

RENOVATION RESCUE

Architect Luca Andrisani revives a post-Courtney Love loft and reveals solutions to preventing and rebounding from remodeling disaster

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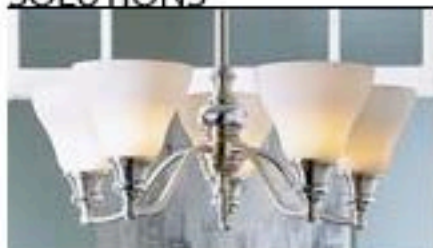
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VIDEO

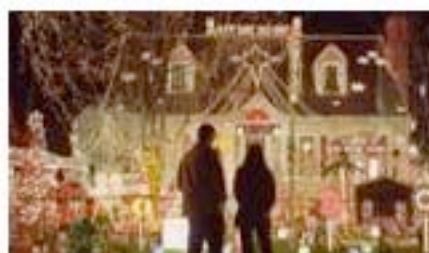


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RENOVATION RESCUE: The Post-Courtney Love Loft

Architect Luca Andrisani revives a loft from the punk rock aftermath and reveals solutions to preventing and rebounding from remodeling disaster

Written by Carla Jordan

While remodeling a 4,000-square-foot New York City loft that had been dramatically vacated by punk rocker Courtney Love amidst a flurry of tabloid media reports, Luca Andrisani was humming anything but a carefree tune. First, the space, located in a prewar paper factory building, was in less than pristine condition. The owners had made the split decision to convert open space into modular units. Plumbing was to be added to a wall of tangled pipes. And the ancient clanking fireplace needed to be stifled once and for all. Fortunately, Andrisani—who has led projects for some of the world's most exclusive high-end names like Louis Vuitton, [Prada](#), Fendi and Dior—saved the day with fast thinking and some creative spin.

Problem #1: Adding Walls and Losing Light

The loft was limited to windows along opposite ends so any interior walled rooms would be dark as a cave.

Solution:

- Frequently-used rooms were positioned by the wall windows so natural light always fills them. Walls are tall pivoting doors and screens that enable rooms to easily transition from private to open and let daylight to interior areas.
- Adding large doorways lets light pass through while still giving the feeling of an enclosed space.

Disaster Prevention:

Natural light is among a home's most important assets; don't hesitate to think outside the box and try something unconventional to preserve it.

Problem #2: Pipe and Duct Obstacles

When workers opened up the walls and ceiling where the new bathrooms were to be created, they unexpectedly found pipes and huge ducts running everywhere through walls and air handlers in the ceiling.

Solution:

- The master bath plan was tweaked to offset walls so the ceiling could remain operable for air handlers (which could not be moved).
- The guest bathroom floor was raised and the toilet placement shifted so that the existing wall piping would reach it.

Disaster Prevention:

- Demolition is the ultimate reveal so to limit surprises, don't take anyone's word. Make sure your architect and [contractor](#) are working with updated plans and have ample opportunity to check out the space prior to work starting.
- Include emergency funds in the budget to accommodate unforeseen changes along the way.

Problem #3 Cacophonous Fireplace

A simple duct modification was initially planned to transform the existing gas fireplace into a taller, slimmer version. However, a flip of the switch revealed a non-working fireplace so noisy that a bed pillow had to be used to stop the airflow from creating strange sounds.

Solution:

- To reduce the noise problem and fix the air drain, a fan was placed at the top of the fireplace, which drastically improved airflow.

The Ultimate Disaster Prevention

- Before signing on the dotted line, walk the space and confirm working conditions by turning everything on. If something doesn't work or makes odd sounds, bring in your contractor to check it out and give an estimate on repairs or replacement. Have your broker alter your purchase contract to require the current owner to make repairs prior to closing or knock down the selling price enough to cover the product replacement and labor expenses.

