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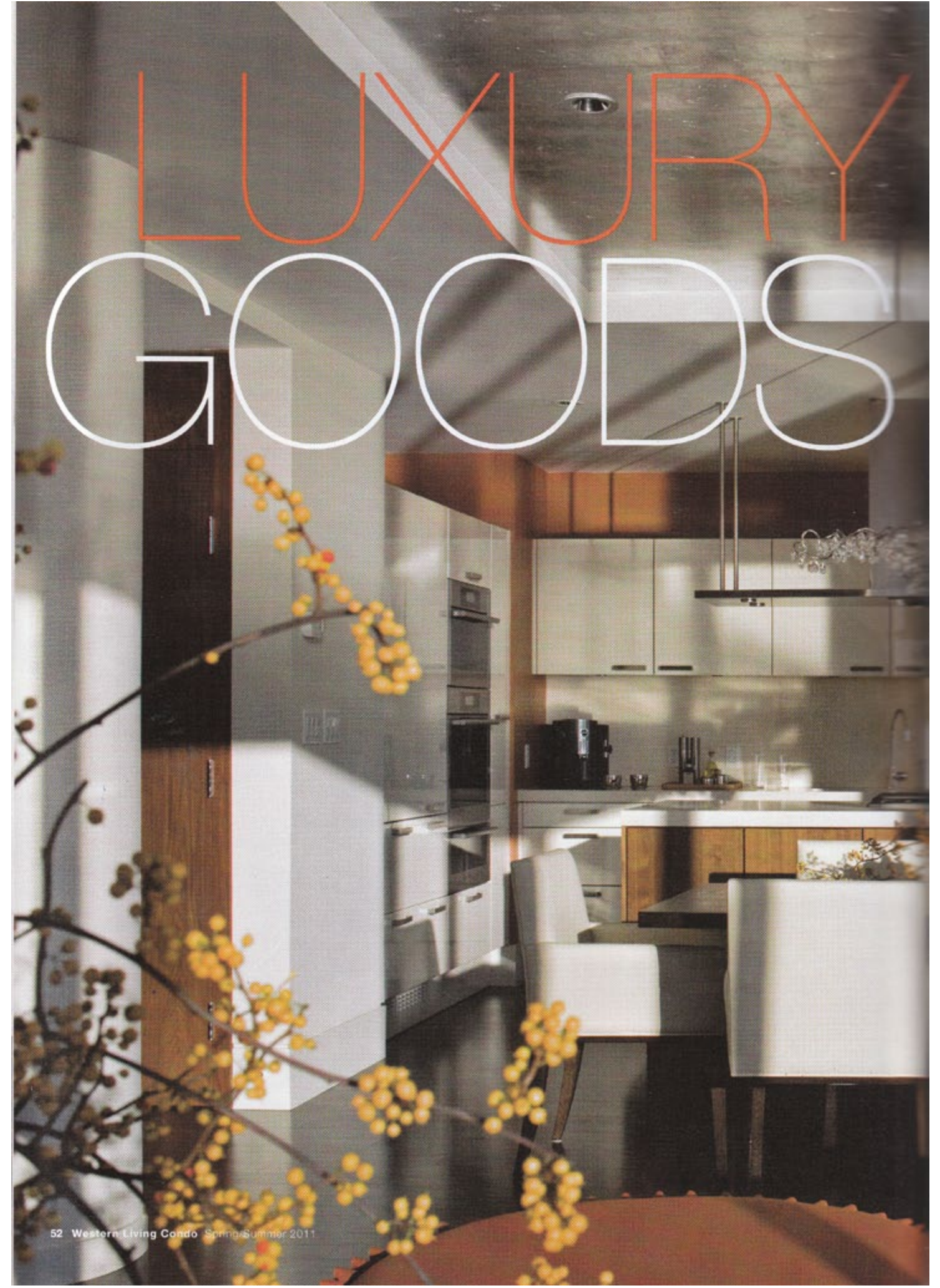
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LUXURY GOODS

A photograph of a modern kitchen and dining area. The kitchen features white cabinetry, a dark countertop, and a stainless steel range hood. A dining table with white chairs is visible in the foreground. The scene is decorated with yellow berries in the foreground.



A San Francisco couple commissions a jewel of a vacation home that soars above a coveted stretch of False Creek's seawall.

BY MICHAEL HARRIS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROGER BROOKS

LIGHT FANTASTIC The living room, dining room and kitchen share space in this sumptuous home. Daylight trips across walnut floors during the day and a Tiara Diamond lamp by Harco Loor sparkles at night.

