

Crystal Clear - Residents at Crystal Point

Written by Written by David M. Brown

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In October 2007, the owner of a luxurious three-bedroom unit at Phoenix's notable Crystal Point asked Paradise Valley interior designer, Brooks Vitalone, to remodel his newly acquired pied-à-terre. Now the epitome of a chic second home, Vitalone not only remodeled this mid-town condo, but transformed it.



A corporate executive who frequently travels to Phoenix from his home town as well as internationally, the owner found in this 18-story high-rise an environment that provided services exceeding those offered by even the best extended-stay hotels. Built 20 years ago, Crystal Point offers him and his family the advantages of luxe downtown living: proximity to shopping, restaurants, entertainment and the airport.

The 2,717-sq.-ft. unit includes a master bedroom with a sitting room and two walk-in closets; a guest bedroom with a full bath; a third bedroom flexing as an office; a large living/dining room; a work space; powder and laundry rooms; and a wrap-around balcony offering great views Valleywide.

Just across Osborn Road to the south is Phoenix Country Club's golf course, the downtown skyline and South Mountain. To the north is Piestewa Peak, with Camelback Mountain to the east. Residents at Crystal Point, whose condos resale from \$500,000 to \$1 million-plus, park in an underground parking garage and use an Olympic-size heated pool and spa, concierge services and exercise facilities.

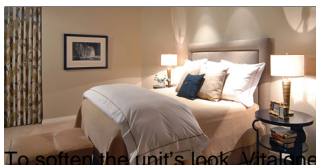
"In redesigning the condo, my goal was to give my client a sophisticated second home that would easily serve not only as a refuge when working in Phoenix, and a family retreat when his family accompanied him, but one that could easily accommodate gatherings for members of his company while he was in town on business," says Brooks Vitalone, a Paradise Valley interior designer with more than 15 years of experience and founder of Brooks & Company.

In particular, the client requested an in-home office, a sofa-bed for guests or friends of their children, additional storage capacity and black-out blinds for the master bedroom because he often works off-hours with his international office.

During the design process, Vitalone was challenged by the existing space. "It was a fashion statement of the mid-to-late 80's crying out for an updating," she says. The original space was awash in white—white walls, off-white carpet and white tiles—with pale-gray cabinets picking up the highlight color of the Carrara marble in the foyer and master bath. All the hardware, including door hinges, was brass, track lighting was prominent, the kitchen appliances were tired, and the Pebble Tec balcony floor dated the space.

Completed in February 2008, the remodeled condo is now contemporary with Asian accents. With the assistance of general contractor, Declan Fox, principal of Phoenix-based Fox's Fine Home Design, Vitalone completely revamped the kitchen and hall powder room. With the help of Scottsdale's The Great Organization, she doubled the capacity of the two walk-in closets in the master bedroom and added a wall of closets in the guest room, installing new shelving, drawer and rack systems.

Further modernizing her client's home, Vitalone added new flooring to most of the interior spaces and, on the balcony, outdoor carpeting made of a high-UV stabilized polypropylene fiber. She installed new door hardware and Toto plumbing fixtures (the toilets have those great slow motion lids that don't slam down). To reduce sun exposure, she added window film. A new water-softening system helps with drinking, washing and cleaning. Finally, she added new furnishings, including many focal-point pieces for display and electronics.



To soften the unit's look, Vitalone decided on neutral tones for the walls. "I chose colors to provide a comforting feeling that complemented rather than contrasted with the beautiful views out every window," she says. She explains that these sand tones enhance the whitewashed random plank oak flooring in the entry, great room and main hall and the wheat-colored carpeting in the office, master bedroom, guest rooms and closets. Similarly, earthy furniture fabric colors enhance the resortlike setting and carefree family living.

In the completely remodeled kitchen, Vitalone added custom cabinetry with a whitewashed oak-veneer finish, which complements the "Smokey Mountain" granite counter tops and full-height backsplashes. New stainless steel appliances, including a GE Monogram refrigerator, accentuate the wheat, butterscotch and steel grey color scheme of the granite.

Also new, undercabinet and ceiling lighting and added storage increase the room's functionality and charm. The neutral-tone Conrad shades in the adjacent living and dining rooms—which also appear in the guest bedroom and office—can be drawn to soften the room or opened to reveal the mountain views. And Carrara marble now appears on the kitchen floor, as well as in the three bathrooms.

The master bedroom is a refuge for the couple, providing serenity, comfort and sophistication. The suite includes a sitting area arranged for reading and television viewing. The master bath is a private sanctuary with a Jacuzzi tub, separate shower, double vanity and toilet closet with an electronically accessorized commode. "Because there were shutters in the bedroom already, they were added to the window next to the tub to add privacy and give the two rooms a look of continuity," Vitalone explains.

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The bathrooms received a refreshing rather than a complete remodeling. Both the guest and the master bath cabinets were updated with contemporary stainless-steel pulls. In the master, Vitalone switched out the vanity top tiles with a slab of Italian Carrara marble and new Kohler sinks. In the guest and master baths, she added frameless glass shower enclosures and new chrome accents, including hinges, drains, towel bars, plumbing and light fixtures.

The hall powder room, serving as the third bathroom, was revived. An espresso- finished, marble-topped vanity from Pottery Barn replaced an outdated pedestal sink, and Vitalone added a mirror with silk shade sconces. "An antiseptic bath is now an inviting, cozy stop-over," she notes.

To find furnishings and fabrics and hides that would complete the spaces, Vitalone used her network in Arizona and California, sourcing through Los Angeles, San Francisco and Scottsdale showrooms. She ordered the living room upholstery by A. Rudin through Dean Warren and major accessories, including lamps, from Jack Pesarczyk Associates, both in Scottsdale. On the walls, she hung a variety of fine art works, including black-and-white scenic photography.

Focal-point furnishings are multi-functional. At The Conservatory in Scottsdale, Vitalone found an antique Chinese cabinet, which holds a flat-screen TV for living room viewing. And, just off the foyer, an antiques cabinet displays memorabilia from the owner's trips. She acquired high-quality area rugs from shops such as Azadi Fine Rugs in Scottsdale, and, from other local and California ateliers, antiquaries and specialty shops, she acquired additional pieces such as the desk off the kitchen which company executives use as a second work space. "These kinds of old and new furnishings, accessories and art make a living space into something unique," Vitalone says. "The magic is in the combination of the antique and the commonplace."