



WEB-EXCLUSIVE HOME TOUR

## AD100 Designer Charles Zana Crafts a Chic London Apartment—Complete With a Jean Royère Ours Polaire Sofa

And a skylight that looks like the Guggenheim rotunda

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Photography by Matthieu Salvaing

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When [AD100 architect](#) and interior designer Charles Zana was tasked with fashioning a London apartment for a family of three, he didn't exactly have carte blanche. After all, his clients wanted a place to showcase their striking assemblage of American art and sculptural works. Zana opted to redesign the home in an American Shaker style, emphasizing form, proportion, and functionality. (Pine floors and white paneled walls created a restrained setting and perfect backdrop for the family's prized collection.)

In the antique glass-appointed living room, for instance, a leopard sculpture stands on the nude wood floors beneath a felt artwork by [Tom Wesselmann](#). Modern pieces hung along traditional paneling make for an eye-catching contrast. Nearby, the fireplace, which was crafted with green marble imported from India and a matte brass trim, imbues the space with both literal and figurative warmth.

Two pocket doors give way to the kitchen, where the subdued home takes a turn. “I wanted more of a dramatic kitchen than a technical one, so we decided on a Gio Ponti blue,” explains Zana. He adds that the entire kitchen is sort of an ode to the late Italian modernist. The backsplash tiles, for instance, are modeled after a design Ponti made for the exterior of a building in Italy. Because the firm had a connection with the factory, Zana was able to request a remake of the classic Carrara pieces.

Although the tone of the kitchen is a far cry from that of the living room, small elements tie the two together: The matte brass seen beneath the fireplace is also the material used to create the open kitchen shelving. The blue hue seen in the living room sofas ties in seamlessly with the color of the cabinets. Bespoke hand-dipped curtains add continuity throughout the home.

And yet, the commission was not purely about aesthetics. For Zana’s clients, creating a family-forward atmosphere was paramount. Zana therefore made the communal rooms central to increase the sense of openness and placed bedrooms at the periphery.



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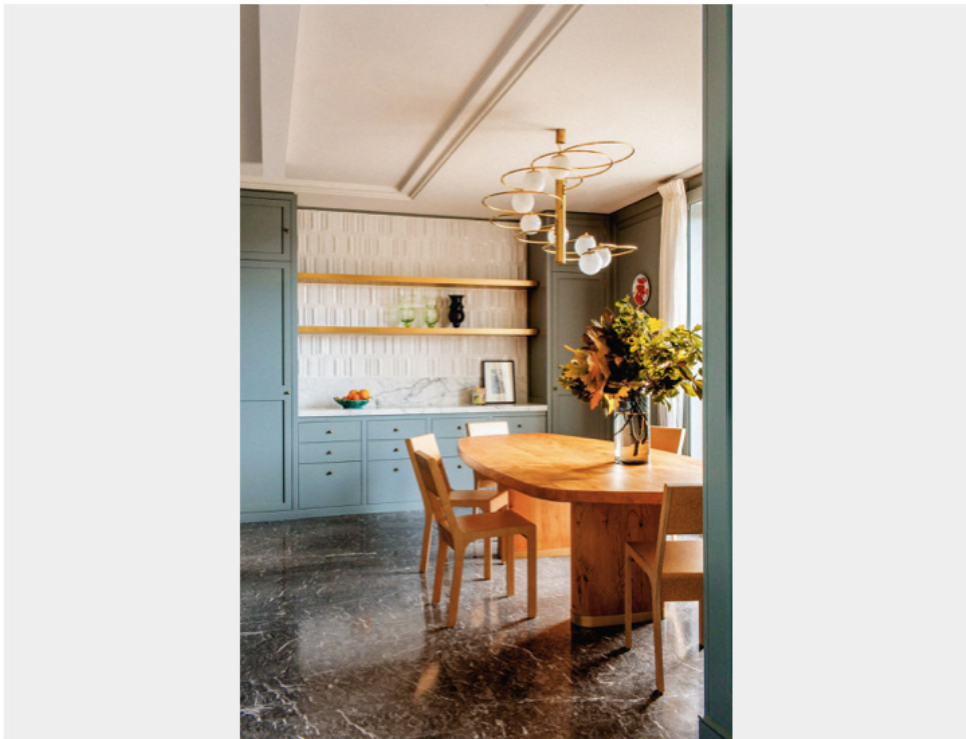
A [Giacomo Ravagli](#) lamp and Martin Szekely desk add a striking angularity to a living room corner. Opposite, a sculpture by [Antony Gormley](#) holds its ground. The photograph is by [Louise Lawler](#); the black painting is by Pierre Soulages.



