# **Sunlight and water views create a calming retreat above the Philadelphia waterfront**

“I get up in the morning and the sun’s pouring in from the east over the Ben Franklin Bridge,” said Steven Peikin, who lives with Amy Spicer in a Pier 3 condominium in Philadelphia.

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The magnificent views of the Delaware River sold Steven Peikin and Amy Spicer on their Pier 3 condominium at Penn’s Landing nine years ago. With a southeastern exposure, the two-story unit gets sunlight flooding into its many windows. Now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, seeing the water is especially calming.

Enter the condo, and sliding glass doors and a wall full of windows offer a view of the Delaware, with Camden in the distance. From the kitchen and dining area, a bank of windows faces Penn’s Landing and the Ben Franklin Bridge. Upstairs, the condo juts out 550 feet over the river, giving the illusion as you stare outside that you are floating above the water.

“I get up in the morning and the sun’s pouring in from the east over the Ben Franklin Bridge,” said Peikin, a gastroenterologist at Cooper Health. “And the rest of the place faces the south, so midday on, you get all that sun coming in.”

About 1½ years ago, the couple completely renovated the 3,000-square-foot unit, moving a couple of walls and starting fresh with new furniture and accessories. Now, four bedrooms include an oversized primary suite with an en suite bathroom and den, a large guest room with its own balcony, a yoga studio, office, laundry room, and 4½ bathrooms.

Decorating the space was no easy task for the couple, who have different styles. “He is very organized and orderly, and I’m all about how it makes you feel,” said Spicer, a reiki practitioner. “My style is very bohemian and his is very clean and classic.”

Said Peikin: “I wanted a seaside, on-the-water look.”

They depended on Christina Henck, owner and senior designer at Henck Design in Queen Village, to find a way to meld the differing styles into a cohesive look. She used natural finishes, including rattan, travertine, woven rugs and sea grass, to offset the clean, geometric patterns in draperies and metallic gold home accents.

“Everybody thinks they have pretty good taste, but let me tell you — that’s not always the case,” said Peikin, laughing. “Initially, I was putting my two cents in, but after a while, we put ourselves in her hands, and she did a fabulous job.”

The home is decorated in various shades of blue and ivory. Luxurious curtains and Roman shades add more than beauty when relief is sought from the sometimes blinding sun. Twelve-foot ceilings show exposed metal beams and ductwork that had been part of the original pier.

“From an architectural standpoint, it has a lot of interest,” Peikin said.

The condo’s first floor includes the den, kitchen, dining room and terrace with a wall of windows that look out over the river. Close to Pier 3 and by the shipping channel, the couple enjoy watching boats move by, from huge freighters to small pleasure craft.

The second floor is larger than the floor below, with spacious rooms and more magnificent views. In the office sit his-and-her desks, backed by an elegant floor-to-ceiling bookcase and staring out into the river. That spot was especially important when Peikin conducted telemedicine calls with patients during the spring lockdown.

“It was a place I could go to work that was very pleasant,” he recalled. “I concentrated on my patients, but it was a pleasant way to do business.”

They spend much of their time in the den off their bedroom by the cozy fireplace, staring at their calming view from comfortable suede swivel chairs.

“It has maybe the best look in the city,” Peikin said. “You can see the city to the right, down the river to the Walt Whitman Bridge.”

The couple saved only two keepsakes from before the renovation — a metal wall sculpture and a high-end Oriental rug. Peikin had bought the wall hanging at a Rittenhouse Square art show. They hung the sculpture in an alcove in the living room and put the rug below their bed.

The Pier 3 condominiums offer amenities including a heated pool, open year-round, a gym, garage and communal deck.

“I love the location,” Spicer said. “You can walk into the city, and you can walk down to the water. I love being able to sit at the kitchen counter and watch the dog park and all the young parents with their little children at Penn’s Landing.”

The home has become the couple’s retreat. Spicer practices reiki there and feels the comfort and coziness of the space.

“The apartment is completely spacious,” she said. “The water is really healing, and it’s beautiful.”

Said Peikin: “Since the renovations, I really enjoy coming home more. I didn’t realize that I would get such pleasure out of living in such a nicely designed home. It has increased the quality of my life.”

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