



# SHADOW CHIC

Glamour and personality were the inspiration for this chilled-out apartment



A warm, comfortable décor was favoured over cold, stark minimalism. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Being an accomplished interior designer meant that Craig Spencer was creatively equipped to renovate and redecorate the two-storey apartment that is his private residence.

**“HIGH DECORATION** and softness were the key elements, moving away from the starkness of the high-back sofas and square chairs and well away from the look and feel of minimalism,” said Craig Spencer of his newly refurbished apartment. As the owner of the apartment, Craig was able to apply all of the techniques and ideas he has had boiling in his head into his own home, and the result is quite spectacular.

The building is a rendered four-storey apartment block with a commercial space on the ground floor. Built in 2001, the two-storey-

high apartment consists of a lobby foyer with internal access.

The refurbishment was produced in an existing mezzanine shell. New lighting, window treatments, joinery, furniture and rugs were selected from an architectural point of view. “The canvas was there to be worked with — straight white walls and clean lines were transformed,” he says.

Craig wanted to make sure the home was comfortable and although there are many design elements in the space, the main

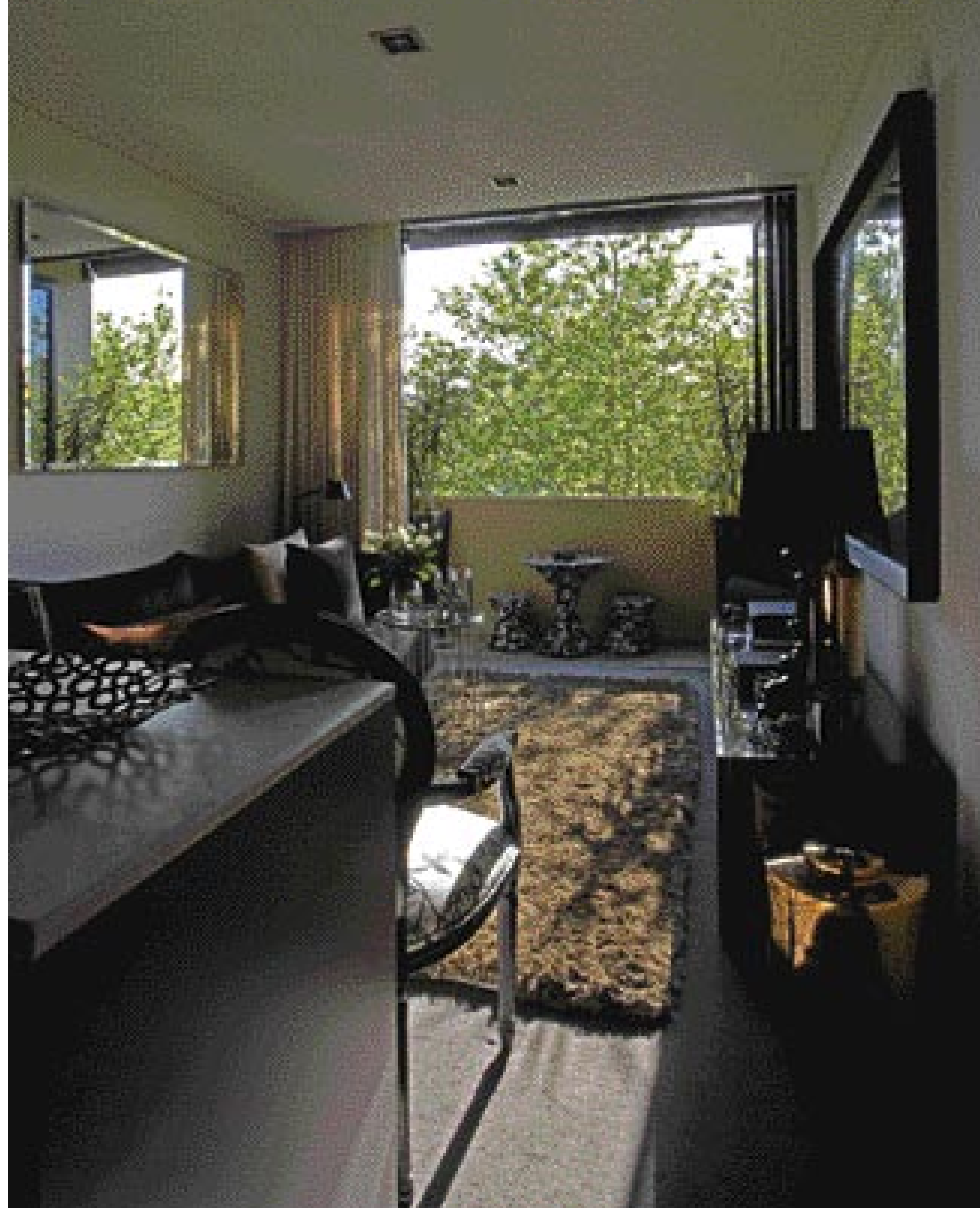


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objective was for every part to be completely functional and relaxed. "There was a purposeful shift from minimalism to high decoration, based on current design trends and contemporary design/decoration shifts," he says of the overtly embellished areas.

Yet this element is never too much. Craig has managed to balance the use of materials with the colours and texture choices, opting for black and greys with plush materials, such as in the velvety rug in the living area and the gloss of the Bourgie lamp on a side table.

These touches create a totally luxurious experience. "It's an evening place, a space to



**ABOVE & RIGHT** Craig chose all the lighting, drapery, joinery, furniture and flooring for the apartment to suit his self-imposed design brief. **OPPOSITE PAGE** The balance of colour and texture in the apartment is achieved by pairing blacks, browns and greys with complementary prints, patterns and fabrics.



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unwind and relax; it has a hotel-like luxurious feel and reflects a romantic hideaway. I wanted the space to be glamorous and seductive," says Craig, who has used sheer curtains to create hauntingly beautiful shadows at night.

Precious older items were mixed with shiny new ones for the renovation and the same finishes were applied to the older pieces to bring them up to date. "Polyurethane finishes and contemporary upholstery is used on pieces

of furniture such as the Louis chair to breathe new life into the old," Craig commented.

The size of the apartment restricted the placement of some furniture but this has been worked around with a commonsense layout where space is maximised (also through custom joinery), and proportion has been kept balanced.

"The methodology was to create a space totally for me, using my chosen style and



Sheer curtains on the windows control light during the day and conjure interesting shadow shapes after dark. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Low lighting and a dark colour scheme projects a sense of dream-like mystery onto the space.

without limits," says Craig. And that's just what a home should be about — somewhere you can relax and be yourself.

One of the best things about working on his own project was also the budget limitation. "There was no budget and I stopped when I had what I wanted, however everything has a cap of course." Craig also raises a good point when he says, "Is a decorator's home ever finished?" Indeed! **CHD**

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