



Photo: Mike Chajcki

A great kitchen is functional, beautiful and will stand the test of time from both a quality and trend perspective

# A SMALL BUT SWEET space by LISA KOOISTRA

**I**n my experience, a kitchen can make or break a home. That's because when a kitchen doesn't work for its owners, it becomes the bane of their existence. On the other hand, a great kitchen will be functional, beautiful, and stand the test of time, both from a quality and a trend perspective.

Size is a common complaint when it comes to kitchens that "just don't work for us." Maybe the family structure has changed, or their needs have shifted, but for some reason, the size takes the heat. I'm here to tell you that a small kitchen isn't a setback. It just requires some thoughtful planning.

## White, bright and light

This kitchen was, admittedly, tiny. Neutral tones and clean lines dominate the space, wrapping it in light, bright and natural materials and finishes, which help to amplify the light streaming in through a pair of windows flanking the gas stove and range hood.

In order for it to function well for the family that lives there, we borrowed some extra space from the adjacent dining room and created an open combination space to accommodate cooking, dining, living and entertaining.

At its heart, it features an appropriately scaled island, which is the main focus of activity.

The island is finished with a white porcelain countertop, which also lines the rear wall of the space. This material was chosen by the homeowners for its versatility, durability, low maintenance and high visual appeal.

The white island and lower cabinets, white countertops and trending porcelain backsplash are a crisp, refreshing complement to the honey-coloured custom cabinetry and open shelving that warm up all that white and create cohesion throughout.

## Everything in its place

Speaking of cabinets and shelves, storage is key in a well-functioning kitchen, regardless of its size. What's

## pro-tip

In many kitchens, the island acts as the main eating area, so integrated seating is a must. When factoring seating into an island, size matters. It should measure at least three ft. by four ft., with two ft. per place setting. Take into account a countertop overhang of about 15 inches, to be used as a tabletop, with enough room underneath to pull up a seat. Allow a buffer of between 42 and 48 inches around the island for foot traffic.

visible, and equally important, what's invisible, will impact the look, feel and function of the space. Having some select pieces on display can enhance a kitchen's function, create visual interest and add warmth, a critical addition to a family-focussed room.

This kitchen was designed with the family's lifestyle and organizational style in mind, with a mix of hidden storage in the form of closed cabinets, balanced with some open shelving for featured items. Glass-enclosed cabinets are constructed of white oak with black-toned trim, with integrated

lighting that transforms this storage system into an artistic display.

## Stylish finish

While practicality takes precedence in a small but busy space, style is never far behind. As any good designer will attest, you can have it all. The look of this small kitchen was enhanced with elegant, gold-toned hardware and plumbing, which is warm and subtle, with just the right measure of good taste.

As you can see, you really can have it all – and even a small kitchen can surpass all expectations.



Lisa Kooistra is the creative director and principal designer for Lisa Kooistra Design. This multi-disciplinary design firm has become known for creating exceptional well curated interiors and custom builds. [lkdesigns.ca](http://lkdesigns.ca) @lisakooistradesigns