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BEFORE AND AFTER: A CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN FOR A MODERN FAMILY

Designer Gideon Mendelson transforms a classic but dated pre-war apartment kitchen into a functional space fit for a family.

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When Gideon Mendelson, founder and principal of New York-based design firm the **Mendelson Group**, first began working with his clients on their Upper East Side apartment, the group could all agree on one thing: it needed help. "The young family loved the pre-war building and the scale of the spaces, but they wanted it to feel like they were living in a modern setting," Mendelson shares. "We all knew from the beginning that the space was going to be gutted." By combining a thoughtful, functional space plan with contemporary details, the designer created a modern setting perfect for the family's lifestyle.

a new focus on functionality

Working to incorporate all of his client's desired modern conveniences and functional needs within the existing space proved to be difficult, but Mendelson rose to the challenge. The biggest feat, "was getting all of the program elements incorporated in a graceful way," Mendelson says. By dividing the room into three distinct zones, the designer incorporated separate areas for casual dining, food prep and cooking, and storage for food and dinnerware. Within these he also managed to find space for audio and visual equipment, and a full washer and dryer. "It sounds like a lot, but it all feels rather calm and efficient when you're there," Mendelson says.

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Accommodating the family's needs was an essential component of the overall design. "The [food-prep area of the] kitchen allows for two or three people to be working in the space together, and its openness and proximity to the breakfast area makes passing food to kids fast and easy," the designer shares. "Even more, no one is schlepping too far to get dirty dishes to the dishwasher. The pantry, refrigerator and freezer are right next to the service entrance, so groceries can be put away easily."

modern luxuries

As far as the aesthetic elements, the direction was always clear. "The kitchen cabinets were going to be white from the beginning," the designer tell us. "Simple details and contemporary materials keep it fresh." Opting for a serene blue color scheme with hints of green and gray, Mendelson managed to lend the busy space a sense of calm. By installing quartzite counters with the stone's vein running in a linear fashion rather than around the room, the designer added an unexpected graphic element which is repeated on the upholstery of the built-in banquette. A modern industrial light fixture over the main island adds to the new whimsical feeling of the classically appointed apartment. Wonderful bones with contemporary amenities: fresh indeed.

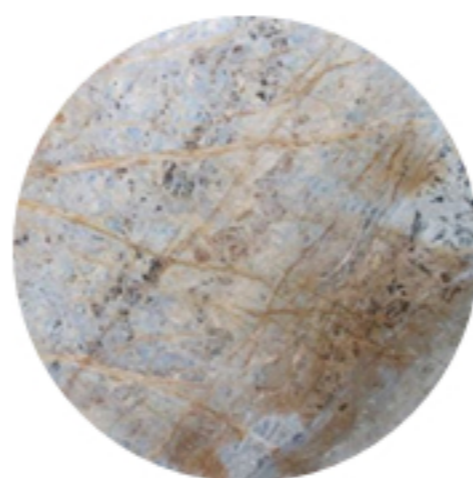
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DWR



Loft Blue Gray Polished Tile,
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Berard Handcrafted Fruit Bowl,
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\$9325, Wolf



Skovby Table, \$1860,
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Wood Gallery Picture Frame,
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Photography: Eric Piasecki

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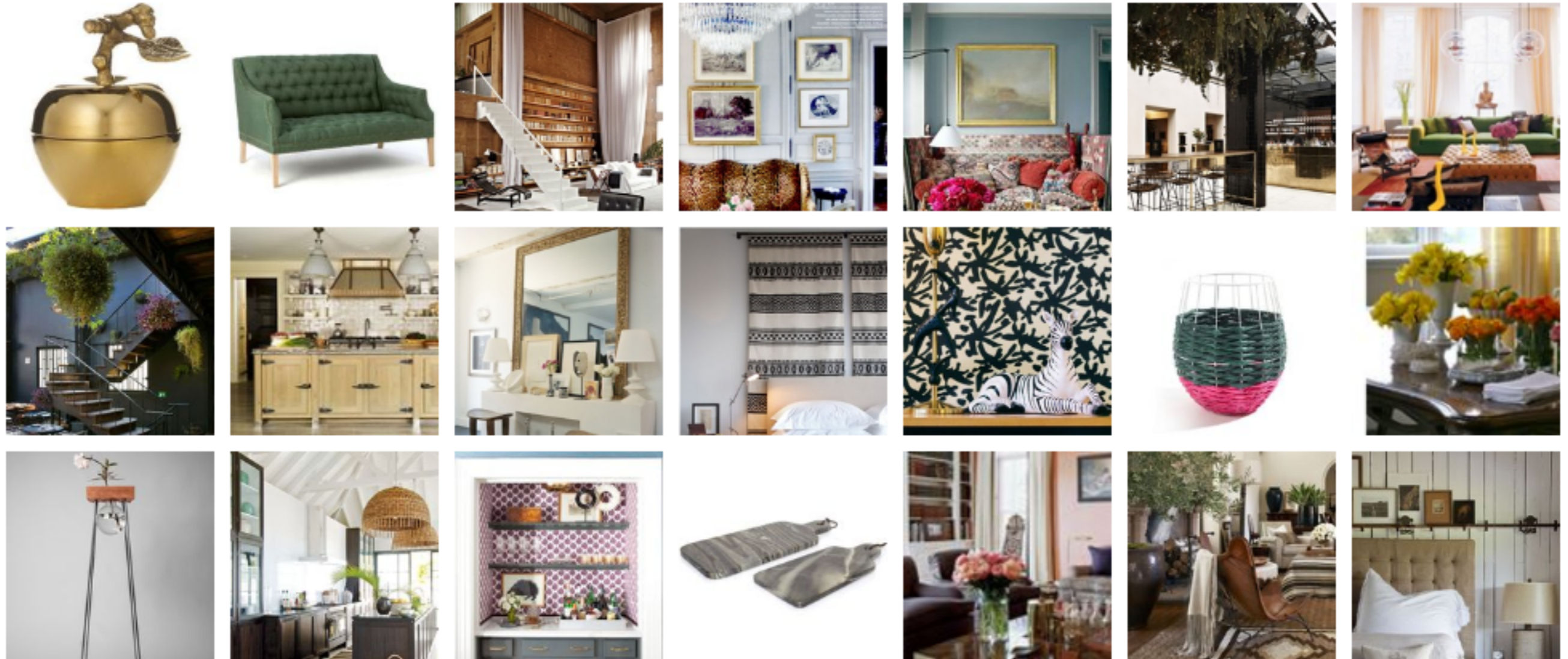
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