

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

BOSTON

HOMES
WE LOVE
FROM BACK BAY
TO NANTUCKET,
THE GEMS OF
THE SEASON

REAL TALK

LUXE LISTINGS, INSIDER INTEL
& PROS TO KNOW



INSIDE A BOSTON
DESIGNER'S
INCREDIBLE NEW
KITCHEN



The architectural powerhouse LDA transforms two former Suffolk University buildings into 62 luxury properties in Beacon Hill.

By Michael McCarthy
Photographed by Greg Premru

HIGHER GROUND



Spacious windows provide breathtaking views of the Boston skyline from the dining room.

THE PROJECT

Situated near the Massachusetts State House, The Archer Residences (thearcherresidences.com) marry the historic elegance of Beacon Hill with a contemporary aesthetic—all carried out by LDa Architecture and Interiors (lda-architects.com), with a goal of giving residents a living experience that feels luxe amid a vibrant community. The twist: The design work was truly inspired, as the LDa team was asked to transform two former Suffolk University buildings into 62 over-the-top units—ranging from 1,140 to 3,460 square feet. The units were varied in size to offer downsized living: one-bedroom spaces for professionals, pieds-a-terre for couples who love to entertain and larger units for family living.

THE TEAM

John Day, a principal and director of interior architecture and design at LDa, says his team was selected for the project because of the breadth of its portfolio. “We needed to draw on our experience with commercial and hospitality projects, historic renovations, custom high-end residential architecture and interior design. Creating a neighborhood residential living experience in a concierge building required careful consideration into the common areas, future resident needs, market salability and what the existing buildings—built last century and in two different decades—offered us.”

A sleek kitchen area boasts contemporary appliances and a burst of natural light.

THE GOAL

The project's ownership group wanted a design unique to the marketplace: single-floor living with parking, elevators and amenities—all in a boutique design. "The client wanted a home feel, not a hotel feel," says Day. "They invested in character, finishes and Beacon Hill charm."

Adds Ashleigh Sanicola, an interior designer at LDa, "The client wanted family homes in Beacon Hill. Leaning away from the commuter's sparse condos, the client was focused on families of all age ranges to either grow into their forever home or downsize to the city as empty nesters."

THE CHALLENGES

First, one of the two buildings (the Archer) dates back to the early 1900s; the structure standing beside it (the Donahue) dates to the 1960s—which meant there was no consistency in design. The all-encompassing project turned into a gut renovation that involved countless structural additions, modifications and removal of the entire facade of the Donahue building.

"The building was filled with a variety of classrooms and even included a theater," says Gillian Baresich, an architectural designer at LDa. "Converting these spaces into residential units offered some unique design opportunities, such as the oversized arched windows and existing exterior doorways that allowed some units to have street access." Baresich also notes her team even had to rethink the space required for the HVAC system in many of the hallways and first-floor spaces. Plus, joining the two buildings at different levels forced the





Clockwise from top left: The living room provides superb relaxation with a gas fireplace, sectional sofa and calming artwork; a minimalist wooden table complements the hardwood flooring to divine effect; a chic office area blooms in bursts of gray, white and black hues.



design minds to consider how to make the transition between the buildings feel seamless. As for the issue of two buildings constructed decades apart? "We merged style elements from both eras to create one timeless yet modern design," she says.

THE DESIGN

All of the units offer open floor plans with exceptional light—the windows are large and unique for Beacon Hill. "It's one of the largest buildings on the Hill, and it converted to residential living extremely well," says Day. "The high ceilings and length of the building were [perfect factors to achieve] single-floor living."

Two color palettes grace the project: a lighter and more contemporary gray and white scheme, and a more transitional look with tobacco-brown floors, walnut and white. Each space also features 5-inch oak floors, large black metal windows and, for hints of modernity, square recessed lights.