VIEW THE GALLERY ▶





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Before: The Wide-Open Space

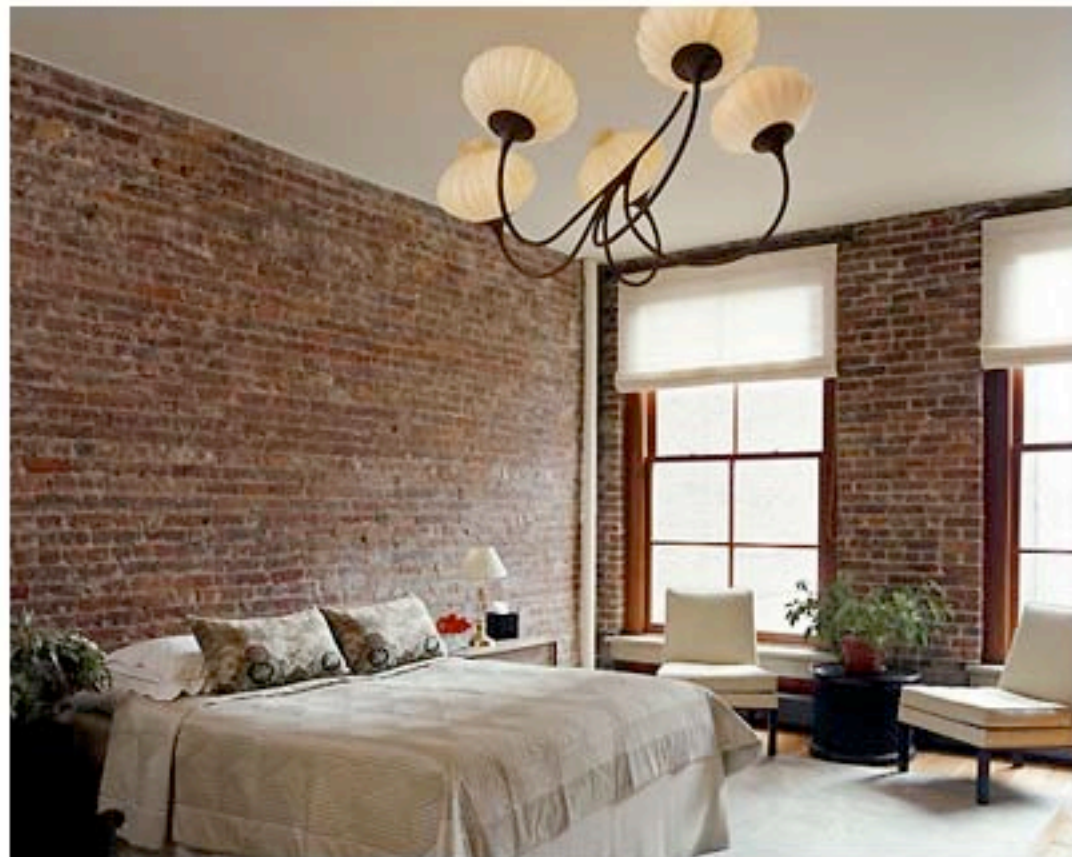
Prior to the remodel, the loft had floor-to-ceiling windows on opposing walls that filled the space with natural light but the [homeowner's](#) plans to create a modular space risked creating a cave-like feel. Architect Luca Andrisani was presented with the challenge: How to create rooms without the losing light.

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Post-Renovation

The added framework gives structure and warmth to the old overly-open space. Here, the clanking fireplace crackles quietly, light streams in, and the space is more inviting than Courtney Love would have ever planned.





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Creating Rooms and Keeping Light

Most frequently used rooms were placed on the opposite ends of the loft next to the windows to take advantage of natural light and maintain an open loft feel. The [bedroom](#) was also placed next to the windows to take advantage of natural light and maintain an open, airy feel.



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Solution to Open but Private Space

Rich wood grain walls are really practical pivot [doors](#). They close to create intimate space and fold back when the owners are craving the open-feel of their loft.

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Clever Shelves

A room divider with peek-a-boo shelves is also an unconventional way to provide natural light to the inner rooms of the loft.



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Over-sized Doorways

The library is a cozy floating modular "room within a room." It was cleverly designed to receive natural light via two spacious doorways. Without feeling confining, the space acts as a hideaway within the larger structure.





05-Andrisani-master-bath-be.jpg



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Before and After: Bathroom

A solution to the massive amount of bulky pipes and ducts was to offset the master bath walls so the ceiling wouldn't be too low.

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Before and After: Fireplace

Adding a fan atop the fireplace to improve airflow, then building out the facade was more practical than ripping out the entire fireplace to fix its existing problems.





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