



Serenity

in the City



In the hustle and bustle of New York City, it's hard to find a place to relax and unwind. So, when Amanda Chan, DDS and Raymond Cho, DDS, decided to open their practice, Meridian Dental Group, in Midtown Manhattan, they set out to make it a quiet oasis for their patients and their staff.

Through smart use of space, a light and airy color palette and modern design, Drs. Chan and Cho converted the basic 1,149-square-foot office space into a spa-like retreat. They've also carefully selected their staff members to create a warm and welcoming experience for patients. "We want the patients to know that we are happy to see them," said Dr. Chan. "Our patients always say we make going to the dentist a better experience."

Selecting the Right Space

Dr. Chan and Dr. Cho met and began dating in 2001 at New York University College of Dentistry, where they were both studying. Dr. Cho graduated in 2002 and completed his Dental General Practice Residency (GPR) at Long Island College Hospital, while Dr. Chan finished her final year of dental school. When she graduated, the couple decided to move to Los Angeles, Calif., where Dr. Chan grew up. They married in 2005 and practiced in California as associates for about two and a half years.

They both missed big city life and decided to move back to New York in 2006. Dr. Chan was an associate for a few months; she then rented a dental chair in a practice for two days a week, slowly building up her clientele. At the same time, Dr. Cho worked with various practices throughout the city as an associate. In the spring of 2008, the couple decided it was time to open their own practice: Dr. Chan had outgrown her two-day schedule and Dr. Cho wanted to build a practice of his own. »

PRACTICE PROFILE

DENTAL PRACTICE

Meridian Dental Group
New York, N.Y.

Dr. Amanda Chan
Dr. Raymond Cho

OFFICE

Square feet: 1,149

OPERATORY EQUIPMENT

- A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization Center
- A-dec Cabinetry
- A-dec Chairs, Lights, Stools and Units
- Air Techniques AirStar 30 Oil-Free Air Compressor
- Air Techniques VacStar 50 Vacuum System
- CAESY Enterprise System
- EagleSoft Practice Management Software
- Midmark M11 Sterilizer
- PLANMECA Intra Intraoral X-ray
- PLANMECA ProMax Digital X-ray
- Satelec Integrated Newtron SP Scaler
- Acteon Sopro 617 Intraoral Camera
- Schick Digital Sensors
- Solmetex Hg5 Amalgam Separator





The first – and most challenging – step to starting their practice was finding a space in Manhattan. A top priority for both doctors was an office with abundant windows, preferably that faced the street and not another building. With the help of a broker, they began viewing office space and found the perfect location in a multi-level building on 46th street in Midtown Manhattan, located near Grand Central Station and Rockefeller Plaza. Unfortunately, another company swooped in and outbid the doctors on the space.

Disappointed, but not discouraged, Drs. Chan and Cho continued their search. They discovered that a space was available in the same building a few floors up. Though the space wasn't quite what they'd hoped for, not wanting to hold up the process any longer, they decided to make an offer. Luckily, before they put in the bid, the offer on the first space fell through and they signed a lease on it for their new practice. "We fought hard for this space and we're lucky we found it," said Dr. Cho.

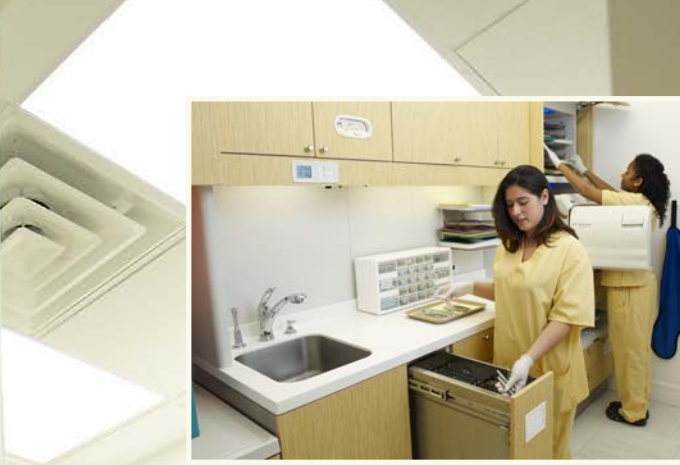
After they secured their dream space, Dr. Chan contacted Patterson. Though the doctors had both worked with other suppliers in their previous practices, Patterson had given them the best impression overall. Plus, Dr. Chan had used EagleSoft software in her previous office and wanted to bring the same simplicity into the new practice.

