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Of Sky & Sea

A Turkish couple blends stunning panoramic water views and an elite audiovisual system into a luxurious Palm Beach penthouse.

By LINDA MARX PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM SARGENT





CONFEZIONE BENEtti COLLECTION / CAVIETTI



The media/living room, shown here and on preceding pages, takes its design cue from the panoramic views of the water. The oil paintings by Turkish artist Murat Ersin depict peaceful water scenes. A pair of Louis XV bergère chairs upholstered in a floral-print fabric from Turkey stand next to an English mahogany cigarette table, which boasts a slightly raised galley and tapered legs. The beige George IV sofa is defined by its scrolled, sloping and outward-curving arms. The custom twin ottomans are bathed in dreamy Indian silk. On either side are neoclassical-style lamps; supporting the lamps are mahogany side tables, both inspired by an 18th-century box-on-stand design.

After a few days of power-shopping in South Florida's luxury malls, Vildan and Aynur Guleryuz like nothing more than to relax in the spacious living room of their new waterfront penthouse in Palm Beach. And until they wrap up for the evening, feet propped up and cocktails in hand, their bliss involves enjoying philharmonic DVDs on their custom 70-inch rear-projection TV, or listening to Verdi's *Aida* and Gounod's *Faust* on their state-of-the-art audio system. In the morning, they rise early to sip coffee and read the newspaper leisurely against a backdrop of the sparkling Atlantic Ocean, the Intracoastal Waterway

and several marinas anchored with luxury megayachts.

The space is the dream home of this Turkish-born couple. They purchased the three-bedroom, four-bathroom corner unit on the 23rd floor of Old Port Cove's Lake Point tower almost two years ago after living in a smaller penthouse on the same floor. Vildan, a civil and mechanical engineer who built bridges and commercial buildings in Turkey for 50 years, led the arduous, five-month renovation with the help of contractor Frank Polacek of Endeavor Development Inc. in Tequesta, Fla. "This 20-year-old penthouse looked like a cave—a ruin," says Vildan, who winters in South Florida and summers in Turkey between Istanbul and Izmir. "It was very dark and old.



This elegant sitting area morphs into the third bedroom, thanks to a motorized wall and a Murphy bed that tucks into the wall. Dining at the hexagonal breakfast table while taking in the splendid water views is a daily ritual for the homeowners.

I demolished the place in 20 days, unloading everything into 29 dumpsters and leaving nothing but the windows.”

His goal was to make the spectacular water views the main focus of nearly every room by combining the media/living room with a transformable third bedroom. But several days after purchasing the penthouse, Vildan realized that achieving his dreams for the space would be a challenge.

“I knew I was in trouble when I learned that the previous owner wouldn’t vacate until August [2002], and I had to leave in April for Turkey,” Vildan says. “My biggest problem was how to get accurate dimensions without entering the penthouse and disturbing the 80-year-old gentleman.” Thus, he obtained the blueprints and calculated every necessary measurement using his architectural and engineering expertise.

During the weeks prior to his trip, Vildan, the maestro of the manor, did it all, enlisting Aynur to find traditional furnishings in light-colored fabrics, antiques, wallpaper and contemporary kitchen appliances. He located light-green granite for the flooring (plus the soundproof material to go

TECH TALK: THE GULERYUZ PENTHOUSE

Conventional wisdom in audiophile circles says high-end two-channel systems cannot be housed with home theaters. Many enthusiasts feel that the speaker positioning and room layout that work for one simply will not work for the other. With the Guleryuz home, however, keeping the systems separate was impossible. “There is square footage, but there are not as many rooms as a custom home would have,” says Jim Carr of Intertech, a division of Eksel Systems in Irvine, Calif. “The customer wasn’t shopping for video or even surround sound. He wanted a high-end two-channel system because he’s a classical music lover. However, his wife is a film buff.”

To address this potential source of marital dissonance, Carr set out to design a system that could accommodate the owners’ individual preferences. He started by convincing the clients that, with a bit of modification to their custom cabinetry, he could create a customized projection system that would perform much better than the run-of-the-mill rear-projection TV they requested.

Thus, the cabinetry separating the living room from the master suite was enlarged to house a custom rear-projection booth. Inside the booth, a large mirror reflects the image from a **Runco DTV 991RP CRT projec-**

tor onto the back of a special **Stewart rear-projection screen**. With this setup, Carr achieved a picture far superior to those produced by the finest consumer rear-projection TVs, without having to mount an obtrusive projector in the elegant room. “The resolution and picture quality are superior to some of the popular technologies today, like DLP ... but at a comparable price,” Carr says.