HIGH ART Thousands of sheets of silver leaf were painstakingly applied on a ship-shaped feature in the ceiling. The effect: an idealized reflection of the False Creek waters below, plus rainbows in the morning.





THE LATE, GREAT ARCHITECT Arthur Erickson was a man who unabashedly loved the finer things in life. In his heyday, it was cocktails with Prince Charles and hot tub parties with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

So Erickson would be pleased to see the lavish condo that designer Patricia Gray has delivered at the Erickson, one of the final towers to bear his creative stamp.

The owners made that push toward luxury a natural choice. This would be a kitted-out vacation home. (They fell in love in Vancouver, but live outside San Francisco.) Gray has arranged things so a single email in advance of a visit activates a flurry of "five-star hotel" attentions at the suite: Frette linens are turned down, vases are stocked with fresh flowers and groceries are fetched. When the owners turn the key (having arrived at the 10th floor via private elevator) their two-bedroom getaway is already primed.

The couple share a cosmopolitan taste, but she's a special lover of all things Hermès; that preference is everywhere evident. The expansive views of False Creek and David Lam Park are mediated by a custom-made Hermès-orange felt ottoman by artist Anne Kyyro Quinn of London. Over the leather sofa lies an Hermès throw. Their young son's bedroom is equipped with an Hermès stuffed horse. And the master bedroom boasts two framed Hermès scarves above the headboard. What dreams may come.

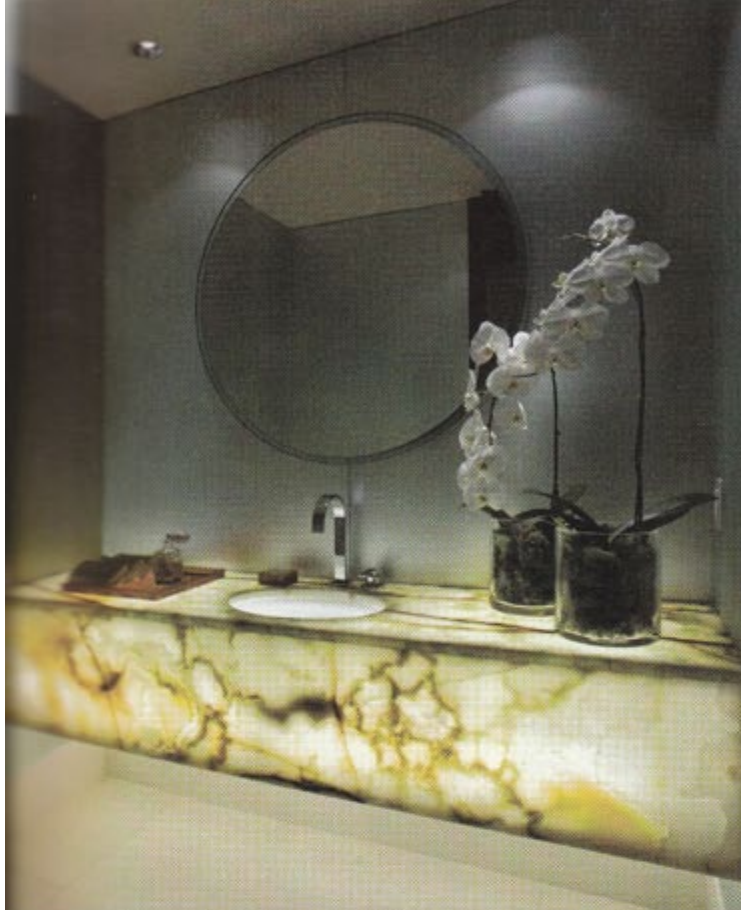
This is hardly a one-trick pony, though; Gray's design is multifaceted, even if it is consistently luxurious. The ceilings are a case in point: 3,000 sheets of silver leaf have been gilded onto recessed areas to create a pearlescent effect overhead (an effect that celebrates



HOT STUFF Accents of orange on the walls and accessories reflect the owner's fondness for all things Hermès, while a limestone countertop and cabinets by the great German manufacturer, Siematic, keep things crisp. Engineered walnut flooring runs throughout the kitchen and ties this space to the dining and living rooms beyond.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

The patio (right) overlooks a park and also a grand stretch of Vancouver's seawall. Accordion-style windows draw back to create a generous extension of both inside and outside spaces. The building itself, designed by the late Arthur Erickson, features several naval touches, including a prow-like curve, as seen along this balcony. The silver ceiling feature inside follows suit.



