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Sky high,

High-altitude living meets a grounded, tactile soul inside this
three-storey penthouse reimaged from its 1980s bones



PHOTOGRAPHY Lauren Miller
WORDS Juliet Benning

earth bound



DINING ROOM

'We weren't shy to use pattern - here the figures in the wallpaper have the rusts, burgundies and greens we've used throughout,' says designer Dvira Ovadia.

Tsauri Figura Mehndi wallpaper, Black Edition. Jakob dining armchairs and Aero stone dining table, both RH. Custom rug, Dvira Ovadia

The download

THE DESIGNER

Dvira Ovadia, who runs Toronto-based interior design studio Dvira Interiors, redesigned this apartment for a couple in their 30s who both work in creative industries.

THE PROPERTY

This penthouse apartment covers the three top floors of a 15-storey 1980s-era building in Toronto. On the main level is an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area with two balconies and a WC. The main bedroom and bathroom, a guest bedroom, a laundry room, additional sitting room and an office are on the second level. On the third level are two more bedrooms, a bathroom and another relaxed sitting room.

KITCHEN BAR

'The clients really wanted a bar so we added this as an extension to the kitchen. There is a contrast brass trim that frames the whole area,' says Dvira.

Bar designed by Dvira Ovadia.
Arno bar stools, RH



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ommanding the peak of a 15-storey apartment block, Dvira Ovadia's latest Toronto penthouse project is completely enveloped by the downtown skyline and the open air. Yet, while most high-altitude properties lean toward a weightless rhetoric of steel and glass, the

interior of this three-story home is resolutely rooted to the earth.

Enlisted to oversee a complete gut renovation, Dvira was hired by a well-travelled young couple, both of whom share a creative outlook. Like other millennials in the city who are buying up condos in older tower blocks, the couple recognised the apartment's many advantages. 'These clients were ready to be bold and push the boundaries. Though built in the 80s, I actually felt the apartment had something of a 70s vibe,' says Dvira. 'There was nothing average about this building. It felt like it had been architecturally forward with many geometric forms, round windows and curved walls.' All of these were ingredients she felt needed to be celebrated. 'While we tore virtually everything out, we still wanted to use the architectural palette and retain the original heritage of the space.'

Influences cited by her clients ranged from the Arizona desert to laid-back Californian ease, holidays in Bali and the layered eclecticism of the Austin Proper Hotel designed by Kelly Wearstler. All these earthbound references are firmly anchored in the natural world and, under Dvira's curation, make for a deeply rich and tactile environment. 'We sourced a lot of tiles, materials and stones that were both earthy and uncommon – we intentionally avoided lighter Carrara marble for example,' Dvira explains. Amid cossetting autumnal tones, honey-coloured oaks and travertine are the forest greens favoured by the male owner. In the kitchen, Dvira used mosaic tiles to evoke a Mediterranean flavour, while



CLOAKROOM

'We call this the jungle bathroom and it almost feels like you're walking into a rainforest,' says Dvira.

Menagerie of Extinct Animals wallpaper, Moooi. Round mirror, West Elm

on the top floor of the property, a terracotta limewash paint subdues the bleaching effect of the sun.

'I saw our design as a fresh application of a 1980s flavour and one executed with organic vision,' Dvira says. Her refinement of the architectural swagger is rather like a designer taking the edge off a classic shoulder pad. 'There's an existing curve that went right through the living space so we gave it a beaded detail to add more interest. It also ties in with the cabinetry. Another custom sofa responds to the arc of the wall,' she notes. Facing the dining room area, two former Gothic arched bookcases have been replaced with stained glass panels that pay homage to the Memphis style. 'It also brings in an Arts and Crafts element, which feels unique. We worked with an artisan and hand-picked every single piece,' says Dvira.

The smaller bathrooms feature bold, illustrative prints, each with its own transporting vision, from lush jungle scenes to fantastical creatures. Solid avocado green marble is another grounding factor that reframes a trend of the 70s and 80s. Dvira's imaginative interiors manage to achieve an impressive architectural paradox: the apartment is both sky bound and yet deeply tethered to the earth. In this modern evolution, Dvira has proved that the bold structural bones of the 1980s can be beautifully redeemed with soul, texture and warmth.

dvira.com

LIVING AREA

The moire print used on the armchairs evokes a desert landscape.

Custom swivel **chairs** by Dvira Ovadia; upholstered in Cascadia in Saffron, Kelly Wearstler for Kravet. Amara travertine **coffee table**, Eternity Modern. Eva **side table**, Co.House Designs. Custom **rug** by Dvira Ovadia



TOP-FLOOR LIVING AREA

'This loft-like space has been designed as a cosy retreat for the end of the day. The clients do a lot of casual entertaining here,' says Dvira.

Tribeca sectional **sofa** designed by Dvira Ovadia; upholstered in Endurepel Nomad 601 Natural, Ennis Fabrics. Eva oak **side table**, Co.House Designs. Sundown **rug**, CB2



TOP-FLOOR LANDING

'There's something natural and earthy feeling about these armchairs,' says Dvira. A limewash wall finish adds to the space's organic, textural quality.

Bali **chairs**, RH. Valo **console table**, Crate & Barrel. Tidal **wall sconces**, Arteriors. Try Bauwerk Colour for a similar **limewash** paint

MAIN BEDROOM

The bed was specifically designed so that the homeowners can sit up and read while leaning against the headboard.

Custom **bed** by Dvira Ovadia; upholstered in Oris in Cream, Ennis Fabrics. Custom **bench**, Dvira Ovadia; upholstered in Linara in Russet, Romo. Byron **bedside table**, RH



MAIN BATHROOM

Dvira designed the vanity with bands of walnut and white oak. 'It gives a striking and almost whimsical note to the space,' she says.

Vanity with Quartzito Avocatus top and sides designed by Dvira Ovadia. Renee **wall sconce**, Mitzi.

Floor in Penny round tiles, Lori London. Vanity **mirrors**, Renwil. Hand Combed Plaster **wallcovering** in Green Leaf, Schumacher