He then made the radical decision to combine the audio and home theater systems into the same space. The two-channel system is founded upon a **Balanced Audio Technology tube preamplifier**, with two **Theta Citadel amplifiers** driving a pair of **Aerial Acoustics speakers**. When a surround-sound source, such as a DVD player, is engaged, the audio control passes to an **ADA Cinema Reference processor**. A **Pass Labs multichannel amplifier** switches on to power the **Triad Gold center and surround speakers** that augment the Aerials.

“It’s a fairly complex system, but when we were done with it, the operation was streamlined,” says Carr, whose company created several pages of extensive, customized screens, which simplify system operation down to a few button presses for the **Pronto touchscreen remote**. For an equipment list, visit www.hedmag.com.—Dennis Burger



The kitchen is a stunning juxtaposition of traditional furniture and contemporary finishes. The English dining table ensemble is crafted of French walnut and zebra veneers; its octagon-shaped top is inlaid with scrolling leaves and flowers in a walnut burl. Electronically controlled vertical blinds are light in color so as not to detract from the breathtaking scenery beyond.



The dramatic view from the dining room gives new meaning to dining by candlelight. The mahogany Regency table, the heart of the space, is wrapped with a sterling finish and gold-leaf accents that match the Empire chairs. All sit upon a silk Turkish rug.

underneath it), artwork and everything for the sophisticated bar complete with its own electronically controlled liquor cabinet (a motorized lazy Susan in a cabinet, if you will). He then secured all of the necessary plumbing and heating and air-conditioning materials, kitchen cabinetry, vertical blinds, various contractors and permits.

In Turkey, Vildan designed nearly 2,000 square feet of lacquered wall units with the assistance of a retired Turkish architect and friend. He arranged for the units—some silver, others champagne and pearly white—to arrive from Turkey in two 40-foot-long, climate-controlled containers. (It took six

men 40 days to transport and properly install the cabinetry.) He also had the foyer and living room ceiling coves built, and ordered silk rugs, bathroom cabinetry and Indian silk drapery. "I even conceived the 11-by-12-foot pocket wall mechanism to separate the third bedroom from the media room," he says, admitting he thought of little else night and day.

"The design and installation of this wall was one of the most challenging aspects of the renovation," says Polacek, who worked side by side with Vildan for five months. The wall, which provides privacy for overnight guests, retracts to incorporate the third bedroom's water views into the media/living



The master bedroom reflects the home's same soothing color schemes of beige and ivory. The custom cabinetry, designed by the homeowner, contains the 42-inch Panasonic plasma TV and provides a peaceful backdrop to the red-upholstered chair and desk. The king-size bed and linens are from Turkey. The automated blinds allow the couple to enjoy the water views day or night.

room during the day. The 270-degree waterfront panorama can be enjoyed from the dining room and breakfast area as well. "The view is one of most spectacular I have ever seen," Polacek marvels. Vildan, a workaholic and perfectionist, was obsessed with having three bedrooms but didn't want to sacrifice the stellar water views that a permanent third-bedroom wall would have blocked. Through trial and error, Polacek constructed a ceiling-mounted mechanical device for the moveable wall. With the push of a button, the wall retreats, opening up the space to full sea views; touch another button and the unique partition reappears for the bedroom.

Additional "wall magic" enhances the media center. A second wall was installed between the living room area and the master bedroom to accommodate Vildan's sophisticated entertainment gear and yards of cable. "The [rear-projection] TV needed more room [for the projector] so we took out the wall to make room for a 4-foot corridor," he says.

In terms of decor, fabrics and furnishings throughout are light and quiet to allow the magnificent blues of sky and sea to be the main attraction. Most of the furnishings, with the exception of the artwork, Persian rugs and a few candles and collectibles in blues and greens, are understated soft beiges or

RESOURCES

ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER

The homeowners; all furnishings imported from Turkey

CUSTOM INSTALLERS

Mellon Custom Sound of Lantana, Fla. (561.586.7245); Inter-tech of Irvine, Calif. (949.509.6722)

EQUIPMENT RESOURCES

Amplifiers: Pass Laboratories (www.passlabs.com, 530.367.3690), Theta (818.597.9195, www.thetadigital.com)

