

SKY HIGH

Three flats are converted into one large, stylish penthouse for the ultimate in luxury city living

Report: **Felicity Borthwick**

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inding a multi-level property with views over London isn't particularly easy. So when James Miller came across the top three flats in an old industrial warehouse for sale – with impressive vistas over the capital – he decided to buy all three and transform them into a single, spacious home for himself and his wife.

With plenty of room at the couple's disposal, the entire top floor has been given over to a modern bedroom-bathroom suite with two separate dressing rooms. The bedroom reflects the building's industrial origins with a feature wall fashioned from polished concrete and a large, bespoke bed finished in dark grey, stained oak veneer. Douglas fir flooring, which has been treated with white lye and soap for a slightly worn look, flows underfoot. ►





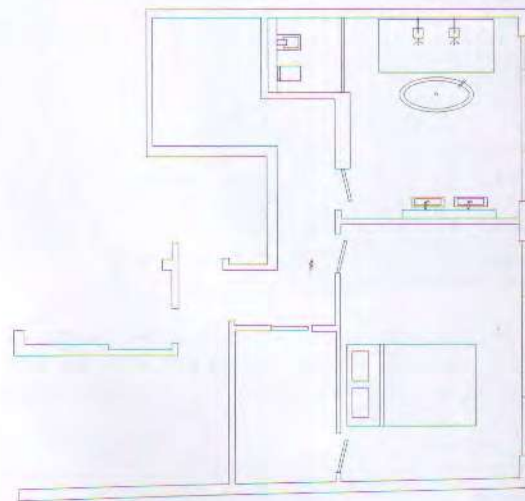
Barbara Genda designed and made the units in the gallery library, which overlooks the kitchen-dining area and enjoys magnificent views out over the capital.



James had very clear ideas about what he wanted looks-wise, even down to the furniture and dressing rooms, so he enlisted the services of furniture designer Barbara Genda to turn his vision into reality. "James is in the design business himself so is very astute when it comes to design and detail; for a lot of the pieces he provided us with outlines and then we just adapted or tweaked them from there," Barbara recalls. "His brief included a bed with a headboard, bedside cabinets and a unit at the end of the bed with an integrated TV."

"James was also very set on the colour he wanted so we spent several months looking at samples until we found something that was not only the right shade but cost effective too," she continues, "and because he was doing so much work we had to keep to a tight budget. We ended up using a natural oak veneer and then staining it the particular shade of grey he wanted."

Lighting has also been used very cleverly, adding drama to the space and lending warmth to the cool, grey backdrop. Although lighting designers were employed for the rest of the house, Barbara says they found it difficult to specify the lighting that James wanted incorporated into the bedroom furniture, so she took this on herself. ►





Above: "James wanted a TV integrated into the box at the end of the bed and he also has a sophisticated speaker system that's connected to the rest of the house, so we had to incorporate so many plugs into the headboard," recalls Barbara. "We spent a day just sorting through the maze of cables for the bedroom furniture!"

Top right: Floor-to-ceiling windows provide spectacular views to the north and also allow light to flood in, combining with the pale Douglas fir flooring to keep the room feeling light and airy.

Right: James kept the flooring and joinery in the dressing rooms light as there are no windows in here.







Above: "My aim with the master bathroom was to create something modern, light and balanced with plenty of space for two people to use it at the same time," explains James. He has achieved this by using sleek, minimal fittings and wall-mounted sanitaryware, while the floor-to-ceiling windows allow in plenty of light.

Opposite page, top left: Barbara made all the furniture for the separate 'his and hers' dressing rooms. Hers leads off from the bedroom, while his (shown) leads off the hallway and features a chute that funnels clothes down to the laundry area on the first floor.

Bottom left: This striking Ashton & Bentley bath holds court in the luxurious master bathroom, while the more functional WC and bidet are tucked discreetly behind a wall. A dark glass screen provides a striking contrast and backdrop to the bath and provides privacy and splash-proofing for the shower.

The kitchen comprises one island for working – opposite the tall housing – and another, larger structure dedicated to cooking and entertaining. The latter's L-shaped form follows the shape of the room to provide a seamless transition from kitchen to dining.





"The designer suggested the colour of the lighting, but then we designed it and built it into the headboard and under the bed," she explains. "We used LED lights to create a really nice, warm glow."

For the master bathroom, meanwhile, the key objective was creating a luxurious space that two people could comfortably use at the same time. As such, it houses a huge walk-in shower, a large freestanding bath and a wall with copious amounts of storage, which Barbara also created. Made from veneered and waterproofed ply, the wall features open shelving at either end for towels and decorative toiletries, and concealed units behind push-touch mirrors in the centre. The wall was designed to house a large, contemporary double basin unit whilst concealing all the pipework.

