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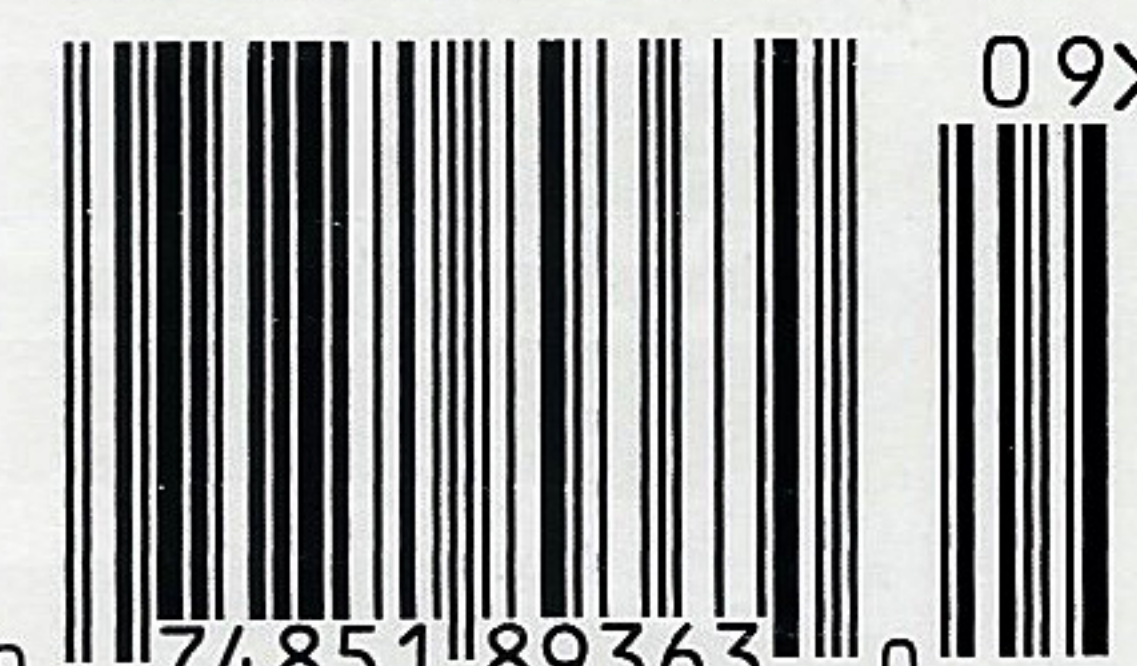
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ideal fit

A local interior designer and his partner make the most of their Ardmore condominium. *By Tara Behan*

Marcello Luzi has been designing homes since the mid-1980s. A principal at Ardmore's WPL Interior Design, his portfolio includes everything from Rittenhouse Square condos to Main Line mansions.

After more than 20 years of living in the city, Luzi decided to settle on the Main Line, drawn by the allure of large living spaces, free parking and proximity to family. Though he and his partner, Gregory Seitter, at first envisioned living in a single-family home, the ease of condo life drew them in.

An Ardmore condo, close to the train, shopping and restaurants, has been an ongoing project for Luzi, who finally feels,

almost 10 years since moving in, that they have it exactly the way he and Seitter envisioned it should be.

MLT: How much of an adjustment was it for you moving from Center City to the Main Line?

ML: This condo is perfect. We're in the back corner of the building, so it feels like it's very private. We have windows on two sides and we look out to trees. It feels like a little house to me. The condo is in a perfect location, within walking distance of Suburban Square. We have dogs, so we can walk them. It's also less than 10 miles to drive into the city. This area is like a

mini Center City to me, and I liked that. We have the best of both worlds.

