

SMALL SPACE 2
1,000
SQ.FT.

Toronto

A MINIMALIST
FINDS HIS ZEN
IN A PARED-
BACK LOFT.

PURE & Simple



Produced by Peter Rupp. Floor plan illustrations by Massimo Pignatelli. Styling by Nancy Soderberg.

PROJECTS HAVE A WAY OF SNOWBALLING, no matter the size. For Glen Flunt, a business coach-consultant, what started as painting and swapping out some cabinets escalated into a total reno after he consulted his ex-wife, designer Stephanie Houghton. Then Glen and a friend got to work. “I started demo and was surprised at just how much damage I could do with a sledgehammer and crowbar,” says Glen. “I ended up in a daze surrounded by rubble thinking, ‘What the hell did we just do!’”

Looking for a relaxing space rather than a construction site, he didn’t think twice about his choice of designer. “Stephanie was the right person,” he says. “She has the ability to make the extremely difficult seem effortless.” His part designer, part project manager and the daughter of an architect.

Glen asked Stephanie to come and see his two-storey loft, which is in a century-old, New York-style building in

DESIGNER GUIDE



LEFT: “Larger pieces like rugs and sofas can help expand spaces visually,” says designer Stephanie Houghton. **SOFA:** Crate and Barrel; **STOOLS, THROW PILLOWS, RUG, ELITE OPPOSITE:** The cabinets under Glen’s stairs house pantry items, as well as a microwave, toaster and pullout counter for extra prep space. **ART:** by Graham Gilmore, Monte Clark Gallery.

HOME TRUTHS

WHAT AREA DO YOU GRAVITATE TO IN YOUR HOME? “The comfortable leather club chair, where I gaze out at the changing seasons.”

WHAT’S THE BIGGEST PLUS TO SMALL-SPACE LIVING? “It removes the noise from my life, and I use everything that I have.”

IF YOU COULD ADD ONE THING TO YOUR SPACE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? “A wabi-sabi water feature on the terrace.”

HOW DO YOU KEEP CLUTTER AT BAY? “I used to collect all kinds of pieces, but I sold a lot and it was like a huge psychic weight was lifted.”

WHAT WAS AT THE TOP OF YOUR RENO WISH LIST? “A calm, relaxing space to come home to, and an escape from the confusion of everyday life.”

Design **STEPHANIE HOUGHTON** | Photography **ASHLEY CAPP**

Toronto’s Riverdale neighbourhood. “He talked about how his kitchen needed a facelift and, from there, we pulled that dangling thread on the proverbial hem,” says Stephanie, a partner along with Emily Griffin at the Toronto firm Griffin Houghton. “Then, we discussed replacing the tile in the principal bathroom, working on the overall layout and the lack of natural light... soon, we were renovating the whole 1,000-square-foot loft.”

The pair spent months obsessing over wood cuts, grades and finishes for the flooring that runs throughout and partially up some walls. “Quartersawn, rift-cut — I didn’t even know these words existed before,” says Glen, a reformed tchotchke collector. “But I do now, and it was so worth it.”

A year-long renovation later, the one-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bathroom loft has the Japandi aesthetic Glen was looking for; it’s sleek but warm, and totally zen. As he likes to say, “Now everything has its place. Including me.”

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ABOVE: Glen's Riverdale building has cool, industrial style.

BELOW: The spare, open-concept kitchen-dining area is warm yet airy. **Backsplash:** Stone Tile. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Hardwood flooring is used throughout the loft and behind the bed. **Storage bed, EQ3; art (left) by Scott McFarland; Monte Clark Gallery.**



LEFT: Replacing a wall with glass transformed the dark, principal bathroom into a light-filled retreat. **Tile:** Ceran Tile. **tub, plumbing fixtures:** Roman Bath Centre. **BELOW:** A floating vanity gives Glen's ensuite a spa-like serenity. **Custom vanity:** Dawson Cabinetworks.