"We prewired and engineered each unit to be fully tech- and integration-ready," says Day. "There are coiled shade power wires, speaker wires, shade pockets and future frame TV boxes with power and cable above fireplaces behind the drywall—the wall surface can be removed to recess-mount a TV or insert a full home theater system. The entire package connects back to a Millson WireFrame unit in the front hall closet, which allows light, shade, music, TV and thermostat control and other integration options to be installed with ease."

THE KITCHEN

The property's kitchens feature wine refrigerators, abundant storage, millwork with LED toe-kick lights and LED under-cabinet lighting. The Sub-Zero

Wolf (subzero-wolf.com) package includes wall ovens, drawer microwaves, coffee systems and steam ovens. The custom cabinetry is from Montreal-based J Suss (jsuss.com) and sets the visual tone for each space. The LDa team also sourced the white marble from Volakas (volakasmrble.com) in Greece and Bulgaria; Mater (materusa.com) Liuku drop-glass pendants add both task and ambient light. "The design centered around providing great storage and offering big islands," says Day. "Our goal was to design timeless kitchens that support cooks, full-time living or family entertaining."

THE OWNER'S SUITE

Through LDa's work with the brokerage team, Day says they learned that Boston's downtown buyers expect large walk-in closets and larger owner suites—and the team delivered. The baths include copper Waterworks (waterworks.com) fixtures—including rain and hand showers—custom luxe copper-trimmed glass enclosures and walls covered with Dolomite white marble. The tubs sit in an alcove illuminated by soothing LED light. The vanities are custom rift white oak by J Suss, with built-in linen cabinetry. Each vanity's 8-inch mitered monolithic top is a Tundra Gray Turkish marble from Marble and Granite (marbleandgranite.com); the marble tops rest below oak medicine cabinets. "The idea was to have the high-end finishes in a modern yet timeless bathroom that would feel like a spa," says Day.

THE DINING ROOM

Flexibility was the design watchword for each dining area. "We planned for empty nesters



Clockwise from left:
A cool color palette
characterizes the owner's suite;
modern finishes define the
living room; custom white oak
vanities by J Suss (juss.com).
(marbleandgranite.com)
elevate the en suite bathroom
into an indoor oasis.



and new families alike," says Sanicola. "While some residents may be bringing an heirloom dining table to the city, we found that the younger generations don't necessarily want a dedicated dining area. The flexible floor plans allow dining space to be converted for other uses—some residents have converted dining space into home offices, especially after this past year, and others are playing with multiple living- and family-room arrangements."

THE OUTCOME

"I've had the pleasure of working with a few of the current owners on additional interior design services, and they love the spaces," says Sanicola. "The Beacon Hill location, paired with a beautiful building, is a perfect combination. The condos have been well received, given the quality of finishes, attention to detail and above-and-beyond material and finish selections." Sanicola also notes that full-service, concierge living in the heart of the city is timely and alluring, as she recently met a resident who said he loved dropping his keys and going about his day. "Many residents who moved from the suburbs told us how much they love walking throughout the city and don't miss suburban living at all. And we've been happy to see residents taking advantage of the many amenities—the roof deck, valet, conference room and lounge—and commenting on how functional and beautiful they are." o



From top: Soothing floral wallpaper adds a serene air to the bedroom; the LED-lit bathroom shines with sandy wooden paneling, a marble sink and copper Waterworks fixtures. Opposite page: A corner nook provides a prime moment of casual repose.





DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE

Residential unit

LOCATION

Beacon Hill, Boston
The Archer Residences
thearcherresidences.com

ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN

LDa Architecture and Interiors
lda-architects.com

RESOURCES

J SUSS

Custom kitchen cabinetry and rift white
oak bathroom vanities
jsuss.com

MARBLE AND GRANITE

Tundra Gray Turkish marble in en suite
bathroom
marbleandgranite.com

MATER

Liuku drop-glass pendants in kitchen
materusa.com

SUB-ZERO WOLF

Wall ovens, drawer microwaves, coffee
systems and steam ovens
subzero-wolf.com

VOLAKAS

White marble countertops
volakasmrble.com

WATERWORKS

Copper fixtures in en suite bathroom
waterworks.com