock-crystal chandelier purchased at Boston's Charles Spada illuminates and hints at the surfaces throughout the space.

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To further ground the sky-high home, Daher designed cocoon-like floor-to-ceiling drapery on concealed tracks in every room.



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN:
Paula Daher, Virginia Seherr-Thoss, Daher Interior Design

INTERIOR BUILDER:
Alison Cutler, Derek Gann, Eric Adams, Adams + Beasley Associates

STONE DESIGN:
Dawn Carroll, Cumar

ABOVE: Triple window treatments in the primary bedroom block out all light and noise, while a wall upholstered in Lee Jofa fabric adds an additional layer of softness. **BELOW:** A pale blue calcite azul was paired with stained rift-cut white oak for the primary bathroom's vanity. **FACING PAGE:** Hardwood floors aren't typical in bathrooms, but here they add warmth to a large space that otherwise could have felt cold, especially with so much glass, explains Daher. In addition to the curtains, motorized shades add a layer of privacy.



ceiling drapery on concealed tracks in every room, including the tub alcove in the primary bath. The window in that space also features a motorized shade studded with pearl-like white beads that, at night, resemble stars. "It's pure magic," says Daher.

Her clients, who, due to COVID-19, didn't see the project until it was finished, agree. "On the day of the big reveal, they exited the elevator and were moved to tears," recalls Daher. "After we walked through the space, she said, 'You did it. Everything feels warm, organic, and inviting. I don't feel so far above the earth.'"

EDITOR'S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

