

A vintage Eero Saarinen pedestal table and chairs define the dining area in this sophisticated South End bachelor pad.

## The Bachelor Pad, Reimagined

DESIGNER MICHAEL FERZOCO CREATES A SLEEK, COMFORTABLE CONDO FOR A SOUTH END BUSINESSMAN WITH SOPHISTICATED TASTES. BY MARNI ELYSE KATZ PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL J. LEE

Gone are the days when the so-called bachelor pad meant black leather sofas, shiny chrome trim, and cookie-cutter kitchens. Today, says Boston-based interior designer Michael Ferzoco of Eleven Interiors, men are looking to establish themselves in a more serious style. “The common theme,” says Ferzoco, who is responsible for setting up homes for numerous men, gay and straight, young and old, “is a fresh start, be it for guys who are just out of a relationship, attending school, or setting up in a new city.”

Michael Richards, a partner in Ernst & Young’s financial services practice, is one such bachelor. Having relocated to Boston after 20 years in Chicago and three in Charlotte, North Carolina, Richards rented and

then purchased a 1,700-square-foot condominium in the South End in 2007. Over the years, Ferzoco has worked with him to make it his own, most recently ripping out the high-end but humdrum kitchen that had what Ferzoco describes as “cabinets the color of pancakes.” Richards tells us, “I don’t think I have one item left that I brought with me. But Michael was really patient; he let me come to it over time.”

Richards didn’t dictate a particular scheme, but he definitely leaned toward an understated look in a neutral palette. “I wanted a contemporary feel, but not funky. I don’t like clutter,” he says. The desire to up the level of sophistication is true for most of Ferzoco’s single male clients.

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“Single male clients are looking for a more mature, classic style, not the trendy, hip thing.”

—MICHAEL FERZOCO

fronted with caramel leather doors featuring polished-nickel nail heads.

Just beyond is the sleek, new kitchen in neutral tones of white, gray, and taupe. Worcester-based Chilmark Architectural Woodworking designed the cabinetry, faced with grass cloth and finished with multiple coats of lacquer. Although the surface is smooth to the touch, there’s a visual texture, almost like wood grain. “Michael wanted something beyond the usual painted wood or flat glass,” says Ferzoco. “This is definitely different, very high-end and refined.” The backsplash, which extends above the upper wall cabinets, is fronted with cappuccino-colored glass and lit from above and below, illuminating the space beautifully at night.

For the dining area, Ferzoco chose a vintage Eero Saarinen black pedestal table with a marble top from Machine Age in South Boston. Ferzoco flirted with the idea of adding a Sputnik chandelier, but Richards demurred.

Instead he went with a vintage design from the 1950s by Santa & Cole, feeling that the metal mesh drum shade would provide warmth. Vintage Saarinen chairs were upholstered in a heavy green cotton blend; it’s a color that Richards admits he probably would not have gravitated to on his own, but one he loves now. The finishing touch is a sensual still-life by Somerville-based artist Bill Chisholm.

A custom rug with a reinterpreted Greek key pattern adds a quick swath of color in the living room. New investment pieces include a Noguchi coffee table, a Twiggy floor lamp by Foscarini, and sofas upholstered in pale gray leather from Sedia in SoWa, a material nod to Richards’ bachelor status. Two vintage Art Deco side tables from Machine Age complete the ensemble.

Although Richards commissioned completely custom furnishings for the master bedroom, he appreciates the vintage pieces that Ferzoco has brought to the condo. He says, “Michael said we could do clean and contemporary but that we’d incorporate older elements, too. I don’t like antiques or tons of wood, but everything he found is perfect.” *Michael Ferzoco, Eleven Interiors, 535 Albany St., 4th Fl., 617-423-1114. eleveninteriors.com BC*

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“They’re looking for a more mature, classic style,” he says, “not the trendy, hip thing.”

When Richards wanted to gut the kitchen, Ferzoco decided it was also time to take down the wall that separated it from the dining area. This way, Richards could get the airy, loft-like space he really wanted. The design was complicated by a gas line that necessitated the existence of a column, so Ferzoco added a mate and designed a credenza to fill out the area. The built-in, which sits flush to the kitchen island, is wrapped in a striated Macassar wood and



TOP LEFT: Michael Richards unwinds in his updated South End home. ABOVE: The bedroom boasts all custom furnishings, while the living room (LEFT) integrates vintage and Art Deco pieces.