



small spaces – dual purposes

Catherine and Lara outfitted a corner of the small dressing room with a desk fashioned from the same built-in cabinetry.



small spaces – fool the eye

Extend the glass walls of a shower to the floor to enlarge a small bathroom. 'The glass allows your gaze to move through the space,' says Lara.





small spaces – choice materials

Use ribbed glass to break up the visual bulk of a solid wall of cabinetry yet keep the look uncluttered.

Before, I had not one square inch of counter space in the kitchen. Now I have tons”

CATHERINE CAPLICE, HOMEOWNER

BELOW The bedroom has an alcove just wide enough for the bed and two tiny night tables. "Catherine is an avid reader, so I chose swing-arm lamps to allow lots of space for books by the bed," says Lara. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT** A corner of the dressing room serves as Catherine's home office. "It's a place to deal with her paperwork," says Lara. "Many of us do that in the dining room, and the papers end up staying there, but Catherine can't because her dining room is visible to the entire first floor." Although the palette for the house is neutral, Lara injected some feminine fun by

upholstering the ottoman in pink. The relaxed Roman blind picks up on the colour and flirty mood with its bold pattern. **OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT** Like most older midtown Toronto homes, Catherine's house had hardly any closet space. But as a busy career woman, she needed a place to organize her wardrobe, especially for frequent business trips, so she opted to turn the second bedroom into a combination dressing room/home office. Built-in cabinetry from an organizing store maximizes storage; the ribbed glass lightens the bulk of the cabinetry. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT** "I wanted

small spaces – maximize storage

Customize store-bought furniture. For more storage, Lara had glass shelves made to fit on existing wood rails in the night tables.



Every day, the space just works for me"

CATHERINE

it to be serene and calming," says Lara of the three-piece basement bathroom with luxurious walk-in shower. The floor tiles are long and linear to make the space look bigger, and a nifty niche above the toilet provides display and storage space. "Because of plumbing issues, the toilet is the first thing you see when you walk in, and that's never ideal," says Lara, "but by having something attractive above it, you draw attention upward." **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT** Turn a negative into a positive:

Because the steps that lead to the main floor protrude into the corner of the ceiling, pot lights and sconces over the sink weren't an option. So Lara placed an attractive lamp on the vanity (a safe distance from the water source) to provide lighting and an unexpected decorative accent. The vanity is almost 5' long – smart planning in a 7½ sq. ft. room. Offsetting the sink allowed a longer stretch of countertop on one side of it, with a wide bank of drawers below. **WHERE TO FIND IT, PAGE 94**

The biggest dilemma was whether the walls should come down," recalls Catherine Caplice of the renovation of her 1,100 sq. ft. Toronto house. At the time, she followed her instincts and gave her contractor the go-ahead, and she hasn't looked back since. From the open-concept floor plan to the kitchen design, Catherine immersed herself in the decision making that a major renovation demands, and when the dust settled, there was just one problem: no furniture. She needed some advice. "I came in

post-construction," says designer Lara Neal. She and Catherine both say there was a real synergy from their first meeting. "I thought the finishes Catherine had chosen for the kitchen were beautiful and felt they should be our jumping-off point in terms of decorating," says Lara, who customized the new space to perfectly suit her client. "It was a dream finding Lara — she shared my vision," says Catherine. "I loved the process so much that when it was done I considered selling the house so I could do it all over again." Yikes! Hello, Lara?

small spaces — play with scale

"Have fun and add something big," says designer Lara Neal, referring to the artwork over the table. "It's dynamic and can anchor a room. Otherwise, if everything is the same scale, a space becomes static and boring."



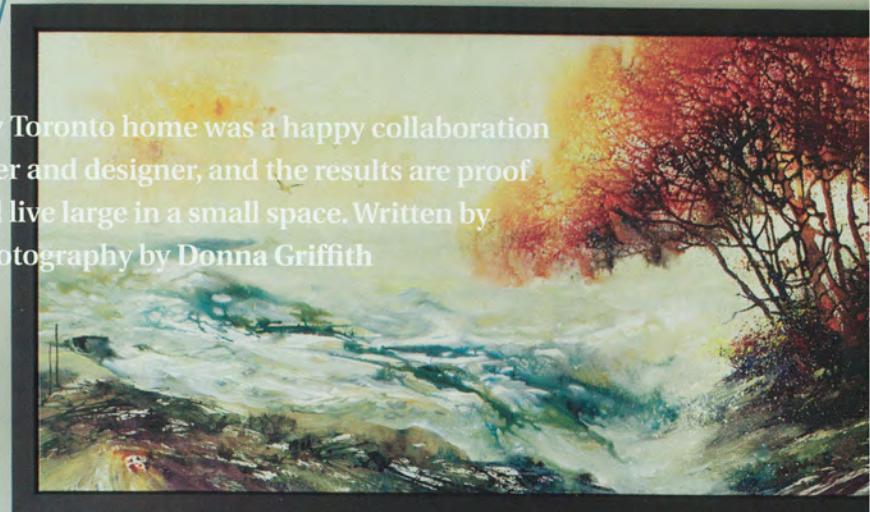
OPPOSITE Catherine Caplice has personalized her decor with artwork she loves. "Buy art for what it does to you emotionally," says designer Lara Neal. "The piece Catherine chose for the living room introduces a different element, with a vibrant shot of orange." **ABOVE** The entire first floor is visible when you pass through the vestibule, so Lara's priority was to create a sophisticated, cohesive palette of neutrals that expands the space visually by creating flow. But it's not all about looking pretty — the

space had to work. Every piece of furniture earns its keep, especially since Catherine loves to entertain. The living room chairs have handles on the back and are on casters, making them easy to move where needed. Also, Lara designed a three-in-one table for the dining room/walkway: it morphs from a console (no leaves) to a table for two (one leaf) to a table that seats eight (two leaves). "I've even hosted 18 people for a buffet I set up on the table and kitchen counter," says Catherine. →

small spaces → 1,100 square feet

personality plus

Furnishing this tiny Toronto home was a happy collaboration between homeowner and designer, and the results are proof that one can indeed live large in a small space. Written by Kathleen Dore / Photography by Donna Griffith



small spaces – clear winners
Glass coffee tables and end tables are smart choices because they don't create a bulky feel in a tight spot.

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decorating



Rev up a neutral office with a dash of colour



OUT OF SIGHT Use closed cabinets to store office supplies, reference materials and other unsightly workspace essentials.

WALL PAINT Nordic Gray CC-576 benjaminmoore.ca. **DESK & CABINETRY** Antique White organizedinteriors.com. **CHAIR, OTTOMAN** Lara Neal Design 416-429-9449. **BLIND FABRIC** Mts. San Remo 23974 designerfabrics.ca. →