

# INTERIOR DESIGN

PETER  
ZUCK

**If you're an engineer,** married to a restaurateur, you might consider yourself equipped to handle your own kitchen renovation. The owners of this New York loft were, indeed, on the verge of personally overseeing the renovation of their entire apartment, a job that entailed combining two one-bedrooms in a former Singer sewing-machine factory. Then, after rethinking the daunting task, the couple sought the counsel of a friend's firm, David Yum Architects. The soft-spoken David Yum listened quietly before providing feedback on the extensive program these prospective clients hoped to cram into their combined 2,000 square feet—three bathrooms and a full-service bar, just for starters. Eventually, the would-be do-it-yourselfers were won over by his determination to strike a balance between beauty for its own sake and functionality for a family of three.

In order to use the available space most efficiently, Yum grouped the three bathrooms and space for mechanical equipment in what he calls the "core" of the apartment, a rectangular volume wrapped in horizontal-grain walnut. "It's like a coconut, a hard shell with a beautiful interior," he explains. On the side facing the hallway, he inserted two doors to reveal the coconut "meat," the powder room and the child's bathroom.

He made the powder room as grown-up as a business suit, complete with pinstripes. On the ceiling and two of the walls, he installed back-painted gray glass tile separated by runs of thin white ceramic tile. He covered the remaining walls and the floor in speckled brown and copper-colored glass tile that mimics terrazzo.

Next door, he says, he made the child's bathroom "fun and lively without being Disney." He installed vivid blue glass mosaics both on the front of the tub and on the wall behind it, then clad the surrounding walls in white subway tile to

*This loft's kitchen is defined by screens built from walnut slats and a maple frame; flooring is bamboo.*

## in a nutshell

*firm: david yum architects  
site: new york*







create a nautical effect. Since the bathroom lacked windows, he devised a complex scheme for overhead lighting: He concealed fluorescent ceiling fixtures behind a canopy of interlocking polyethylene strips—think billowing spinners on a regatta's worth of sailboats. The design proved so difficult to explain to the contractor that five of his own employees had to hand-cut and assemble it themselves.

For the master bathroom, he went with a look as strong and masculine as the captain's

quarters on a luxury liner. He constructed a wenge-veneered unit to support the vanity's counter—its white Corian intended to coax both the wood's figuring—as well as hanging a pair of round mirrors, porthole-style. In his approach to the shower stall, he revealed a hand deft with optical illusion: By installing horizontal bands of tile that diminished in width as they ascended, he lifted the apparent height of the ceiling.

With elaborate tilework established as the key charac-

teristic of the three bathrooms, Yam switched to slatted screens to define the open kitchen and give the cook a bit of culinary privacy—while still promoting transparency and allowing light to shine through. He positioned the screens to conceal a structural column and to partition the kitchen from the area containing the wine refrigerator and service bar. Then he carved out a tall, narrow pass-through, lined in mirror, to connect the adjacent spaces.

To jibe with the couple's taste for commercial kitchens,

*Clockwise from top left: Counters are Italian marble. Riser shelving and paneling add color. A pass-through improves access to the wine refrigerator and service bar. A walnut plank tops the breakfast bar, which is food in stainless steel.*

kitchen bath

