

CONDO LIVING

Small space kitchens come full of surprises

When it comes to kitchens, the possibilities are endless



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CONDO CHIC

The term 'small space challenges' has practically become everyday terminology in the world of design and especially obvious in the city of Toronto.

With new condo builds going up daily we've finally run out of room to build wide so we're going up, high up in the sky! And as a result of this 'tall and skinny' condo boom

our spaces have become, in one way or another small spaces with challenging areas to decorate and even renovate.

What's the first issues my clients run into when it comes to renovating their condo? The kitchen. And, what's our major focus with designing this space? We strive for minimal clutter, maximum efficiency

and highly personalized living environments.

That sounds easy! Well, not exactly. Typically, when we begin designing a kitchen, before we even look at a paint swatch or compare door styles, we prepare a concrete plan.

We ask the condo owners what their current kitchen lacks in terms of storage and space, what they required in their new kitchen, how they plan on using the kitchen and how they feel about the lighting both natural and artificial. But, what do we really want to know? We need to hear what excites them.

Today's consumer strives to tell their story; their successes,



When we ask condo owners what they require in their new kitchen, we need to hear what excites them, says Erica Gelman designer.



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their experiences, their travels and even their journey. That's why this generation of design is so much more personalized than ever before.

When our clients call us to service their spaces we try to create something personal, tailored and something that will enhance their quality of living. Whether it's the home-chef who requires the kitchen for dinner parties, or the busy mom making lunches in the morning or just the bachelor grabbing a bit to eat, the kitchen is ground-zero.

How do we facilitate a personalized kitchen while keeping form and function top priority? Number one is space planning. When thinking about space always consider

"real estate" in your condo, every square inch counts.

We consider appliance width, cabinetry height; pull out shelves vs. stationary cupboards, spice drawers and the list goes on.

Not to long ago we had a client tell us that she needed a pull out doggy dish easily accessible for her chihuahua, it may not be typical but it's definitely personal.

After gathering all the information and all the requirements we can then put together the floor plan, the 3D rendering, pull tangible samples, lighting options and appliance specifications.

We recently renovated a fantastic small space kitchen that was anything but ordinary. The

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design was ours but the inspiration was the clients. A young family who wanted a space that reflected their casual living philosophy.

We incorporated off-white cabinets with a subtle hint of gray to freshen up the simple shaker style doors. We very carefully chose a sustainable Caesarstone countertop that meant spills, stains and daily accidents would not affect this solid surface. Something very important to the homeowner — "easy living" is the way they described it.

When it comes to kitchens the possibilities are endless. Multi-level islands, wine fridge, steamer, built-in cappuccino maker even a pullout doggy bowl — its not just doors and countertops anymore.

Be prepared to make important decisions to fuel your living requirements. Keeping everything compact while utilizing concealed accessibility will not only transform your kitchen, it will allow you to love of your small space again.

— Erica Gelman is a Toronto-based designer and principal of House of Design by Erica Gelman specializing in residential design projects. For more information, go to www.ericagelman.com.