



REAL estate

top-selling properties

The Ritz Fits

Couple trade their suburban house for a posh city residence

BY MARIE GULLARD
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After 30 years in three different northern Baltimore County residences, Maxine Blume decided it was time for a change. Since all of her previous houses were resales, the 54-year-old Long & Foster Realtor promised herself a newly built home. In addition, she and her husband, Dr. Michael Blume, a gastroenterologist at Good Samaritan Hospital, also wanted a change of venue: the city as opposed to the suburbs.

Last September, the couple moved into their dream home at the newly opened Ritz-Carlton Residences at Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

With views of water and skyline instead of backyards and drive-ways, the new home has all of the excitement and advantages of city living just steps beyond the beautifully appointed, marble lobby. "In summer, you can hear all of the concerts at Pier 6," she said. "We



Michael and Maxine Blume have a living room full of eclectic furnishings, including brocade sofas and a shag rug over Brazilian cherry wood floors, at the recently opened Ritz-Carlton Residences.

leave the patio door and windows open."

When the couple's pristine, 2,800-square-foot residence calls out for decorating touches, Maxine Blume walks across the street to an antiques emporium or to nearby Federal Hill, where nifty boutiques line the streets of the historic neighborhood.

Back home, the Blumes enjoy private elevator access into their vestibule, which is a recent recipient of new furnishings. Here, a burning candle with a rich scent sits on a marble-topped, cast-iron credenza. On the opposite wall, a framed gilt mirror reflects hanging architectural prints.

This residence is "perfect for two people," Maxine Blume said, pointing out the open, circular layout that sprawls from the foyer and gallery to a north and south wing, each with a bedroom and bath. The kitchen has Italian ceramic flooring



and stainless Viking appliances.

Maxine Blume is content to take her decorating projects slowly as she and her husband enjoy the amenities of Ritz-Carlton living.

"You can do 50 things a day here," she said, referring to the use of the Ritz-Carlton's spa and indoor pool, along with its happy hours, pot luck dinners, movie theater, card-playing groups and video room. "My husband comes home from [the hospital] each day earlier than he ever has."

DREAM ELEMENT: City and water views.

DESIGN INSPIRATION: Vintage. Beige is the dominant color. A pair of traditional brocade sofas and a shag rug are placed over Brazilian cherry wood floors in the living room. The couple's collection of artwork, assembled over the years, includes a framed Erte lithograph, Alphonse Mucha prints and several large framed posters, one being the distinctive Tattinger advertisement. An antique, glass cabinet is filled with vintage Rene Lalique perfume bottles.

SURPRISE FEATURE: Noting that every area of the home is meant for



comfort, Maxine Blume made it a point to have a large, flat-screen TV in her living room of eclectic furnishings.

PERSONAL TOUCH: Maxine Blume put her dining room adjacent to the kitchen in an area intended as a media room. The floor plan's suggested dining room, across the hall from the kitchen, is a comfortable den/office for her husband.

DESIGN TIP: Make rooms do double duty. The second bedroom, for their daughter who is away at college, is also Maxine Blume's office, an area she will take over completely when her daughter moves out.

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