



From top: The living room features an ottoman, chairs, artwork and vase from designer Thom Filicia's collection, Sedgwick and Brattle, and the table has an antique brass base with a custom top; Filicia utilized custom sofas and armless chairs for plush relaxation on the couple's balcony.

# A LITTLE BIT BRIT

Designer Thom Filicia turns a penthouse pied-à-terre into an inviting weekend retreat with a mix of classic furnishings and some lively, modern touches.

By Jean Nayar // Photography by Nick Johnson

Although it's hardly uncommon for city dwellers to escape to a country retreat at the end of a busy work week, empty nesters in the suburbs often crave just the opposite—a weekend getaway home in the city that allows them to go to the theater, amble through a museum or enjoy a night out on the town at their leisure and without a commute. And the Connecticut-based couple who own this three-bedroom penthouse pied-à-terre in Manhattan bought their city dwelling in order to do just that.

Situated on the top floor of a new condominium building near the Meatpacking District, the 3,000-square-foot apartment already brimmed with an abundance of

positive attributes—ample space, three outdoor terraces, lots of light and exceptional city views—when the pair purchased it. Yet to make it truly comfortable for long weekends in the city, they knew they'd need to enrich it with some character and color. So they tapped interior designer Thom Filicia to help them feather their spacious aerie with some of the creature comforts they'd grown accustomed to in their single-family house in Greenwich. "Apartments in new buildings often have fantastic amenities and great views," says Filicia, "but they can sometimes also be sterile and lack luster, warmth, inviting texture or depth."

To remedy that scenario here, Filicia collaborated with the couple to turn the clean-







Clockwise from left: The clear writing desk brings in a pop of modernity to the space; Filicia used a woven Phillip Jeffries fabric grass cloth wallpaper and a David Hicks-inspired geometric rug for contrast and textures in the main bedroom; the sleek, modern kitchen features nickel finishes and ceiling lights to bring a light and airy feel.



slate contemporary setting into a cosmopolitan yet warm home away from home. He started by attuning to their lifestyle and background. “Both the husband and wife are originally from England, so they share a classic, tailored, timeless sensibility,” Filicia explains. To align with their instinctive aesthetic, he injected the penthouse with warmth and dimension by introducing wall coverings, window treatments and rugs in their favorite colors—deep blues, rich reds and dark oranges—with patterns they love—checks, plaids and florals. “We wanted the media room to feel like a warm and wonderful rainy-day room, so we enveloped the walls with felt to make it cozy and relaxing,” says Filicia. The walls of the master bedroom, on the other hand, are wrapped in woven grass cloth and “the floor is covered with a David Hicks-inspired geometric rug that makes the room warm and inviting with a nod to British design,” he adds.

The mix of furnishings throughout—including some antiques and vintage pieces—also contributes to the tailored, classic ambiance. Yet, in contrast to the decor in the couple’s more traditional Connecticut home, a few contemporary custom pieces bring in clean lines and pops of color that make the city setting feel “more fresh and modern, more urban than

country,” says the designer. In the living room, for example, a sleek modern sofa and a gutsy concrete coffee table sit atop a classic striped rug and contrast with a pair of bergère-style chairs. With their backs upholstered in plaid wool, the smartly tailored chairs introduce an “old-school haberdasherylike influence,” says Filicia, who notes that the Klismos-inspired

dining chairs and tufted bench in the dining area also nod to European style. Rounding out the ensemble, a few striking light fixtures, accents and art—including a variety of pieces from Filicia’s collection for Wendover Art Group as well as some favorite works from the couple’s collection—finish off the elegant penthouse with just the right notes of modern urban flair. ■

