

# nightshift

New York hotel style and a nocturnal glamour theme distinguish this apartment makeover.



Mood lighting ... Muted tones and Deco-meets-modern glamour frame the evening view to the Story Bridge (main); the antique Chinese cabinet (left); walls upholstered in silk match the carpets and enhance the boutique hotel vibe (below).



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**D**ark is the new black in interior design. And epitomising the type of sophistication you only get after the sun goes down is this Brisbane residence, inspired by New York hotel style. From the leather dining chairs that sink into the plush carpet to the inlaid Chinese cabinets, rimless downlights and silk padded walls, the inner-city haven exudes pure glamour.

This Manhattan transformation is the work of interior design duo Ian Wrightson and Steven Stewart, of Phorm Interiors, who were called in to revive the tired two-bedroom apartment in New Farm. "We wanted a sophisticated and modern aesthetic rather than a casual elegance," Wrightson says of the fit-out. "City chic is always about dark colours, great lighting and muted tones. The only

With a beachside residence for weekends and the kids off their hands, the professional owners requested a makeover that would suit their busy working lifestyle. As both leave for work at 7am the apartment was, realistically, a "worknight" abode. "They saw it as a place to use before heading off for an evening drink and meal with friends, so they wanted something spectacular at night. They wanted the 'Wow!' factor."

Proximity to the Story Bridge suggested a version of city chic inspired by Deco industrial glamour, and the greenish-grey colour scheme was created to reinforce the city setting. Stewart explains: "Given the view, the apartment needed to be distinctive and make you feel like you were in the city. We wanted quite a dark interior to match the colour of the Story Bridge in the nicest way possible, so the view would come into the room."

*Archie Wrightson: "It's really a small space but*

*are the same colour [Resene's masala] with custom carpets to match. The walls that are not painted are treated in full mirror."*

The designers have pronounced the bedroom's silk upholstered walls "a triumph", with seamless cabinetry and joinery enhancing the grown-up vibe throughout the apartment. Centre stage in the dining room is a 2.5m-long Chinese antique cabinet, 230 years old and bought at auction in Shanghai specifically for the residence.

"We wanted to use an antique piece in a contemporary aesthetic," Wrightson says. "It's actually built into the wall. Our friend in China found the piece. She called and said, 'You've got to trust me. We're going to auction right now.' After she bought the cabinet she told us she'd been bidding against Bill Gates's personal assistant! So we felt lucky to get it."

cocktails at five, a drinks cabinet that lights up when opened and disappears into the wall when shut was also integrated into the room. "We like to have surprises in our walls," Wrightson says.

The duo pulled some distinctive pieces out of the design archive, such as the futuristic Taccla lamp and 1960s Platner armchair (main picture), the one with the steel wire spans – "the ultimate city chic chair", according to Wrightson. Carved Naka heads – decorative architectural elements from Thailand – are mounted on stone plinths. "The owners travel a lot and wanted the interior to reflect the places they've been," Stewart says.

But most crucial to the ambience is the mix of architectural, mood and task lighting. With a push of the "welcome home" button on the C-bus control system, artworks are lit and downlights and decorative lamps cast just the right amount of illumination to create the perfect evening mood. ■