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A chef's condo



MELISSA DAVIS **LIFE**WELL-DESIGNED

Then my friend, Toronto chef Mike Ward asked me to help him redesign his condo, I thought, thank goodness!

Over the years, I've spent many an hour in this space — as a guinea pig for his new recipes and sharing a bottle of wine.

This may only be a temporary downtown home for him but it was time to create a space that was more functional for his two young daughters to enjoy the time while there.

We were mindful of the fact this is a condo, and massive renovation budgets seldom pay off, so we settled on a modest goal that would bring a good return on the investment while focusing on their needs as a family.

I decided to keep the existing cabinetry, a great help if it's in good condition. A coat of white paint instantly refreshed the look, freeing up budget for a makeover that would truly change the way they used the space.

The two biggest challenges were the small kitchen and no dining room. This is how we solved them.

Small kitchen

Condo kitchens are limited in that there really isn't much ability to expand the footprint. There are, however, some creative ways to maximize the limited space and provide a more integrated look with adjacent rooms.

I extended the island counter and added a 'waterfall design' by wrapping the counter surface down the dining room side.

This provided more prep space in the kitchen and room for stools on the other side, either for guests to chat as he cooks or for the girls to do their homework.

I opted for a Cambria stone counter and a silgranit sink from Blanco for the kitchen. The white colour blends in nicely for a subtle look and offers a durable scratch-, stain- and heat-



resistant surface.

Lastly, we added an IKEA knife and utility rail set which provides quick access and frees up storage space.

No dining room

Condo model suites are famous for their tiny round glass tables as if to say 'You don't have more than two friends and no intention of hosting a meal at home.'

Mike loves to entertain, and having enjoyed many a meal here, I knew I had to work some design magic to give him a proper table.

Use of a dining bench enabled us to pull the table closer to the wall, freeing up space around the table and creating more storage space for Mike's large kitchen appliances. Remarkably, this area now seats up to 12 people for dinner.

Remember the rule of scale here, a few large streamlined pieces make the space seem larger and less cluttered than having numerous small pieces. I opted for a large harvest style table from IKEA but kept it in the same wood tone as the existing floors. Visually this all blends together for a gentler overall look.

 Melissa Davis is a celebrity designer well-known for her appearances and creative work on several HGTV programs. Visit her at www.melissadavis.com.



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