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# HOME RUN

UP IN THEIR TRIBECA PENTHOUSE,  
BASEBALL STAR MIKE PIAZZA  
AND HIS WIFE, ALICIA, KICK BACK IN NO-  
FUSS, NO-MUSS STYLE

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Facing page: Mike and Alicia Piazza at their Tribeca penthouse, which Alicia decorated; Mike designed the custom-made Holly Hunt mirror. This page: A pair of Armani/Casa Sydney sofas, a metal-mesh standing lamp by José Esteves for Interieurs, and Pál B. Stock's painting, *Ice*, in the living area. See Resources.





**MIKE PIAZZA** may have left Manhattan and the Mets to play for the San Diego Padres last year—he's now with the Oakland A's—but when he heads back to New York, baseball's best-hitting catcher of all time still gets royal treatment. Fans greet him and his wife, Alicia, when they step out for a stroll, and like any well-mannered sports hero, Piazza often stops to sign autographs.

"New York is such a dynamic city that it was a no-brainer for Alicia and me to keep our home here," says Piazza, who also has an apartment in Miami and a brand-new place in the Bay Area.

A rooftop loft, however, wasn't exactly the pied-à-terre the couple had in mind when they got married in a candlelit wedding two years ago. Thinking they would just downsize from Mike's balconied bachelor pad on Gramercy Park to a smaller, cozier place that might be more suitable for raising a family (Alicia is expecting their first child), the pair actually ended up swapping one swell penthouse for another, this one a spacious two-bedroom duplex in a converted early-20th-century commercial building in Tribeca.

"I saw this apartment and called Mike, who jumped on a plane in the middle of spring training to come see it," says Alicia, an actress who is now studying for a degree in child psychology. The couple made an offer on the spot, and Piazza headed back to the dugout the next day.

At nearly 3,000 square feet, the penthouse is actually larger than the Gramercy Park place they left behind. "This is downsizing," the catcher jokes. What captivated the bicoastal dynamic duo wasn't the square footage or the sweeping river views, but the built-in architectural drama. The centerpiece of the apartment is an airy, 30-foot-high space with an open kitchen and dining and living areas linked by gleaming expanses of luxe American walnut. Overhead, a frosted-glass catwalk leads to the master bedroom while walls of windows pour light inside from two terraces. Best of all, as far as its new owners are concerned, is the cantilevered steel staircase that hovers in midair like a zigzag sculpture. "We fell in love with that detail right away," says Alicia, whose father is an architect. A staircase, she adds, is "one





In the living area, an Antoine bamboo cocktail table and a kama-gong bench from Interieurs, and an Oreste oak-and-leather side table by Armani/Casa; the floor is American walnut finished with tung oil, and the custom-made wool-blend rug came from Piazza's Gramercy Park apartment and was cut down to size and edged in suede. See Resources.







A pair of Willy armchairs flank an African carved-wood table, both from Intérieurs, in the entrance; the rug is made of zebra hide, and the Pam bar stools are from Ligne Roset. Facing page, from top: A steel-and-glass catwalk leads to the master bedroom and a terrace. The fold-down desk in the entrance was custom made of stingray, ostrich, and snakeskin by R & Y Augousti. See Resources.







of the hardest things to execute well. It's like a ballerina en pointe, balancing on top of a pole."

Built in 1910, the brick-faced commercial building was converted into loft apartments by the Piazzas' friend Mark Mancinelli and the architecture team of Claudia Kianoury and Marianne Hyde, who worked in collaboration with Stas Zakrzewski. "I'm a huge history buff, and I love the history of this city, this neighborhood with all the 19th-century cast-iron buildings," says Mike. "It's so charming."

With no walls to move, plumbing to reconfigure, or tiles to select and reject—the architectural team was brought back to execute some postpurchase tinkering, however, including a more gracious redesign of the main terrace—Alicia devoted her time to whipping up the interiors as her hectic class schedule and family travel allowed. "Mike has always admired modern architecture and clean lines," she says. "We both dislike clutter, so we agreed that we wanted the interiors to be contemporary."

Clean-lined doesn't mean playing it totally safe. Amid the Ultrasuede-clad chairs and linen-covered







The Madison dining table and bench are by Desiron, the Stockholm dining chairs are from Intérieurs, the free-form bowls are Indonesian, and the walls and floor are American walnut. Facing page, clockwise from top: A Viking double oven, range, and hood; the sink fittings are by Grohe, and the countertop is cast concrete. A temperature-controlled wine cellar lined with slate and Portuguese cork; the shelves are blackened steel. The Havana table and armchairs on the main terrace are by Brown Jordan, and the spiral staircase leads to a roof deck. See Resources.





A Bold bed by Flou and Lisa Galimberti  
linens in the master bedroom;  
the Edo armchair is by Armani/Casa,  
and the television is Panasonic.  
Facing page: Grohe shower fittings  
and polished-concrete walls in the  
master bathroom. See Resources.







"MIKE HAS ALWAYS ADMIRED MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND CLEAN LINES," SAYS ALICIA PIAZZA. "WE BOTH DISLIKE CLUTTER, SO WE AGREED THAT WE WANTED THE INTERIORS TO BE CONTEMPORARY"

sofas that Alicia found at Armani/Casa, Intérieurs, and Ligne Roset—"I pieced it all together with their help," she says, referring to the in-store designers she called on for advice—are a few textural curiosities. In the entrance, an African carved-wood table stands atop a zebra hide, and instead of standard-issue lighting for the living room, Alicia settled on eye-catching metal-mesh floor lamps by designer José Esteves that look part chandelier, part sculpture. In one corner is an Art Deco-style desk sheathed in stingray and ostrich, and Asian artifacts are on subtle display, from a 19th-century Thai elephant bell to a Buddha head from the 1920s.

Upstairs, a platform bed upholstered in white linen floats in the middle of the master bedroom. The nearby terrace was reorganized to accommodate a built-in barbecue grill and two teak banquettes. From here, an exterior spiral staircase—climbed by everyone from the fashion designer Valentino to

former-pitcher-turned-broadcaster Al Leiter—leads to a 600-square-foot roof deck that overlooks the Hudson River and downtown Manhattan. "It's great for parties on summer nights," Alicia explains (a temperature-controlled wine cellar also comes in handy when it's time to entertain).

Though she did most of the heavy lifting, aesthetically speaking, her husband's input is difficult to miss, and the floor-to-ceiling stereo cabinet is packed with a professional rocker's equipment. (Piazza is an amateur musician who has appeared with the heavy-metal bands Overkill and Black Label Society.) And the master suite includes a steam shower that can go from 0 to 120 degrees in less than a minute and a sliding teak wall that opens to spectacular bird's-eye views. The spot is sybaritic, yes, but playful, too. "This bedroom suite is so comfortable, and it has a really great vibe," says Piazza. "It's like our own little tree house." ■