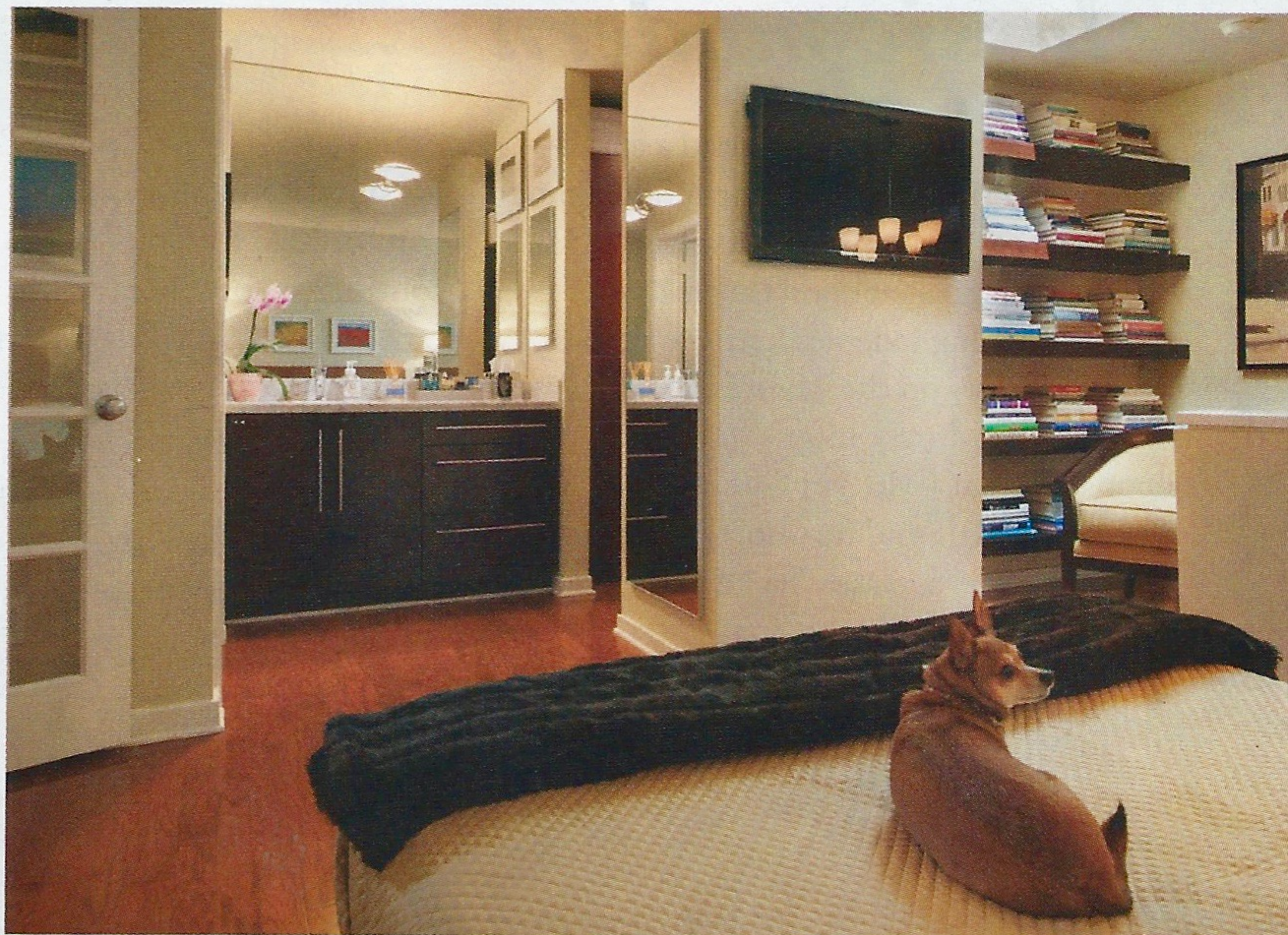
MLT: It's rare to find a bi-level condo on the Main Line.

ML: The bi-level definitely helps in making it feel like a house more than a condo. We have private space and public space. We like to entertain, and we have people over a lot. Everyone stays in the main living room or the deck when the weather is nice. We have the public space downstairs, and then upstairs is the bedroom, dressing room and study.

MLT: What was the condition of the condo when you bought it? Did it need many upgrades?

continued on page 41

≡ **resources** **interior design:** Marcello Luzi, WPL Interior Design, Ardmore, (215) 592-9570, www.wpldesign.com.



CONTEMPORARY COMFORTS: (Clockwise from opposite page) A neutral palette in the main living space allows the color to come from the extensive art collection; the galley kitchen redesign included a more efficient layout, custom off-white cabinetry and a colorful tile backsplash; the master bedroom suite dominates the second floor of the bi-level condo; a vintage poster collection is on display in the dining area.



habitat *continued from page 38*

ML: This building was built in 1984. It's post-modern architecture. We bought the condo almost 10 years ago. We had to redo the kitchen, master bathroom and powder room because those rooms were all original. We put in hardwood floors throughout, along with new closets, lighting and hardware. I liked buying a place that hadn't been re-decorated too much because I didn't want to buy someone else's decorating. I wanted to do my own.

MLT: Were you worried about making design decisions with your partner?

ML: This place was definitely bigger than our last condo. We went from 800 square feet to 1,200 square feet. I always lived in small homes, but designed big ones. I knew we needed to buy more furniture. For one, we didn't have a proper dining table. Gregory told me that he had found a dining table that he had liked, and I knew I had one that I liked. I thought, here we go—this will be our first argument. Turns out we were looking at the exact same dining table. I was shocked. I knew then that we would be fine making design decisions together. Chances are if I like it, he'll like

The living room



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The powder room

it. We like collecting art and vintage posters. Where we have opinions that are the most diverse are usually on paintings, not on interior design per se, like furniture and rugs. When you pick a painting, it's a personal decision, so it's not surprising that we have different opinions.

MLT: Your open living-dining room space is the main room to make an impact in the condo. How would you best describe its style?