Dr. Chan spoke with Patterson Dental Equipment Specialist Dean Merolle, who encouraged her to attend the branch's Build the Office of Your Dreams seminar. "Once I went to the meeting, I realized that Patterson had everything to help us set up the practice," said Dr. Chan.

Spa Inspired

Setting up a dental practice in New York City can present unique challenges not found in suburban or rural areas, due to smaller office spaces. "Sometimes doctors have to compromise on a few things," said Merolle. "I tell the doctors that the operatories are the most important part of the practice, and then we go from there."

At 1,149-square-feet, Meridian Dental Group is spacious by Manhattan standards. To maximize every inch of space, Merolle and Patterson Dental Office Designer Sherry Tassavori created an open floor plan with four 11' x 9' dual entrance operatories, an 8-foot A-dec sterilization center, a small lab, reception area, staff lounge, a private restroom for staff, a private office, an alcove for their PLANMECA panoramic X-ray and a spot reserved for a future CEREC system. "The office is very functional," said Merolle.



The office's modern décor also contributes to the feeling of spaciousness. Dr. Chan selected a light, monochromatic palette of whites, greens and earth tones that open up the space. She took decorating cues from chic hotels and condos to create a spa-like oasis. "I didn't want it to be traditional or to look like a dental office," said Dr. Chan. "I think we were able to succeed with that."

Though patients rarely wait longer than five minutes for their appointment, the doctors wanted to make the reception area a relaxing space. Contemporary furniture was chosen for its clean lines, as well as its comfort. An elegant white and gray marble reception desk is set aglow by three pendant lights. Patients are invited to enjoy a glass of ice water flavored with fresh fruit, which is always made available on the reception desk. Frosted glass doors separate the reception area from the clinical side of the practice.

White walls and flooring in the operatories create a clean, minimalist look. Sage A-dec chairs add natural color and complement A-dec cabinets in Natural Cane. The A-dec sterilization area is only a few steps from the operatories, creating a highly functional workflow. The doctors also made sure their staff was taken care of with a private lounge where they can enjoy lunch or a cup of coffee.

"It's so relaxing and so calming," said Patterson Dental Sales Representative Debralee Suro. "I really believe that's what makes them so successful, not to mention they have beautiful personalities."

Experience is Everything

The doctors' experience in other practices with an array of products really came into play when it was time to select the

technology and equipment for their office. Both doctors had worked with various chairs and delivery systems and both preferred A-dec for style and simplicity. "The chairs are compact and have a thin back, so you can get in close," said Dr. Chan.

Dr. Chan had worked with EagleSoft in her previous office and enjoyed its ease-of-use, as well as the peace of mind that she could easily import the data from her previous practice into the new system. Dr. Cho had used a competitor's software in the past, but was immediately impressed by EagleSoft. "It's a power program," he said. "I think there's much more to it than the [competitor's] software." The doctors and their office manager enjoy EagleSoft's eServices because they make mundane tasks easier. Currently, the practice is using eStatements, EagleSoft credit card processing and Real-Time Eligibility.

CAESY Patient Education Systems, which Dr. Cho used in the past, also has simplified the doctors' lives considerably. "The videos make the patients understand a lot better than any picture I could draw," said Dr. Chan. Dr. Cho agrees: "I can't tell you how many times I've played the periodontal video for patients."

Acteon Sopro 617 intraoral cameras have become one of the doctors' favorite tools. Each new patient gets an intraoral photo and a tour of their mouth on the flat panel monitors in each operatory. "Otherwise they really never get a close-up look in their mouths," said Dr. Chan. "Plus, it's great for case acceptance." >>