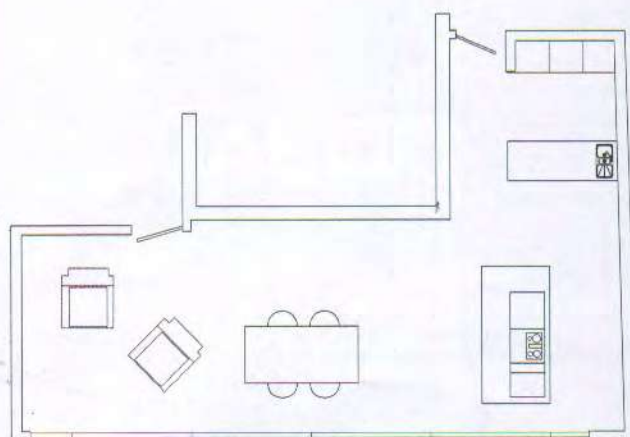
Raised flooring beneath both the bath and WC/bidet zone, which is tucked discreetly around the corner, also ensures that plumbing is neatly out of sight. The flooring is a mix of large grey Royal Mosa tiles and Douglas fir to echo the aesthetics of the bedroom, while the sanitaryware is sleek yet sculptural to complement the property's contemporary feel. The brassware and basin were sourced from West One Bathrooms and James found the elegant Ashton & Bentley bath on eBay. Once again, careful lighting lends added drama to the space, with bright task lighting around the mirrored units and soft LEDs elsewhere.

Down on the floor below, a similar modern-industrial vibe prevails, with the kitchen cabinetry finished in anodised aluminium and worktops made from stainless steel. Crafted by a company called Tin Tab – which also made the staircase – the kitchen is tucked beneath the mezzanine level and comprises a wall of tall units and a central island unit. On the other side of the island is a huge, L-shaped second island-cum-dining table, which sits within a light-drenched double-height space, offering up magnificent city views.

"Even if the space hadn't dictated that this be an L-shape I would have had something similar so that when we're cooking we can still be part of the conversation and pass food down as it's ready," James remarks, referring to the Gaggenau grill, teppan yaki and induction hob that are all installed at the 'work end' of the vast structure.

Moreover, to ensure the Millers can work from both sides of the smaller island, there is a sink on either side – served by a central, industrial-style tap – and an additional oven. What's more, all the drawers operate on Blum's Servo Drive, opening automatically with a slight tap or nudge, for the ultimate in functionality.

As well as comprising such a striking kitchen-dining space, this level also houses a living area, two guest bedrooms, a cloakroom, office and cinema, while downstairs is another guest bedroom with ensuite, a laundry room and an art studio. Thanks to James's ambitious vision – realised by the likes of Barbara Genda and Tin Tab – the Millers' new home is truly spectacular. It's spacious, stylish and modern, it boasts a fashionable postcode, and the views are simply breathtaking. **KBB**





Left: The Millers' kitchen boasts an assortment of cutting-edge appliances including several ovens and warming drawers from Miele as well as a wine storage unit and an induction hob, teppan yaki and grill from Gaggenau.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Furniture Barbara Genda (020 7978 2349 or www.barbara-genda.com)

Kitchen Tin Tab (01273 515155 or www.tintab.com)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Anodised aluminium with Corian lip and ply carcass, from Tin Tab, as before

Worktop Stainless steel, Tin Tab, as before

Flooring Douglas fir with white lye and soap finish, as before

Tap KWC ONO (020 8675 9335 or www.swisslinelondon.co.uk)

Appliances Ovens and warming drawers, Miele (0845 365 6600 or www.miele.co.uk); Induction hob, fridge-freezer, teppan yaki, grill and wine storage unit, all Gaggenau (0844 892 8988 or www.gaggenau.com/gb); Extractor, Westin (01484 421585 or www.westin.co.uk)

Dining table/island Tin Tab, as before

Stools Tonon Concept in dark grey, from Mac & Mac Interiors (01252 717771 or www.macandmacinteriors.co.uk)

Pendant lights Bestlite BL9 in black, Mac & Mac Interiors, as before

BEDROOM

Bed, headboard and bedside tables Stained-oak veneer, designed and made by Barbara Genda, as before

Lamps Luceplan Costanza table lamp from Mac & Mac Interiors, as before

Flooring Douglas fir with white lye and soap finish. For similar try Chauncey's (0117 971 3131 or www.chauncey.co.uk)

Feature wall Polished concrete. For similar try White+Reid (023 9264 1641 or www.whiteandreid.co.uk)

Armchair Charles by B&B Italia (www.bebitalia.com), from Mac & Mac Interiors, as before

Sofa Erba Abbraccio from Mac & Mac Interiors, as before

BATHROOM

Wall units Ply with oak veneer finish, designed and made by Barbara Genda, as before

Basin Rexa by Opus from West One Bathrooms (020 7499 1845 or www.westonebathrooms.co.uk)

WC and bidet West One Bathrooms, as before

Flooring Douglas fir, as before and Terra Maestrichtl XXL 206V tiles by Royal Mosa, from Strata Tiles (0800 012 1454 or www.stratatiles.co.uk)

Shower screen Islington Glass (020 7607 6008 or www.islingtonglass.com)

Brassware CEA, West One Bathrooms, as before

Bath Xinia by Ashton & Bentley (01902 837436 or www.ashtonandbentley.co.uk)

COST

Kitchens from Tin Tab start from around £20,000. A similar bathroom would cost around £24,000 and a similar bedroom would cost around £6000 (furniture only)