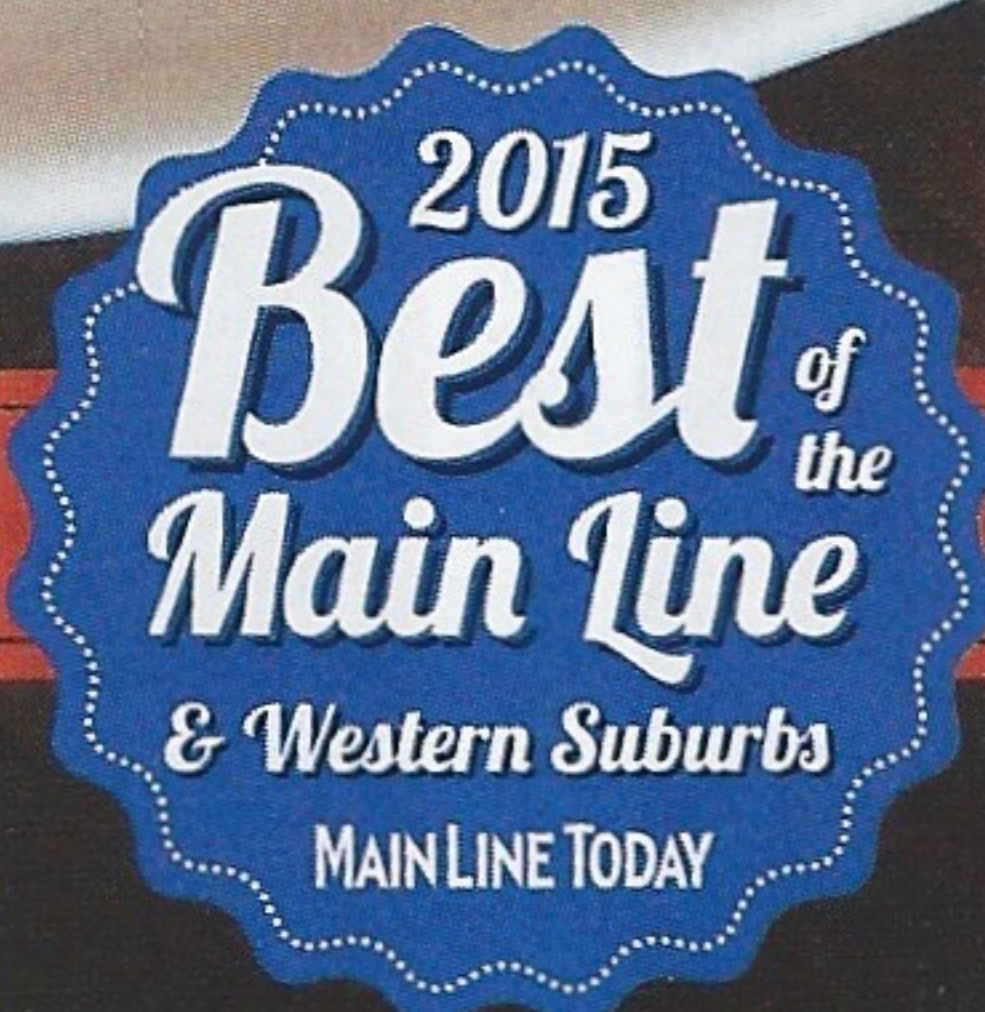
ML: I'd say casual contemporary. When we first moved in, we had a lot of black leather and chrome furniture from the city. We moved it in, and it was fine for a while. Since we were nestled in the trees here, I thought I wanted to soften it up with lighter colors. I never went too bold with color in the space because I always thought the art should be the color. So a lot of things are neutral, other than pillows and a punch of color on the red ottoman and the two green chairs. Most of the colors come from the walls because it comes from the art. I never, ever find a painting that matches someone's furniture. It has to sit well in the décor, but we don't match art. Art is art. Art gets a free pass. It's beautiful on its own and it should be. Buy something you love and you always find a place for it. In the living room area, most of the upholstery, including the yellow chair, the ottoman and the butterscotch leather sofa are all custom from my upholsterer. We do a lot of custom upholstery because we design it and we make it. It allows us to have more control over exactly what we want.

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Another view of
the living room

MLT: The gallery wall of vintage posters in your dining room space makes such a great impact.

ML: I had seven large vintage posters in a previous condo. When I moved from that condo, I sold most of the collection to clients and friends. I was over the vintage posters. Years later, Gregory really liked the vintage posters and wanted to have some to display in our condo. I ended up re-buying some of the posters I had originally owned. That wall space was the perfect place to display our collection.

MLT: You redid the galley kitchen. Any tips for designing a small kitchen space?

ML: I love my galley kitchen even though it is small. It's perfect for one person to work. The original kitchen was basically one wall. The range was on the same wall as the sink. I knew there had to be a better, more efficient layout for this kitchen. I made the distance between the countertops and the upper cabinets higher than normal to give it more breathing room. I went all the way to the ceiling with the cabinets for the additional space. The cabinets are off white. I wanted to keep it light and bright because of the size. The granite is dark green with a porcelain tile, green-gray floor that looks like soapstone. The real drama is the backsplash tile, which is colored mosaic glass.

MLT: Is it hard to believe that you'll be celebrating living in the condo for a decade by the end of the year?

ML: Time has flown by. We absolutely love our condo. We love the location and everything that's happening on the Main Line, like all the new restaurants opening. We simply love it here. **MLT**