

# TRADING SPACES



*A newlywed couple kicks off married life in style by upgrading their home to a stunning new apartment decked to the nines by esteemed Chicago interior designer Michael Abrams.*

**By J.P. Anderson**  
**Photographed by Ryan McDonald**



Sleek Snidero cabinetry and a stunning Cambria waterfall countertop make for a potent one-two punch in the kitchen. Opposite page: The dining area is highlighted by a Design Within Reach table and chairs, a buffet from Room & Board and a colorful Ellsworth Kelly work sourced by Patti Gifford Fine Arts.

#### THE CLIENT

Repeat business is one of the best indicators of a client's satisfaction with your work. Veteran interior designer Michael Abrams knows the feeling well, as 18 months after he completed work on a two-bedroom River North apartment, the client returned with another project—in the same building. Explains Abrams, "He was engaged, and he and his future husband wanted to swap up to a large three-bedroom apartment on a higher floor with great views."

#### THE PRIORITY

"The newly married couple wanted their first home to be a reflection of them and starting out together," notes Abrams, "a place where they could comfortably entertain friends and family and start a family of their own." Some of the furniture purchased for the original home was able to be incorporated into the new space; other pieces were added, reupholstered or replaced as needed. "One had very strong ideas on what he wanted, while the other was most agreeable with his spouse," says the designer. "His passion for modern art came from a mother who has collected all her life."

In the living room, a vintage LC4 chaise and a Lightology floor lamp are all you need to enjoy the condo's stunning sky-high setting.







From left: A handsome blue sofa from Design Within Reach and a work by Alex S. MacLean beckon in the living room; the office enjoys stunning city views; artwork by Harold Krisel decks the walls.



#### THE CHALLENGE

Abrams cuts to the chase: "The space was tired and lacked personality." The primary bathroom? "It was of developer quality and outdated." As expected, the pandemic presented its own set of challenges, with back-ordered and damaged-upon-arrival products. But all's well that ends well, Abrams notes, saying, "We got them moved in just in time."

#### THE DETAIL

The finished home abounds with eye-catching highlights. "The subtle textured wallcovering throughout the living spaces totally enhanced the level of design," says Abrams. "The remodeled master bathroom replaced a bulky deck tub with a modern free-standing tub finished in black, and the shower walls were replaced with glass panels so the city view could be enjoyed."

#### THE OUTCOME

"They could not have been happier," beams Abrams of the clients' response, "especially as the pandemic provided them a lot of time to nest and work from home." ■



From top: Even the hallway is abundant with visual interest, notably an artwork by Scott Reeder; a custom vanity by Eurocraft adds serious warmth to the primary bathroom.



With a spa-like shower and tub, the primary bathroom is perhaps the most inviting room of all.

## DESIGN DETAILS

**TYPE**  
High-rise condo

**LOCATION**  
River North

**INTERIORS**  
Michael Abrams Interiors  
michaelsabrams.com

**PAINTERS**  
New Order Decorating  
847.922.3571

## RESOURCES

**CAMBRIA**  
Various countertops  
cambriausa.com

**CIRCALIGHTING**  
Primary bath lighting  
circalighting.com

**DESIGN WITHIN REACH**  
Various furniture  
dwr.com

**ÉLITIS**  
Powder room wallpaper  
elitis.fr

**EUROCRAFT**  
Various custom furniture  
eurocraft-inc.com

**THE FINE LINE**  
Primary bathroom tile  
finelinetile.com

**LIGHTOLOGY**  
Floor lamp, kitchen island pendant  
lightology.com

**PATTI GILFORD FINE ARTS**  
Various art  
pattigilford.com

Phillip Jeffries  
Various wallcoverings  
phillipjeffries.com

**RESTORATION HARDWARE**  
Bed in primary bedroom  
rh.com

**REXX RUG**  
Various rugs and carpeting  
rexxrug.com

**SNADERO CHICAGO**  
Kitchen cabinetry  
snaderochicago.com