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# Homme Sweet Homme

**The ultimate bachelor pad is all about functionality, comfort and, maybe, showing off a bit.**

| *By Rebecca Taras* |  
| *Photography by Tony Solari* |

While the term “man cave” may be off-putting to some, a bachelor pad need not be reminiscent of a college dorm room to evoke a sense of masculinity. In fact, interior designer Frank Ponterio ([frankponterio.com](http://frankponterio.com)) had a completely different vision of what the ultimate testosterone-fueled abode would look like. So when he was approached to design a luxurious 1,700-square-foot one-bedroom model condo in The Ritz-Carlton Residences, the decor guru knew right where to start. Known for his work restoring iconic structures from architectural geniuses like David Adler and Benjamin Marshall, Ponterio was the perfect person to take on a project in a building designed by world-renowned French architect Lucien Lagrange.

Before tackling the aesthetic details, Ponterio and his team made a few small tweaks to the layout—including moving a wall and changing some millwork—that provided

**SUBTLE STYLE**  
The overall color palette included various values of ivory, tan and gray, which could be found in everything from the textured wallcoverings to the furniture.

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**CLASSIC WITH A TWIST**

Clockwise from top left: Multifunctional pieces, such as a pop-up television concealed in a horn-clad cabinet, helped to keep the space current; streamlined furnishings, like cozy chairs and sleek cabinetry, were curated from a mix of designers, including Ponterio's own custom Avrett line; the goal was to make the home feel as though it had been lived in for a while without feeling dated.



...CONTINUED big benefits to the space from a design and functionality standpoint. Then came the details. The general color scheme of the unit can be described as subtle. A layering of different values of ivory, tan and gray added depth to the overall look, while understated pops of color added a touch of warmth. Streamlined furnishings, like sophisticated chairs and sleek cabinetry, came from a wide mix of suppliers, like Michael Taylor, Holly Hunt and Ponterio's own custom Avrett line.

"I was excited to be able to do a classic interior that still felt really current."

—FRANK PONTERIO, DESIGNER

Customization played a large role in the plans, starting with a walk-in closet with style that rivals the merchandising in a luxury department store. "I basically approached this project as if I was creating my own bachelor pad," says Ponterio. "But when you're designing a smaller area, you have to be more selective when curating items to fill the space, so it's important

to find things that evoke the personality of the home but also have a mixed use." Case in point: A pop-up television is concealed in an eye-catching cabinet with horns on top; the dining room table also serves as a game table; and another cabinet doubles as a bar. If Ponterio had to choose a TV show that the space would fit into, it would be *Mad Men* circa 2015. "It's masculine, but it's built around entertaining," he explains.

And when it comes to wooing visitors, the space boasts sweeping southerly views of Michigan Avenue that shoot right down to Museum Campus, as well as an outdoor terrace that will undoubtedly be a focal point during the balmy Chicago summer months. But





perhaps one of the most remarkable talking points is the hallway dedicated to a gallery of artwork curated by Joanna Burke Art Consultants in Los Angeles. “We looked for old landscape designs from significant Chicago and North Shore estates,” says Ponterio. “It really tied in the feel of design and architecture within the space.”

The use of textures throughout the home is like a work of art in itself. The powder room, for example, features a stunning hand-painted wallcovering from de Gournay and a marble-and-stainless-steel floor laid out in a sunburst pattern. A Phillip Jeffries wallcovering meant to look like panels of vellum provides a sophisticated edge to the living room, while the entryway walls in the vestibule to the master bedroom are upholstered in charcoal-gray cashmere.

The project took about five months to complete, with the biggest challenge being the logistics of coordinating with so many different artists, artisans and specialty contractors for such a small space. “I was excited to be able to do a classic interior that still felt really current,” said Ponterio. “I wanted the space to feel like it had been there awhile, but also feel fresh and fit a modern lifestyle.” Mission accomplished. ■



**OFF THE WALL**  
From top: While the master bedroom itself is more subdued, the vestibule leading into the space is upholstered in charcoal-gray cashmere; wallcoverings have a large presence in the home, with the most impressive being this stunning hand-painted number in the powder room.