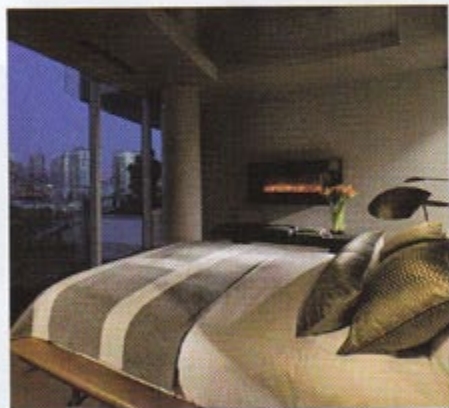
GLOW STICK Onyx is naturally translucent, which gives it great potential as a source of soft lighting. Two large backlit slabs became a counter in the powder room (left). The walls, made of acid-etched glass, continue that translucent effect, as does the resin tray by Martha Sturdy.





JUST RIGHT

Luxurious touches include (clockwise from top) a stuffed horse from Hermès; pedestal-like shoe shelving; an ergonomic Lavasca bathtub; and an Hermès throw over Frette linen in the master bedroom.



the grey Vancouver light that Erickson's work embraces).

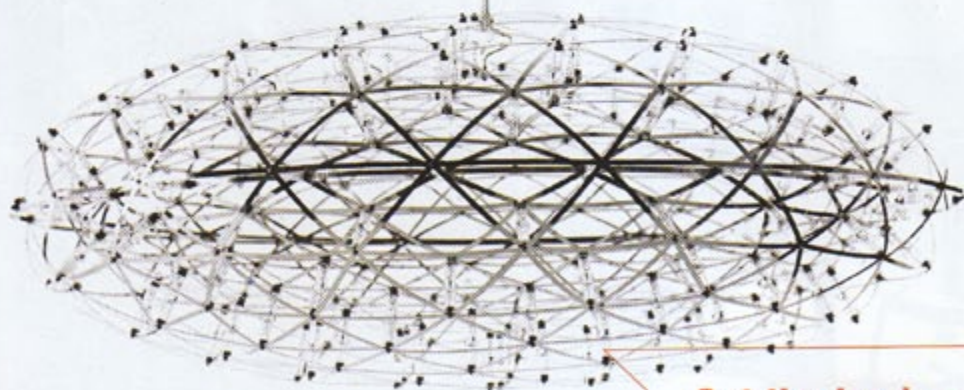
Gray considers ceilings the most neglected aspect of any home. But lighting is a close second, an everyday element that usually looks like an afterthought. Here, it's made precious. Over the dining room table, a chandelier made of custom-twisted stainless steel and transparent crystals is perched like a piece of jewellery "on the little black dress of the room," says Gray. Colours are refracted onto the expanse of silver above and, on sunny mornings, full rainbows stretch across it.

Natural lighting is hardly wanting: 20 feet of window folds back, accordion-style, on balmy days so mom and dad can monitor the park below, where their son plays with his nanny. (The nanny makes use of the guest bed on the premises, a custom-built walnut Murphy bed in the den, which doubles as a desk in the daytime.)

Gray's clients may have been capable of covering their walls with the most expensive of artworks, but Gray (a former Emily Carr art student) positioned a series of her own mixed-media pieces on the walls in advance of their first visit. "These are just placeholders," she assured them while giving an inaugural tour. The owner walked all around for a couple hours, asked questions, commented on all the elements, then said, "The paintings, Patricia: I love them all. They'll all stay just as they are."

And even gleaming new vacation homes need a touch of history. Gray came across a patchwork quilt made of antique saris at a previous home of one of her clients (who was born in India). It seemed a worn-out thing but, now that it's elegantly framed and mounted under proper lighting, the artifact commands a museum-grade fascination.

That's another thing Arthur Erickson would have appreciated. No matter how finely wrought an environment becomes, no matter how richly furnished or chicly appointed, there ought to always be room for the personal. **CONDO**



Get the Look If a room is a little black dress, then lighting is the statement jewellery. When designer Patricia Gray styled this home for a cosmopolitan family, she chose a sparkling ceiling lamp that extended the sheen of the dining room's silvery ceiling. Moooi's Raimond Zafu, an ellipse of hundreds of LED lights, provides the same starry-night wonder.—*Taraneh Ghajar Jerven*