D/A converter: MSB Technology (www.msbsbtech.com, 650.747.0400)

D-VHS VCR: JVC (800.247.3608, www.jvc.com)

DVD players: living room, Ayre (303.442.7300, www.ayre.com); second bedroom, Marantz (630.741.0300, www.marantz.com); master bedroom, Toshiba (973.628.8000, www.toshiba.com)

Home automation: Xantech (www.xantech.com, 800.843.5465)

Interconnects: AudioQuest (www.audioquestmusic.com, 949.585.0111)

LCD TV: kitchen, Sharp Electronics (800.BE.SHARP, www.sharpsusa.com)

Plasma TV: bedroom, Panasonic (www.panasonic.com, 888.211.PANA)

Power conditioning: Furman Sound (www.furmansound.com, 707.763.1010), Richard Gray's Power Co. (504.247.0300, www.richardgrayspowercompany.com)

Preamplifiers: living room and

second bedroom, Balanced Audio Technology Inc. (800.255.4228, www.balanced.com)

Rear-projection screen and mirror: Stewart Filmscreen Corp. (www.stewartfilm.com, 800.762.4999)

Rear-projection TV: bedroom, Sony (www.sony.com, 800.222.7669)

Receiver: bedroom, Harman/Kardon (516.255.HKHK, www.harmankardon.com)

Room correction: Tact Audio (www.tactaudio.com, 201.440.9300)

SACD player: Sony (800.222.7669, www.sony.com)

Stereo speakers: living room, Aerial Acoustics (781.235.7715, www.aerialacoustics.com); second bedroom, WEGG3 (310.577.9148, www.wegg3.com)

Subwoofers: bedroom, Tannoy (www.tannoy.com, 519.745.1158); living room, Von Schweikert Audio (760.410.1650, www.vonschweikert.com)

Surround-sound processor: ADA (www.ada-usa.com, 800.432.8346)

Surround speakers: bedroom, Tannoy (www.tannoy.com, 519.745.1158); living room, Triad Speaker Inc. (503.256.2600, www.triadspeakers.com)

Surge suppressors: bedroom, Monster Cable (415.840.2000, www.monstercable.com)

Touchscreen remotes: Philips Electronics (888.486.6272, www.pronto.philips.com)

Video projector and processor: Runco (510.324.7777, www.runco.com)

lightly patterned fabrics. Much of the home's lighting is recessed; while some of the lighting strategically highlights artwork, other lighting is designed to dim different regions of the home with ease. Illumination, as well as audio, blinds and air-conditioning and heat, can be controlled by any of the three Lutron remote-control units.


"This house has the most amazing ocean and Intracoastal Waterway views I've ever seen. Seamlessly blending such a high-end audio and video system into a home of this caliber is like icing on the cake."

—Jim Fortier, Mellon Custom Sound

Vildan and Aynur enjoy reading and watching television at various times of the day, so they incorporated TVs into every room. In the master suite, Mellon Custom Sound of Lantana, Fla., installed a Panasonic 42-inch plasma TV and a 5.1 surround-sound system complete with Tannoy S8-LRs for the left and right speakers, an S8-C for the center, and a recessed S8iw for the rear. "The sleek styling of the custom wall units Vildan made gives the space a clean, finished line," says Jim Fortier of Mellon Custom Sound. "We accomplished our goal by recessing the left, right and center channels and flush-mounting the plasma. The end result is unobtrusive and elegant."

A 40-inch Sony XBR TV from the homeowners' previous penthouse provides entertainment in the second bedroom. In the kitchen, Mellon Custom Design installed a Sharp 20-inch LCD monitor. For the workout room, there's a 15-inch wall-mounted version of the Sharp TV.

"One of the challenges in this installation was working with the custom wall units," Fortier says. "Any mistake could have been disastrous, so we measured twice and cut once."

Now that the renovation is behind them, Vildan and his wife are contented homebodies. Occasionally they invite friends for dinner, and Aynur serves Turkish-style chicken with walnuts on her Herend china from Hungary. But they prefer spending quiet days and nights together, enjoying the sights and sounds of their new home. "We spend at least five hours each day admiring the view and using our entertainment center," Vildan says. "We designed our Florida home with our own taste in mind. We feel like we live in a small palace." For a preferred list of architects and interior designers previously published in the magazine, visit www.hedmag.com. 



The delicate appointments of the bedroom allow the stunning panoramic views to star as the main attraction of the space.