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## STEAMED AND FOLDED

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# OOH LA LA!

With its parquetry and plaster work, this apartment in Jardine's Lookout channels the joie de vivre of 19th-century Paris.

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**I**n the coveted residential neighbourhood of Jardine's Lookout, on Hong Kong Island, a remodelled 1,100-square-foot apartment has been imbued with clean, modern lines and the elegance and style of a Parisian Haussmann loft.

It's the handiwork of Hong Kong interior designer Clement Cheng, who was commissioned to create a spacious and bright contemporary home with a dash of French elegance for his discerning client.

The Haussmann architecture and interior design style takes its name from Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann, who carried out one of the most successful city renovations of all time, in Paris, from 1853 to 1870. Haussmann interiors evoke an atmosphere best described as "regal but practical", characterised by perfect alignment and symmetry, parquet floors and intricate plasterwork mouldings. Some of these features were adopted by Cheng to

bring the sophisticated Haussmann spirit to the Jardine's Lookout apartment.

He began by demolishing all the existing non-structural walls and rearranging the floor plan to ensure every millimetre of space was put to work to meet the family's needs. He relocated the guest bathroom to enlarge the living and dining area, and converted one of the bedrooms into a walk-in closet and a new guest bathroom. The revised layout is a flexible space accommodating an open-plan living and dining area, breakfast bar, open kitchen, two bedrooms, a walk-in wardrobe, guest bathroom, study corner, laundry room, helper's room and balcony.

Cheng introduced subtle Haussmann features such as simplified classical plaster mouldings along the ceilings and walls, as well as a faux marbled fireplace – a common feature in >>

Parisian homes – and herringbone parquet floors.

A large glazed vintage mirror bought in New York was placed above the fireplace to mimic the feel of a historical French home. The mirror helps to open up the space by increasing light dispersion and making the room brighter. For child safety, Cheng ensured all the corners of both walls and furniture were rounded and smooth.

Stunning wallpaper hints at dreamy Charles Perrault fairytales. In the living area, the birds and flowers on the emerald-green painted-silk wall covering from de Gournay's Chinoiserie collection transport one to a mythical oriental garden. In the master bedroom, a life-sized wisteria print on cream-coloured wallpaper – also from de Gournay – creates a soothing, restful feminine ambience, while simple taupe- and white-stripped wallpaper adds youthful energy to the son's room.

“Classical mouldings and lines add sophistication and French flair to the space. The handcrafted wallpaper by de Gournay in the living room, which is printed on emerald green silk, acts as an eye-catching feature wall in the living and dining areas. This interesting wall is complimented by a Chinese wedding cabinet, from Bowerbird, a custom-made oval dining table, green velvet dining chairs from Tequila Kola, and a low television console unit,” says Cheng, who selected only high-quality, texturally luxuriant materials.

To counterbalance the classical French elements, transparent Kartell chairs add a touch of the avant-garde and a sense of lightness. Most loose furnishings were custom-made for the project, and for lighting, Cheng chose a simple art deco-style Kelly Wearstler chandelier and Jonathan Adler brass wall sconces. He also chose art deco tiles for the bathroom walls and the balcony floor.

**“The owner wanted to feel as if she was in Paris the moment she stepped into her flat. She is also an avid equestrian, so I built a custom saddle rack where she could display her tack in the living room. At the entrance is a James Nares painting, which adds a little more modernity to the classical concept,” Cheng says.**

For the parquetry, he chose rich, brown walnut with dark highlights to make the floors warm and inviting. “Herringbone patterns can also be seen in some of the fabrics, like cushions and curtains used in the apartment. Beautiful Claybrook marble mosaics on the bathroom feature walls demonstrate the level of quality and craftsmanship in this home,” Cheng says.

“What we've created is a comfortable and cosy home with plenty of classical French motifs. It doesn't look like a typical apartment in Hong Kong. Once you enter the apartment, you feel as if you are in a Parisian home, except you have the Victoria Harbour view as the backdrop.” ■

