



# home

Fun, functional and  
fabulous outdoor  
entertaining accessories.



KITS PENTHOUSE p.33 // OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING p.39

## Living the High Life



**AFTER ENJOYING CITY LIFE** in San Francisco and New York, and then settling in a tony neighbourhood on the west side, an urban couple and their eight-year-old daughter found themselves yearning once again for the apartment lifestyle. Here's how they found bliss in a fully renovated penthouse overlooking Kits Beach. ▶

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**I**t may sound like a story told backwards, but a local couple traded in their large house and yard in Vancouver's Dunbar neighbourhood for a Kitsilano apartment. They pined for the city lifestyle they had once enjoyed while living and working in San Francisco and New York, and this luxury penthouse brought them and their eight-year-old daughter back to where the action was, centrally located on Cornwall Avenue, with stunning ocean views.

Upon gutting the space, they enlisted interior designer Geele Soroka of Sublime Interior Design to bring a breezy West Coast feel into their home, while maintaining the sophisticated glamour that's synonymous with a west side penthouse.

"My signature is for indoor and outdoor connections, and maximizing the view," says Soroka. For the interior, Soroka's main concern was drawing the eye out to the view and replicating the soft beach, ocean and sky esthetic. "I wanted all glass," she says of the living room, "because when you come into the space, you want that infinity edge into the ocean."

Soroka insisted on expanding the small existing patio into a massive outdoor living space that could accommodate the same level of entertaining as the indoor living and dining rooms. Inside, she created an expansive master bedroom that transitions seamlessly into the open-concept bathroom. "It's more of that open lifestyle," she says. "When I'm designing these homes, I give them more cookie-cutter options, but it always finds its way back."

**"The foliage that [the garden designer] Glenna selected helped play into the mountains and the greenery, so it's a great complement"**  
*— Geele Soroka, interior designer*



## ***The Outdoor Dining***

### **MIRROR IMAGE**

The couple's main vision for the patio was entertaining. "When you're dealing with an outdoor space, you just mimic what's inside," says Soroka. "You have a dining table; you have to put a dining table outside." The white, Lucite, bloom-back chairs from Livingspace Interiors – the same ones as the indoor dining space – bring an element of glamour to the rustic wood Restoration Hardware table.

**TIP**

Always check with city building codes before creating tall privacy walls in outdoor spaces



## The Patio

### GO BIG

Soroka encouraged the couple to build out the deck to the edge of the building, capitalizing on the potential for outdoor living. She chose materials to complement the cedar ceilings in the master bedroom, enhancing the indoor/outdoor visual transition, and put up cedar walls to create privacy.



## The Living Room

### ROOM WITH A VIEW

To highlight the deck and view as visitors come up the stairs to the living space, Soroka created a full mirrored wall, using a chic roller shade for the inset window that looks onto the neighbouring building. She anchored the space with a sectional that would be functional for the family and look great when entertaining.

**THE DESIGNER (Above)**  
Geele Soroka of Sublime Interior Design was brought in to create a chic West Coast esthetic that honoured the incomparable ocean views. "I remember touring it for the first time and all they could talk about was the view," she says.



## The Bedroom

### OPEN CONCEPT

No room in the penthouse better encapsulates the breezy West Coast lifestyle than the open master bedroom and bathroom that lead onto the patio, with its outdoor shower and hot tub. The bedroom flows easily into the bathroom, while maintaining visual privacy with a pony wall blocking off the toilet and shower area. Soroka commissioned a custom painting from Vancouver artist Ronan Boyle for over the headboard, playing off the greys, blues and whites of the horizon.

## The Dining Room

### WEST COAST GLAM

"We wanted something really fresh," says Soroka. The subtle whites and taupes in both the durable Caesarstone countertops and the marble backsplash that extends to the ceiling repeat the beachy feel of the outdoors, and the mirrored dining table earns major glamour points. During the evening, with the lighting controls in the space, everything sparkles for an elegant look.



## The Bathroom

### DOUBLE DUTY

The double sinks and double showerheads mean nobody is left waiting on busy mornings, but Soroka sees the dual fixtures for more than their functionality.

"It's kind of the couple's time in the morning, getting ready together," she says. "I think it's kind of special. I think it's important for the relationship."

### IDEA

A mirrored table is chic yet durable and easily wiped down

**TIP**

Create horizontal lines – with flooring, ceilings and artwork – that lead the eye toward the view



## Patio Planters

The couple hired garden designer Glenna Partridge to create privacy on the patio and enhance the different zones with seasonal plantings and year-round greenery. Partridge says she wanted to add to the space without distracting from or impeding the view. The living wall offers seclusion from neighbours while acting as a subtle art piece. "It gave it a more decorative element," says Partridge. "Sometimes plants that are just tall and narrow are a little bit boring."



### CLEVER CONTAINERS

Partridge used a container with a false bottom – it's only about eight inches deep – and an irrigation system below that keeps the plants moist and healthy. For creating privacy in outdoor spaces, she recommends lavender, which smells great and is easily clipped, or True Dwarf boxwood, a tough plant that can withstand shade and drought.

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### FLOWER POWER

Dahlias (pictured here) can be pulled out at the end of the fall, stored through winter and replanted in early May. For the summer, try Lantana, a flowering plant that comes in hotter colours and attracts hummingbirds.

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### SWEET SUCCULENTS

When using succulents indoors, Partridge stresses that they need as much bright light as possible. Contrast the foliage colours using different shades and mix the texture with finer underplantings. "She's got a little snake plant in her arrangement there, and that's always nice to add some height," she says.