

YOUR GUIDE TO HOME AND LIFE IMPROVEMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL digest plus

PLAN

Eight tips for a more functional kitchen

DECORATE

Spring into summer with patterns that pop!

EAT & DRINK

Try hot weather recipes that sizzle

TRAVEL

A treehouse getaway – for adults

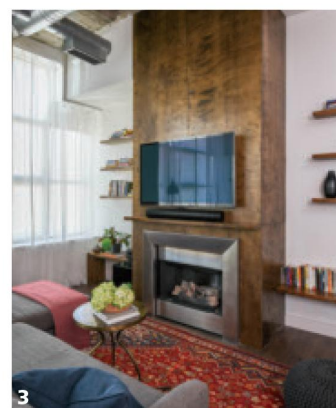
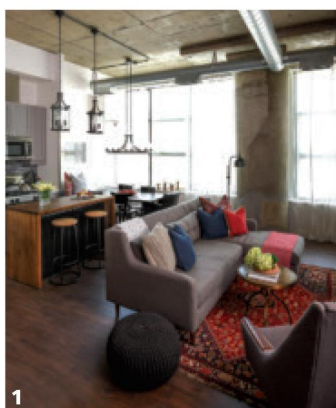
Spring 2016 | Plus Edition

MAKE
THE MOST
OF THE
SEASON

indoors OR out



SMALL SPACES ARE **big** DESIGN BUSINESS



1. Lots of light, high ceilings and original features add character to this condo loft.

2. Cool greys are punctuated in the kitchen with statement lighting.

3. Stained maple plywood stands in for more expensive walnut on a fireplace surround.

Small spaces and great design are not mutually exclusive, as designer Melissa Davis proved in the recent redesign of an 865 square-foot condo loft.

Planning was key, says Davis, who's noticed a rapid uptick in small footprint projects.

"You have to think carefully, right down to where you put the stack of mail when you come in the door. Good design always starts with the way you live in a space – especially if it's small."

When the homeowner bought the space a decade ago, he loved the industrial vibe of the exposed ductwork, concrete ceilings and large windows.

But at the ripe old age of 40, he decided he wanted a more sophisticated look, one that reflected his growing appreciation of mid-century design.

Davis started with an efficient floor plan, and a restrained palette of grey, black and white, with wood accents to soften industrial edges.

In the living area, a floor-to-ceiling fireplace surround became a signature feature, simply by cladding it in stained ¼-inch maple plywood. Materials cost a mere \$300.

In the kitchen, affordable, heavy-duty workroom cabinets were placed below the counter. Not only does the dark grey metal fit colour-wise, the units are lockable, a valuable feature for a homeowner who occasionally does short-term rentals.

After choosing lots of affordable options, Davis indulged in one of her favourite splurges – backsplash tiles. She chose a matte glass tile with a wavy grey and white pattern that ties together kitchen colours.

Floating wood shelves, a low "book bench", and a relaxed vintage chair form a library corner for this avid reader. A sofa in a soft grey that compliments the reading chair provides seating for guests.

Chic, relatively cheap window treatments consist of plain roller blinds mounted close to the glass and a track system clipped with lengths of cheesecloth.

Yes, cheesecloth.

"I love imperfection in the weave," says Davis. "Funny, because that's what you're getting for \$400-a-metre silk sheers – those perfect imperfections." 🍁



"People think you have to spend so much money for wood. You don't – stain out maple out the right colour and it has a very similar look to walnut," says Davis.

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