

HOTEL SOPHISTICATION

Inspired by his business travels, executive's condo reflects a hip and trendy feel

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FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS QUINCE FLOWERS

The gleaming surfaces of the ceramic backsplash tile and stainless-steel countertops and appliances add luxe to this modern white kitchen. Aside from replacing the cabinet pulls and the original island (a beautiful new nine-foot-long island from Adenat Custom Cabinets offers more storage and seating space), little was done to upgrade the space. Fridge and wine fridge: Sub-Zero; stove and dishwasher: JennAir; cabinet pulls: Richelieu; pendant light: Casalife by Nuevo; painting: Linelle MacDougall; media unit: Casalife; bar accessories: Crate & Barrel.



The dining area's custom high-top table from Merlo Woodworking not only seats 10 comfortably, it's the focal point of the condo's glam hotel-inspired design. The side chairs, covered with faux ostrich leather, are accented with a striped fabric from Maharam that was used throughout the condo. Ultra-modern chrome end chairs and a stunning chrome chandelier from Casalife add visual drama.



LOCATED IN ONE OF TORONTO'S TRENDIEST neighbourhoods, this sweeping King Street West condo is a bold mix of industrial chic and glossy vintage glamour. With wide-open spaces that flow seamlessly into one another, and a 47-foot-long balcony that spans the length of the condo, this home was built for relaxed, sophisticated living.

And, that's exactly what the homeowner was looking for, though he didn't know it at the time. He originally purchased the condo as a rental property, but later decided to customize it for himself. "I wanted to create a space that would be ideal as a rental. It had to be trendy yet durable," he says. "But my personal situation changed just after I bought it, so I decided to move in instead."

That meant designing something much more personal, and the previous owners gave him a lot to work with. "I was fortunate to have incredible built-in closets and drawers, and a modern kitchen, so there wasn't a lot of major structural work to be done. It just needed to be modernized and cleaned up."

As an executive who travels a lot for business, he used his hotel stays as design inspiration. He knew he wanted his 1,500-square-foot two bedroom, two bathroom home to have the sophistication of a boutique hotel ... taken up a notch. "My goal was to create a space that has a similar hip and trendy feel that you'd find in one of the many W Hotels around the world," he says.

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As luck would have it, his sister had the perfect young interior designer to meet his needs: Natalie Chong, owner of Nest Design Studio. "Natalie had worked on my sister's condo at Granite Place and did an excellent job," he says. "It was a fluke that she shared with me how happy she was with the work that Natalie had done for her."

He hired Chong to help him transform his space. The timing couldn't have been better. "I'm often out of town and trusted that her expertise would serve me well," he says. To start their working relationship, Chong clarified what he was trying to achieve and then confirmed that they were on the same page. "The opportunity here was that the space needed to reflect a hotel feeling, but also be more luxurious," says Chong, who clearly understood the owner's vision.

She kicked off the project by changing the dark wood-paneled walls in the entrance and living room. "They gave the space a very formal look," says the owner. "I wanted a comfortable, casual feel so I was determined to cover the dark wood." Chong's solution? Several coats of Benjamin Moore's Chelsea Gray paint. Now, instead of overwhelming the space, the walls recede into the background.

"My inspiration for the overall colour scheme was a Maharam stripe fabric," says Chong, describing the black fabric with multicoloured stripes—white, blue and persimmon orange—that she used as an accent throughout the condo. ☞

Elegant architectural elements in the living area juxtapose with industrial materials in the den beyond. One of the strengths of the condo's decor, however, is how seamlessly it flows from one open space to the next. Here, the colour scheme in the living room is echoed in the den where an orange desk is the centre of attention. Living room chair: Crate & Barrel; pillow: In Vu Drapery; living room rug: Elte; desk and globe lamp in den: Black Pug DMK; storage unit: Ikea; shelves: West Elm; artwork: Soho Art and Custom Framing; rug: Crate and Barrel; stool: Queen West Antique Centre; stool reupholstery: Grand Dukes Design Upholstery.



