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* **Stylish in Seattle, p.116**







A CAPITAL DESIGN

IN WASHINGTON, D.C., DESIGNER NESTOR SANTA-CRUZ OUTFITTED A GEORGETOWN APARTMENT FOR USE AS A PIED-A-TERRE BY AN OFT-FLYING FAMILY.

The living room of this condominium on the C & O Canal is wrapped in walls of industrial windows that recall the neighborhood's warehouse past. Designer Nestor Santa-Cruz wanted the furniture to appear "as if it were floating in the room," so he placed most of it away from the perimeter. Pieces include a Mattalano sofa and armchair inspired by Jean-Michel Frank (from Holly Hunt), Directoire-style chairs (through Niermann Weeks) and classically shaped lamps.



T“THIS BUILDING IS THE PREMIER NEW GEORGETOWN CONDOMINIUM,” SAYS NESTOR SANTA-CRUZ, A PARTNER AT SKB ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN IN WASHINGTON, D.C. Built in 2004 by New York’s Handel Architects, working with D.C.-based Frank Schlesinger, it sits on a strip of land between the C & O Canal and the Potomac River in an old, once-bustling warehouse district. The architects were so successful in styling the brick-clad development to evoke the neighborhood’s mercantile past that most locals think it’s a factory conversion. In fact, it’s a no-expense-spared new structure with luxurious bathrooms and sleek kitchens. “It set a level of quality the area hadn’t seen,” says Santa-Cruz, “and it has played a big part in the rebirth of the canal and the design district.”

His clients are fiftysomething empty-nesters from Puerto Rico who come to the capital about five times a year to see their daughter—a dentist with a practice in town. When they first contacted Santa-

Cruz, they emphasized value for cost (since it would be a second home) and their tight schedule. They wanted the two-bedroom, 1,500-square-foot space ready in just six months, in time for their annual Thanksgiving visit. There were children in the picture too: their daughter’s (a boy, 10, and girl, 5) as well as their son’s (another boy, 17, and girl, 15, who also visit frequently from Puerto Rico).

“We wanted something modern and eclectic,” says the husband, “but it had to work for three generations, so it had to be childproof and low-maintenance.” It was a tall order, perhaps, but not impossible for Santa-Cruz, one of Washington’s most talented designers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER MURDOCK
 Above: Muted metallic flashes—the gilded bronze coffee table with a hammered-copper top and a Julian Chichester floor lamp—as well as details such as leather piping on the sofa, add refined polish without pomp. Opposite: The den balances Bauhaus austerity (a pair of Mies van der Rohe daybeds) with tribal textures (the Moroccan Beni Ouarain rug). The circa-1970 sculpture on the antique Chinese coffee table is by C. Jere.

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