

# INSIDEOUT

HOME | DESIGN | GARDEN | REAL ESTATE



## UPSCALE GETAWAY

Customized Four Seasons condo makes a chic weekend retreat



### INSIDE

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# INSIDEOUT

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## A high-end New Orleans retreat

This week, we get a peek inside a condo in the luxe Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences New Orleans, where owners Marilyn and Glen Smith brought in designer Monique Breaux to make the place into a chic contemporary weekend retreat. Lee Cutrone takes us inside on Page 14.

Feibleman's was the epitome of contemporary shopping back in the '30s, when the local retailer part-

nered with Sears for a new five-story building on Baronne and Common streets. The advent of the suburban shopping mall brought the store's demise, but the building lives on. See Mike Scott's column on Page 8.



Karen Taylor Gist

And finally, trees are the giants of the landscape, but they're not invincible. Garden columnist Dan Gill offers some tips on keeping them safe and healthy. That's on Page 10.

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## Tell us about your spaces

InsideOut's mission is to give readers peeks inside the many different ways that people in the New Orleans area live. We profile spaces that are opulent, or just off-beat; sophisticated or simple; functional or light-hearted; historic or brand-spanking new. And anything in between.

Please help us by sending information and JPEG photos of your home, or specific spaces inside it, to [insideout@theadvocate.com](mailto:insideout@theadvocate.com). We love gardens and outdoor spaces, too. And we're waiting to hear from you.

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PROVIDED PHOTOS BY SARA ESSEX BRADLEY



**CLOCKWISE FROM**

**ABOVE LEFT:** The slipper tub in the master bath sits in front of a surface painted by a Milan artist to look like a beautifully veined, glossy slab of natural stone.

Luxurious Calcutta luccioso marble adds hints of gold to the bar top and backsplash. A motorized shelf can be raised or lowered on demand to conceal liquor.

The living room's main wall went from a flat surface to multidimensional and illuminated with the addition of a back-lit floating wall.



COVER STORY

# CUSTOM CONDO

## Layering and texture are key to the contemporary vibe

BY LEE CUTRONE  
Contributing writer

Spectacular views of the Mississippi River, an iconic downtown building painstakingly restored and renovated, and a prestigious five-star hotel brand known the world over were a perfect trifecta of selling points when LaPlace residents Marilyn and Glen Smith decided to buy a second home in New Orleans for themselves and their grown daughter. In a city not known for high-rise living, the combination of location, landmark and luxury found at the Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences New Orleans stood apart from the other options.

“The Four Seasons has been a favorite location around the country for both personal and business travel, so when we had the opportunity to get involved with the Four Seasons Private Residences New Orleans, we thought it was a great deal,” said Glen Smith, owner and CEO of The Magnolia Companies of Louisiana, based in St. Rose. “The family gets away as often as possible, including weekends, to relax and enjoy all the amenities that the Four Seasons has to offer.”

Those amenities include several top-tier restaurants, a fashionable ground-floor bar, a pool, a health club, a spa, room service and a private package closet for convenient deliveries outside of each condo.

Originally designed as the International Trade Mart by modernist architect Edward Durrell Stone in the 1960s, the 33-story building at the foot of Canal Street now has the distinction of being the first hotel-



Crera marble kitchen counters up to a clean and contemporary look.

serviced residential building in New Orleans, and the private residential units boast the highest elevations of any homes in the city.

The Smiths hired interior designer Monique Breaux, principal designer of Posh Exclusive Interiors in Lafayette, to take the two-bedroom condo from basic to bespoke, in a manner that incorporates the character of the city.

Breaux, a Louisiana native whose portfolio has included numerous projects in Manhattan over the years, says condos and high-rises are her “comfort zone.”

She introduced a contemporary viewpoint that is a departure from the traditional French antiques of the clients’ main residence but is in

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A custom baquette is topped by an abstract painting from local artist Tony Mose of Esom Gallery. The office can be seen at right, with a large textured artwork by Charles Marksberry.



## CUSTOM

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sync with the streamlined interiors of the Four Seasons properties.

“The design aligns seamlessly with the aesthetic the Four Seasons represents across the globe,” said Breaux.

Because Breaux came in during the construction phase, she was able to upgrade some of the condo’s standard elements with one-of-a-kind features. The wood floors, Carrera marble kitchen counters, kitchen appliances and master bath fixtures, already in place, remained. But Breaux worked with her husband, contractor Tim Breaux, and the Four Seasons to modify existing features and add to the buildout.

She had soffits opened for new strategically placed recessed

lighting and new wiring installed for a smart home system. In the bathrooms, she extended tile that stopped midway up the wall to the ceiling. Where possible, she halted installation of yet-to-be-completed surfaces and fixtures, such as the powder room’s tile, vanity and commode, in order to outfit the room with a newly curated mix of elevated designer selections.

Customization begins at the front door, where Breaux reconceived the standard two-bedroom condo model’s coat closet as an elegant wet bar with an extra-deep, polished Calcutta luuccoso countertop and a motorized shelf that can be raised and lowered on demand to conceal liquor bottles. She designed the bar to be functional but also to create a memorable impression.

“People like a wow moment,” said Laura Sanders, of the Four Seasons Private Residences New



**ABOVE:** Elegant textural wallpaper and headboard add panache to the neutral bedroom.

**LEFT:** The jazz-themed sculpture by artist Paul Wegner was brought from the Smiths’ main residence and is one of the couple’s favorite pieces.

PROVIDED PHOTOS BY SARA ESSEX BRADLEY

Orleans sales team. “It’s all about the details.”

Layering and texture are key to the enhancements. The living room’s main wall went from a flat surface to multidimensional and illuminated with the addition of a back-lit floating wall. A wall to the left of the front door is now embellished with cube-shaped fixtures of burnished brass — precisely arranged to create a diamond grid of light.

In the master bath, Breaux transformed a plain wall behind the slipper tub with what looks like a beautifully veined, glossy slab of natural stone, but is actually a painted surface by an artist from Milan.

Most of the furnishings in the condo are neutral in color. Breaux used a variety of textures to add interest and comfort, and curved shapes (barrel-back upholstered chairs and round coffee tables for instance) to soften the angles of the 1,800-square-foot space.

In what would have been a white powder room, she paid homage to local culture by using a Saints-inspired palette of black and gold. The room includes glamorous relief-like tile by Versace and a white stone floating mirror by Roberto Cavalli above a black matte vanity custom-made in London. Even the toilet paper is black.

The guest bedroom was built around an abstract, Mardi Gras-colored painting that Breaux commissioned for the room from artist Charles Marksberry. In the living room, there is a New Orleans jazz-themed sculpture by artist Paul Wegner that came from the Smiths’ main residence and is one of the couple’s favorite pieces. Breaux also included abstract works by local artists Tony Mose in the condo design.

The Smiths love the sophistication, serenity and modern stylings of the interior design and never tire of the framework provided by the historic building and the city itself.

“The view of the mighty Mississippi, the Crescent City Connection and the cruise ships coming in and out of the fabulous Port of New Orleans is a view that never gets old,” said the homeowners. “No matter how many times you’ve seen it, it still takes your breath away.”



**ABOVE:** Elegant Versace relief tiles are the backgroup for white Cavalli stone attached to a backlit mirror.

**LEFT:** A small but functional office area includes a large piece of textured artwork by Charles Marksberry.