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A broader look across the living room.

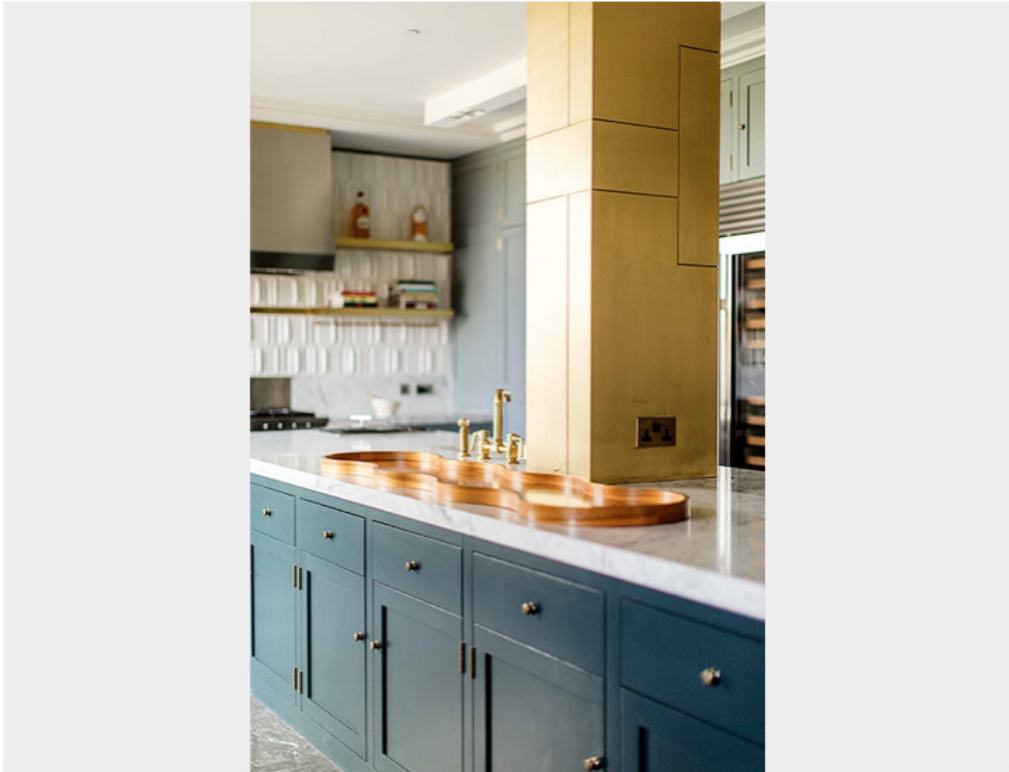


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"I like to install the kitchen in the best place," says Zana, noting that with the right placement, it can bring the family together. "If there is a garden view or a street view, I put it there." In the original layout, the kitchen had no windows. Now, with a view to the frequently gray skies of London, colorful was a must.





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In the kitchen, matte brass detailing features on the open shelves and columns. The kitchen sink is by [Waterworks](#).



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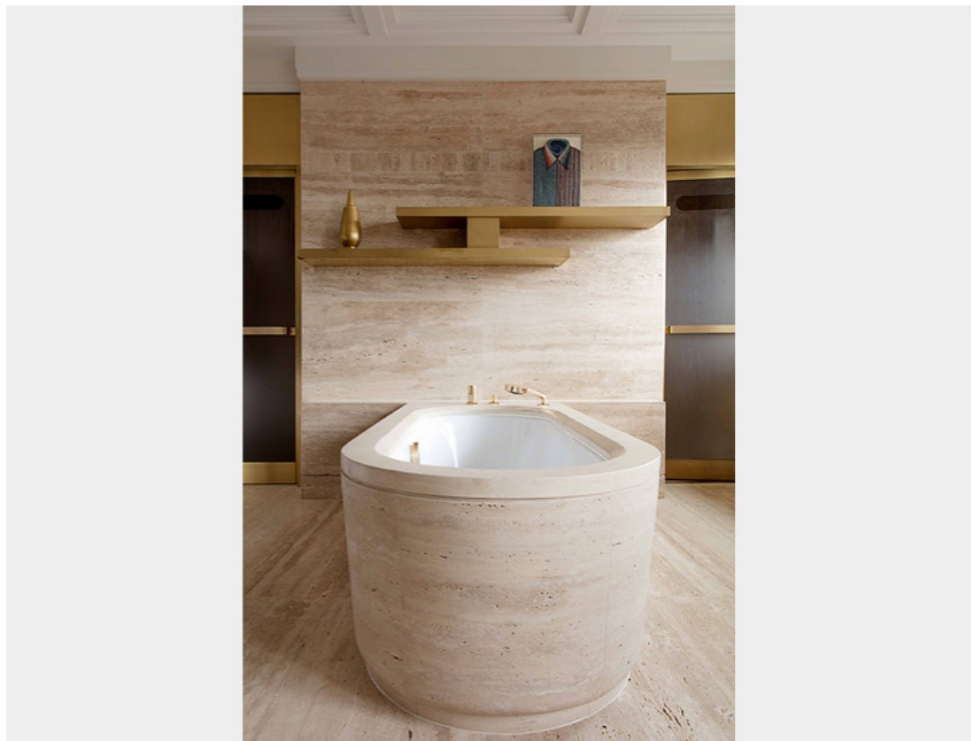
The dining room features a grand table originally conceived for meeting spaces. It was designed by [Jules Wabbes](#) during the 1950s.



