

WEB-EXCLUSIVE HOME TOUR

An Elegant Postwar Apartment with Character

Designer Wesley Moon transforms a soulless white box into a sophisticated New York home

TEXT BY [FAN WINSTON](#) · PHOTOGRAPHY BY [PETER MURDOCK](#) · Posted July 22, 2016



If you're at all familiar with the New York City real-estate market, you know that agents love to crow about prewar apartments, with their architectural charm and airy proportions. Postwar apartments, though? Not so much. "They're every realtor's nightmare," says Manhattan-based designer [Wesley Moon](#).

Nevertheless, when he signed on to overhaul a retired couple's Upper East Side postwar flat, what he felt wasn't fear but excitement. After all, the empty nesters were "the loveliest people you can imagine," and more important, they let him "design every little thing from start to finish," he says. "I really got to let my creativity soar because they were so trusting and on board with my overall vision for the space."

Moon's strategy for transforming their soulless 2,000-square-foot white box into a sophisticated yet welcoming home? Adding lots and lots of architectural details—whether in the form of large window casings, higher doorways, stately crown moldings, or statement-making plaster ceiling designs. Moon also swapped dated parquet wood floors, a staple of 1960s apartments, for more modern wide-plank white oak floors with a driftwood finish, and enlarged the kitchen by combining it with what was once the maid's room.

After transforming the bones, and in the process adding much-needed architectural weight and elegance, Moon set out to dress up the space according to the wishes and taste of the homeowners. That meant contemporary design, dark wood elements, “and all-new everything,” he says. He stuck to a soothing palette of cream, gray, brass, and “bittersweet chocolate” with pops of smoky lavender and pink. And to give the illusion of higher ceilings, he chose mostly low furniture.

The result speaks for itself—but it's perhaps Moon who says it best: “This project is ultimately a tale of triumph over the postwar apartment.” Indeed. And this happily-ever-after story couldn't be more inspiring.



Instead of one large dining table that gets used only when there are guests, Moon designed a two-in-one piece for a New York apartment. Two small tables (for intimate dining), fabricated by Brooklyn's IV Design, can easily—with the help of two leaves—turn into one large piece for a dinner party. Vintage Kinkeldey



“Every piece of furniture in the living room is comfortable, every fabric is durable, and the seating is arranged to allow intimate or large gatherings without moving things around,” says Moon. Arresting vintage glass lamps from [John Salibello Antiques](#) flank a custom-designed couch, which was inspired by a Jean

READ CAPTION +



Moon positioned a colorful piece of art above the kitchen sink, between windows, since cabinets would look awkward in that space. Besides, he says, “art makes the kitchen look more like a living space.” White Calacatta quartzite counters offset the gray cerused-oak cabinets. The island was designed by Moon and inspired

READ CAPTION +



In the space that was formerly the maid's room, Moon created an eat-in area for the kitchen and a powder room. "The clients really didn't want the bathroom door opening into the kitchen but there was no way around it. So, I designed a concealed door that blends into the space," explains Moon.



Moon created a butler's pantry next to the kitchen and stocked it with bar essentials. Davlin rose goldleaf tiles from [Ann Sacks](#) give off a reflective sparkle in the otherwise dark space.



The den was designed for the husband and, as such, feels more masculine than the rest of the rooms, says Moon, who chose rougher textures (like the grass-cloth wallpaper from [Ralph Lauren](#)) and simpler furniture (like the clean-lined sofa from [American Leather](#)). The modern armchair is from [Design Within Reach](#).



Creating a niche to frame the bed “added much-needed height without having a tall headboard,” says the designer. Luxurious and textured finishes—like the Vladimir Kagan chaise upholstered in cashmere from [Holland & Sherry](#) and walls covered in bark paper from [Caba Co.](#)—create a richly layered look in the

READ CAPTION +



In the master bath, it's the tiles that take the spotlight. Moon designed the pattern with a mixture of earthenware and glazed terra-cotta tiles from [Ann Sacks](#). The 1950s sconces are from [Jean Marc Fray Antiques](#), and the crystal ceiling fixture is from [Carlos de la Puente Antiques](#).



One of the only items that made it from the clients' previous home, the painting by Donald Baechler anchors what Moon calls the gallery. Also on display is a totem sculpture by Cecilia Biagini from [Praxis Gallery](#) in New York City. Moon himself provided the other art in the room: the showstopping fan-pleat ceiling

READ CAPTION +