



THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE:

To make a 616-square-foot Vancouver condo feel bigger, interior designer Corey Klassen mixed custom furnishings, such as floating walnut shelves and a 19-foot-long banquette, with transformable pieces from Resource Furniture. Each one unfolds like a magic trick. The Cubista ottoman, below, contains metal frames and upholstered pads that assemble into five individual chairs. “That little cube is the best thing I’ve ever seen,” Klassen says. The sofa is from Camerich; the rug is from CB2.



TRICKS OF THE TRADE

A bevy of space-saving tricks and a fleet of transformable furniture rescue a formerly cramped condo.

Written by JAIME GILLIN • Photographed by TRACEY AYTON

Corey Klassen and Lindsey Richardson banter like old friends, not like interior designer and client. That rapport may trace back to the way their professional relationship began, back in 2013—standing side by side in Richardson’s tiny bathroom in Vancouver, pretending to brush their teeth together. It was their first consultation before Klassen renovated Richardson’s 616-square-foot Kitsilano condo, and he wanted his client to get real about how she needed her home to function. In addition to acting out real-life scenarios to gauge space requirements, Klassen asked “lots of interesting questions, from how much sock storage I needed to whether I really needed a bathtub,” Richardson says. (She didn’t.)

Drawing on his extensive renovation experience and aided by easy dialogue with his client, Klassen transformed Richardson’s postwar one-bedroom condo into a model of clever small-space living. Richardson, a sociology professor, had lived in her home for 10 years before hiring Klassen to update it, and she had a clear sense of her priorities. At the top of the list was entertaining. Richardson loves to host dinners and has lots of out-of-town friends and family who stay overnight. With its single bedroom, closed-off kitchen, and limited, poorly placed storage, her home fell far short of her needs.

Working with his longtime collaborator, Fifth Element Construction & Renovation, Klassen took portions of the »

GO LONG
RESIDENT LINDSEY RICHARDSON WANTED TO THROW BIG DINNER PARTIES, BUT A LARGE TABLE WASN'T PRACTICAL IN THE TIGHT SPACE. KLASSEN'S SOLUTION? THE TELESCOPING, MULTILEAF GOLIATH DINING TABLE, WHICH CAN SEAT UP TO 12 PEOPLE WHEN FULLY EXTENDED.

Goliath table, from \$4,350 at Resource Furniture, Vancouver, resourcefurniture.com





When you're furnishing a small space, think in terms of overlapping activities, Klassen suggests. The quintessential example in Richardson's home is the wall-mounted LGM Tavolo by Clei, which transforms in mere seconds from a desk and bookcase to a guest bed with side tables. "It's an office, reading area, and sleeping area, all resolved together in one functional space," Klassen says.

condo down to the studs, opening up the galley kitchen to the rest of the living space, removing three underused hall closets to free up square footage, and raising the ceilings by two inches—a minor change with a surprisingly big impact.

Three pieces of furniture, sourced from Resource Furniture in Vancouver, are key to the apartment's functionality. A desk and bookshelf in the living room tuck and swivel to reveal a pull-down Murphy bed, a comfortable landing pad for guests. A 17-inch-wide table with five hidden leaves can extend up to 115 inches, enabling Richardson to seat up to 12 people. And the top of a cube-shaped ottoman lifts off to reveal four small stools nested within it—seating for five condensed into a tiny footprint.

To get the most out of the remaining space, Klassen leaned on built-ins and other custom furniture, including a 19-foot-long banquette that runs the length of the apartment, from the dining to the living areas. Storage space hidden beneath the banquette's cushions contains everything from tools to linens. "If you open up to customization, you're able to add multiple functions in a small area and get the feeling of more space," Klassen advises.

That's precisely what Richardson has discovered since the renovation. "Pre-renovation, there is no way I would have been able to do anything remotely close to what I can do now," she says. "It feels like it has more rooms than it actually does." She recently invited a friend for dinner. Over the course of an evening, they cycled through her open living space: sipping wine on the banquette, chatting over the kitchen bar, dining at the table, drinking tea on the sofa. "Each small area serves a different purpose. Even though it's a single large room, the functionalities don't feel crammed together or forced," Richardson marvels. "It all just flows seamlessly from one space to the next." »

“I’ve learned that I PREFER LIVING IN A SMALL, WELL-DESIGNED SPACE to living in a large one. I like how everything is built for functionality and there’s no dead space. I had no idea that I could live so comfortably without expanding the floor plan.” —LINDSEY RICHARDSON, CLIENT



Klassen opened up the formerly claustrophobic, closed-off galley kitchen to the larger living space, replacing its standard appliances with European-sized 24-inch fixtures to better suit the scale of the room. A Caesarstone-topped eating bar enables Richardson to chat with dinner guests as she cooks. The curved custom walnut shelves echo the arc of the Brizo brushed-bronze faucet. *