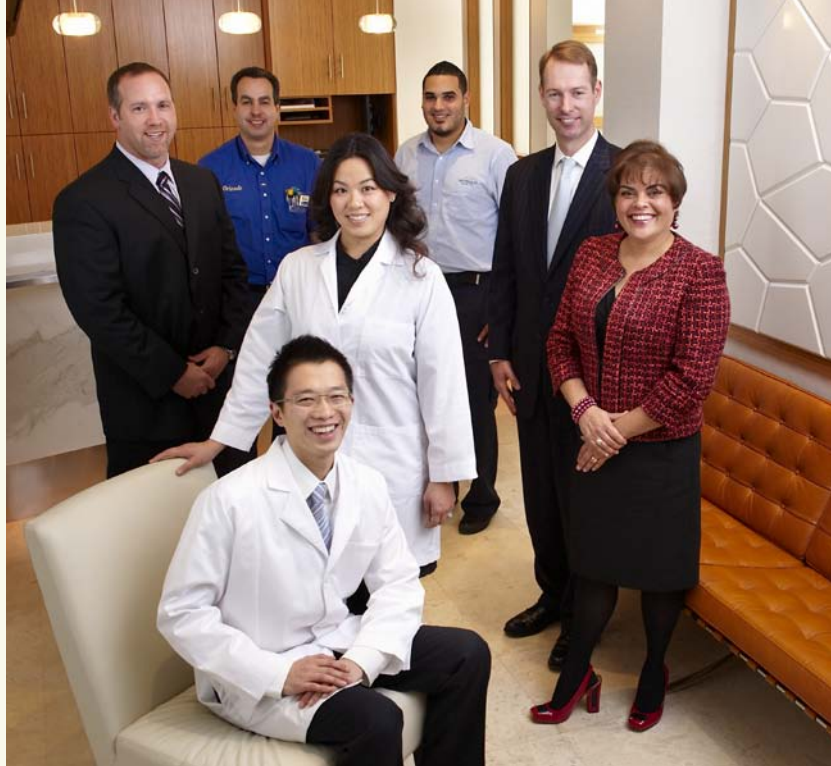
The doctors also appreciate their PLANMECA ProMax digital panoramic X-ray system and Schick digital sensors for their instant images and reduced radiation. Dr. Cho says they may update their panoramic to a cone beam in the future. The doctors also made sure to dedicate space for a CEREC Acquisition Center (AC) powered by Bluecam and the MC XL milling unit, which they'd like to add in the future.

No Compromises Necessary

Meridian Dental Group has been open for just over a year, and the practice is everything the doctors dreamed of. Despite the unique challenges that come with setting up a new practice in the city, both doctors are ecstatic with the end result and don't feel they had to compromise on anything. "We got everything we wanted and needed. Our operatories are good sized for Manhattan and the practice is laid out so nicely," said Dr. Chan.

Patients have complimented the doctors on how open and spacious the practice feels. The doctors credit that to the décor and the successful floor plan created by their Patterson team. "It's a great use of space," says Dr. Cho. "I've worked in some other New York offices as an associate and the offices were bigger, but felt much smaller."

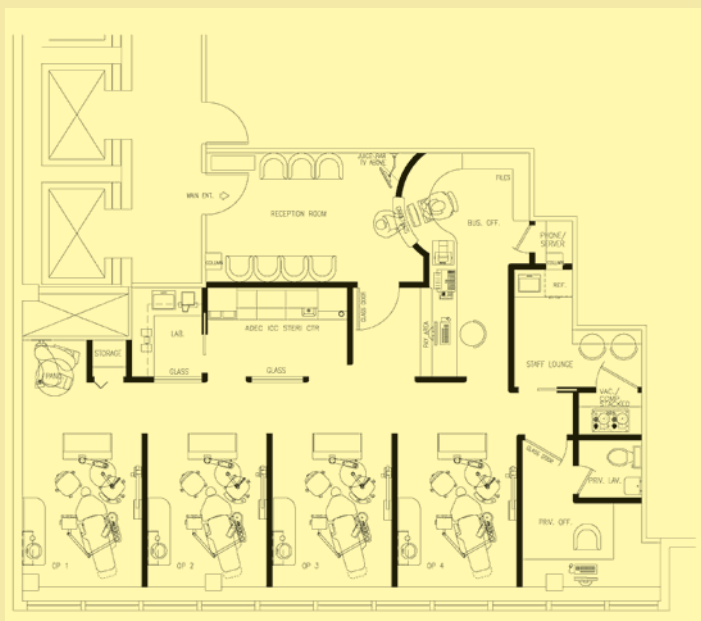
For other doctors considering a new practice or remodel, Dr. Cho encourages them to consider their own experiences to define their goals. "This worked out so well because we drew from the positive aspects of our past experiences to create our practice," he said. "We found things that made us happy and that has hopefully translated into something grander." **PT**



From left to right:
Back: Dean Merolle, Orlando Garcia, Manny Gutierrez, Perrin DesPortes and Debralee Suro
Front: Dr. Raymond Cho and Dr. Amanda Chan

PATTERSON TEAM

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|--|---|
| Perrin Desportes, <i>Branch Manager</i> | Manuel Gutierrez, <i>Service Technician</i> |
| Dean Merolle, <i>Equipment Specialist</i> | Orlando Garcia, <i>Service Technician</i> |
| Debralee Suro, <i>Sales Representative</i> | Sherry Tassavori, <i>Office Designer</i> |



For more information on Meridian Dental Group, visit www.MeridianDentalGroup.com