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In the living room, the fabric inspired the selection of a blue velvet-studded sofa and punchy orange throw cushions. There’s also a velvet-upholstered bench, two oversized armchairs from Crate & Barrel, an over-sized coffee table, and two end tables and lamps all from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams. “It’s definitely somewhat eclectic,” says Chong, who included several vintage pieces, including a vintage Eames chair in the den.

In the adjacent dining area, Chong took the owner’s love of entertaining to a whole new level, literally. Instead of a traditional dining table, she selected a counter-height granite-topped table that seats 10. “The high-top dining table and comfortable bar chairs are great for dinner parties and stand up entertaining,” says the owner, who likes to host casual gatherings.

Because Chong’s interpretation of a luxurious boutique hotel decor includes the use of glossy finishes, she anchored the dining table with two ultra-modern mirrored-chrome bar chairs that the homeowner fell in love with. “The chairs only came in counter height so they actually inspired the choice of dining table,” says Chong.

Another glam element found in almost every area of the condo is faux ostrich leather. “I chose it for its chic durability,” says Chong, who used it on the bar stools in the dining area and kitchen, and on occasional chairs in the living room and master bedroom. “We used so much of it, we ran out and had to find another manufacturer so some is glossy and some matte, but it still works,” she says. 

The condo’s hip boutique hotel-inspired design is evident here in the living room where modern elegance and vintage glamour meet. “I definitely wanted it to feel like all the design choices were intentional,” says designer Natalie Chong. “It’s an open space that has an entertaining feel and that’s important to the owner.” Velvet bench, sofa, cushions on chairs: Grand Dukes Design & Custom Upholstery; wood stump tables: Hideaway Antiques; chairs: Crate and Barrel; table lamps, coffee table and side tables: Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams; throw pillows: In Vu Drapery; rug: Elte; custom velvet draperies and throw pillows: Your Sweet Home.

In the master bedroom, diamond-print Crown wallpaper offers the perfect retro-glam backdrop to a black velvet studded headboard designed by Natalie Chong. "The decor and accessories all tie together to create a visually impactful space that is very comfortable to be in," says the owner. Side table: Mode Haus; sconce: Sescolite; bedding: The Feather Factory; pillows: In Vu Drapery; rug: Crate & Barrel; chair: The Painted Table; headboard and chair upholstery: Grand Dukes Design Upholstery.



The ostrich vinyl can also be found in the modern kitchen on the new square cabinet pulls. Aside from replacing the pulls and switching out the original white island for a larger black granite-topped island that has nine drawers of extra storage space, very little was done in the kitchen. "Even though it's open to the living and dining areas, it still feels like a kitchen yet blends well in the space," says Chong.

Today, one of the owner's favourite spaces in his home is the master bedroom where Chong replaced an old-fashioned blue flock wallpaper he disliked with a contemporary grey-on-grey diamond-print. "In condos we usually don't have enough space for a king-size bed and side tables," says the designer. "But in this case we did, which meant I could design the perfect studded black velvet headboard. I also used the ostrich vinyl again here to cover a modern vintage chair."

In the bedroom, the use of persimmon orange, in this case the colour of throw pillows on the bed, is also repeated. "The pops of orange is the element that visually draws you through the apartment. I even had a desk in the den painted orange," says the designer, whose biggest challenge was making sure the condo didn't feel overly decorated. "I tried not to go overboard, but I got really excited with this project," she says.

With attention to detail and adeptly mixing old and new, Chong took an industrial loft-style space, replete with rough-hewn concrete ceilings and open-concept spaces, and turned it into an enviable luxury hotel-style suite. It's as visually captivating as it is livable ... exactly what the owner wanted. "I think Natalie did an incredible job," he says. "It had to be modern, but also comfortable. Each space now has special meaning for me." 🐾

(Opposite) Gleaming curvy lamps add a touch of glamour. The engineered hardwood floors throughout the condo were stained dark ebony for added elegance.

