

# Small in space, big on style



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## LIFE WELL-DESIGNED

Recently, a well-known TV media personality purchased a Toronto condo. It was bought from plans and with no intent from her to ever live in the unit.

Typical development delays pushed back completion, however, life changed and recently it became her home.

Pay Chen is a colourful gal with personality and an affinity for bold statements, and adores cooking up delicious food.

Pay called me when she took possession recently and asked me to transform her

tiny blank canvas, make it feel larger, store all her kitchen gadgets and add more of her personality.

Together, we set out to solve a few of the most common condo shortcomings.

### Small kitchen

The condo footprint was too small to hold both an island and dining area. I opted instead to create a custom unit using IKEA cabinets.

A shallow depth work area is backed by 15-inch height cabinets mounted low to create a bench with storage.

This adds oodles of overflow storage, functional kitchen prep and eliminates excess floor area around the table. It's also a terrific opportunity to add character. Here we used a soft wood cabinet with butcher-block top.

### Overflow storage

In these small footprint dwellings, there is literally not an inch to spare. When looking for ways to add more storage, think like an urban planner and build up.

Here I used IKEA kitchen cabinets wrapping up and over the bed. The wall storage provides a place for those items not accessed every day.

I added pretty green glass handles from Lee Valley Tools to tie them in with the overall design.

### Tiny closets

Our wardrobes are growing but with limited space the storage area needs to be utilized to the fullest. Typical condos come with a single hang bar and shelf above.

Here, I removed that inefficient system and instead created a custom configuration with combination of double hanging, long hanging and shelves using a system from Lee Valley Tools offering easy to install and flexible layouts.

### No character

Condos are designed to be a bit of a one size fits all, offering little to no style beyond the white walls. Pay loves colour, but we didn't want to do anything too permanent.

A few simple décor additions added huge impact here. Bedding and linens in primary colours from Aura and Blue Bell Grey are used throughout.

We incorporated Pay's existing retro table and chairs which when used with the neutral style of the island is just enough of a colour hit.

To finish it off, I added a feminine chandelier from a great lighting source in city — Royal Lighting — for the perfect shabby chic addition. Opting for a fixture with chain allows us to swag to suit the best placement



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given the power locations are not ideal.

### Temporary style

Here they had what has become a standard offering with commercial style sliding glass door between the main area and bedroom.

Although frosted glass, it still not truly private. We decided to add a vinyl wall covering that simply peels and sticks to the glass. The barn board pattern looks terrific with the other condo finishes and removes in a flash without damaging the doors.

— *Melissa Davis is a celebrity designer well-known for her appearances and creative work on several HGTV programs. Visit her at [www.melissadavis.com](http://www.melissadavis.com).*



A custom combination of double and long hanging bars and shelves offers better closet storage.



A few simple decor additions such as colourful bedding and linens can add huge impact.