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PRECISELY RIGHT

Toronto designer Jessica Kelly serves this homeowner a dose of modern garnished with lighthearted colour and texture.

TEXT LAURA MUIR | PHOTOGRAPHY JOANNA FERRARO





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1. Defining the eating area, the banquette contains three drawers for extra storage. It also provided designer Jessica Kelly with an opportunity to include a variety of cushions, which adds extra colour and also softens the sleek, industrial look of the space.

DESIGN, Jessica Kelly Design, jessicakelly-design.com; **BANQUETTE CABINETRY,** IKEA; **BANQUETTE FABRICATION,** JD McNicoll Interiors; **SEAT CUSHION,** Quality Upholstery.

2. The airy chandelier by Patrick Townsend, which homeowner Christopher Craib dubbed “splash-tastic,” anchors the eating area and complements the contemporary kitchen.

3. Covering an entire wall in tumbled marble gives this kitchen its “wow” factor. Also, passing on upper cabinetry left room to install the substantial chef-style faucet.

CABINETRY, IKEA; **HARDWARE,** Métal Style Bouvet; tumbled marble **BACKSPLASH,** porcelain **FLOOR TILES,** Olympia Tile & Stone; Caesarstone **COUNTERTOPS** in Stone Grey, Allset Interiors; **SINK, FAUCET,** Blanco; Panasonic **MICROWAVE,** The Bay.

4. With a monochromatic backdrop, you can easily change a kitchen’s look with colourful accents without having to spend a bundle, says Christopher.

5. The sleek appliances and all-white high-gloss cabinetry were offset with a tumbled marble backsplash, which provides interest and texture. “We also went for glass-front upper cabinets to mix it up a bit and add dimension,” says Jessica. “I like how their metal frames tie in with the stainless steel appliances.”

Bosch **STOVE & RANGE HOOD,** Fisher & Paykel **REFRIGERATOR,** The Bay.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

Preparing for a kitchen renovation is definitely a time to dream – to think of how that brand new stainless steel range, show-stopping backsplash or even extra counter space will make life just that much better. But for a Bay Street financier, it’s also a time for prudence. When Christopher Craib, the chief financial officer of a securities firm in Toronto, decided it was time to overhaul the builder-boring kitchen in his 10-year-old west-end condo, his plan involved more than just updating the look.

“I had to consider I was renovating in a condo and wanted to spend my money wisely,” says Christopher, who has been living in his 1,600-square-foot condo for eight years. “You have to be careful not to overspend for your building if you want to get your money back in the future, so I was mindful of those constraints.” For Christopher, cautious spending meant keeping the reno simple (“I didn’t want to have to move plumbing or make major structural changes”), mixing high and low elements and creating a modern look that lasts. So he enlisted Toronto designer Jessica Kelly to make sure he got it all right the first time.

To create a contemporary, slightly industrial aesthetic, Jessica incorporated all-white high-gloss cabinetry, grey quartz countertops and over-

sized porcelain floor tiles. Giving the kitchen its standout appeal, tumbled marble serves as the backsplash on one side of the kitchen and creates a captivating feature wall, which was kept free of any upper cabinetry, unlike the other. It was a big decision, but Christopher bucked the trend of open-concept condo living and chose not to take down the nine-foot-long wall separating the kitchen and dining room. Instead, Jessica pared back two half walls that slightly separated the kitchen from the eat-in nook and created a more open, streamlined 18-by-eight-foot galley space.

While the relationship between designer and homeowner was extremely simpatico during the process, there was one bit of controversy. “I was against doing a banquette in the eating area,” says Christopher. “I didn’t want to invest money in a built-in because, if I sell the place, I can’t take it with me.” He’s glad he changed his mind, because with the kitchen now being his favourite room in the condo, the banquette offers him a spot to sit and enjoy the space. “I have coffee there, I read there,” he says. “I’ve even managed to have a nap.”

So, as Christopher proves, it’s important to let self-indulgence sometimes win over prudence. “Ultimately, I built this kitchen for myself.”

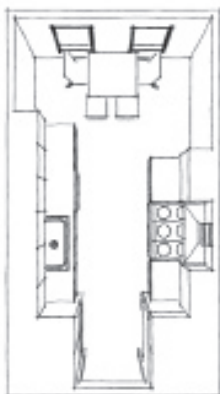


With a designer's touch, these three kitchens went from unappetizing to delectable thanks to refreshed floor plans and à la carte looks.

THE BEFORE



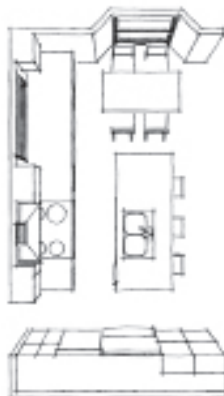
THE PLAN



The layout of this 136-square-foot kitchen remained the same, but replacing the wall oven and microwave with a high-end range allowed for a useful pantry.

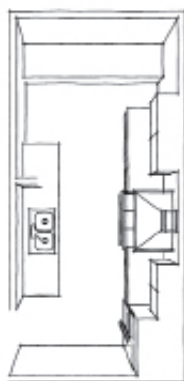
THE LOOK

BISTRO GLAMOUR



To create better flow in this 336-square-foot space, walls were taken down - one had an ineffectual pass-through and another was essentially a counter with awkward overhang cabinets.

FRESH TRADITIONAL



Forgoing an open-concept cooking/dining area, two half walls were removed to create a more open, galley-style kitchen, resulting in a 144-square-foot space.

MODERN FUN

