

Design & storage for limited space

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When it comes to small condos, decorating and storage can present the owners with somewhat unique challenges. Trying to create a warm open-concept space while having enough room to keep all of your belongings and live comfortably is, indeed, a daunting task to accomplish in less than 1,000 square feet. But with a little guidance from professionals, you can craft the home of your dreams, no matter its size.

“Working on a small-space design concept is a challenge because you need to maximize each square foot in the right way,” said Anne Grillot, interior designer and winner of the Richelieu Award for emerging young designers at the 2017 Habitat Design Awards. “This is what makes the job very fun for a designer because everything has to be thought of in the best way to make the space easy to use and aesthetically interesting.”

For both small and large spaces, the main trend today is openconcept design. This look works particularly well in condos with limited square footage because it helps create the feeling of being in a larger space.

“For the occupant to have a feeling of tranquillity in the openconcept trend, less-is-more is the best

way to go,” Grillot said. “So any storage and other necessities must be concealed in every possible way to avoid having the space feel overloaded. Sliding panels and specialized hardware are often used to achieve this.”

The right colours, tones, furniture, and accent pieces also go a long way toward making a small space feel larger.

“Using neutral palettes throughout is always trending when decorating a small space because it creates a larger illusion,” said Carmen Roy, interior designer and two-time Houzz Award winner for outstanding service. “Purchasing smaller scaled furniture with low-back seating in a light colour palette will give a feeling of expansion.”

In fact, many retailers today carry a condo-scale line of furniture in order to accommodate the demand for this trend.

“Then things like mirrors, glass tables, crystals, metallics and anything reflective will help brighten your space,” Roy said. “If you’re opting for drapes, hang them as high as you can to create the illusion that the ceiling looks higher.”

Maximizing the height of a small condo will not only help create the illusion of more space, but can also help with practical storage needs.

“To optimize storage, you have to think of height; this space is often forgotten,” Grillot said. “Adding floor-to-ceiling storage units can



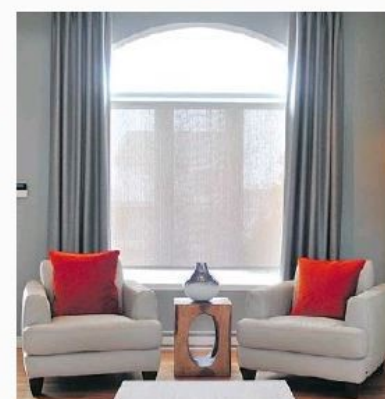
Using a neutral palette, and hanging drapes up to the ceiling, will create an illusion of space in small rooms.

really help. It’s incredible what solutions you can find on the market today; there are all kinds of mechanisms and processes to make storage efficient.”

Furniture that doubles as storage can be a great option as well.

“Pieces like coffee tables and end tables with built-in shelves are a great investment when space is limited,” Roy said. “Ottomans are good, too, because they provide storage and seating.”

Whenever space is limited, don’t



forget about the walls, she added.

“Floating shelves are a good way to display books and decorative accessories without compromising floor space.”

If you’re considering purchasing a small condo, or you’d like to renovate your existing unit, the designers urge caution and proper planning in order to make the most of your space.

“Investing in renovations and design can be expensive, so the best advice I can give is to think carefully before acting,” Grillot said. “You want people to be able to have everything they need while creating a space that is harmonious to live in.”

Working with expert consultants can help you avoid any headaches, especially if you’re new to the world of design.

“I recommend at least consulting with a designer before making large purchases,” Roy said. “Choosing furniture that is too large for your space will create a heavy boxed-in feeling that’s not welcoming or visually appealing.”