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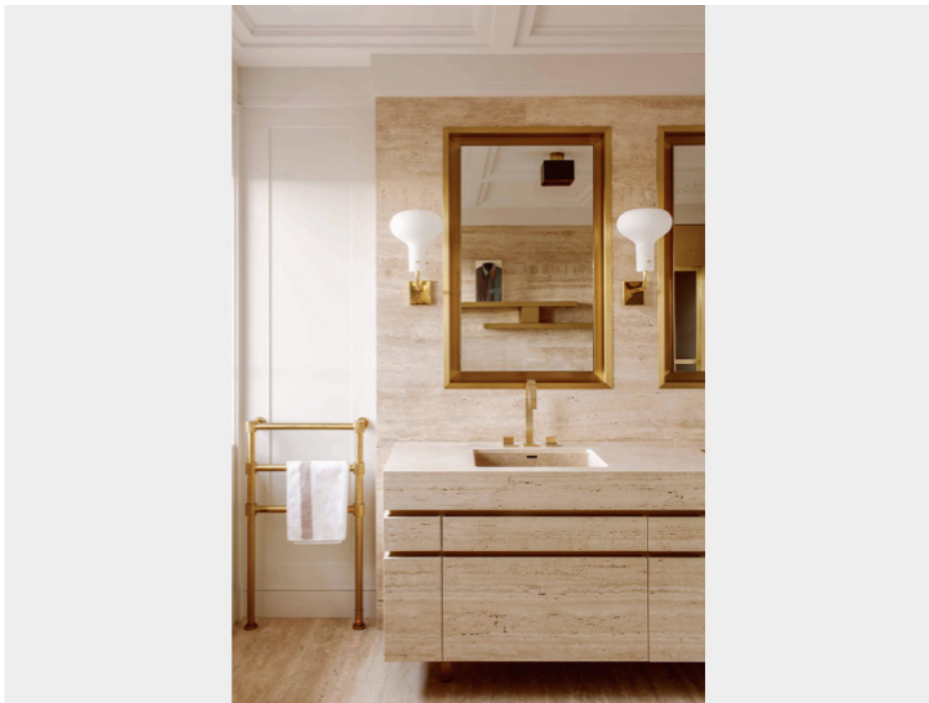
In the primary bedroom, a painting by [Sterling Ruby](#) hangs above the bed designed by Zana. Hand-dipped bespoke curtains were made in collaboration with [Dedar](#). Nonetheless, Jean Royère's famous Ours Polaires sofa can't help but steal the scene.



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A rough Roman travertine tub creates a textural contrast to the brushed brass finishings in the primary bath.



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Another look into the primary bath.

As a friend of the clients, Zana also knew that the primary bedroom was a particularly important area. When he suggested they transform the striking round room that had originally been the intended living area and convert it into their own private space, the couple was hesitant: “I had to convince them to take the best place in the apartment,” Zana recalls of the skylight-filled room.

Because the primary bedroom was the most stunning space inside the home, its furniture had to be up to snuff. Zana therefore opted to use the couple’s iconic Jean Royère Ours Polaire sofa in order to craft a cozy seating nook. Next to the design, a custom bed with a curved frame crafted by the architect fits snugly along the wall.

“We love to change people’s attitudes through our design,” the architect says. “By altering plans and layouts, you can define the way that people live.”