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youthful modern



change *of* place

The light-filled kitchen is the hub of this Calgary home for homeowner and designer Erica Cook and her five sons, Connor, 20, Carter, 17, Riley, 16, Ethan, 13, and Lawson Luke, 5.

DESIGN, Moth Design, moth-design.com.



After a cross-country move and a huge renovation, designer Erica Cook and her five boys can finally call their house a home.

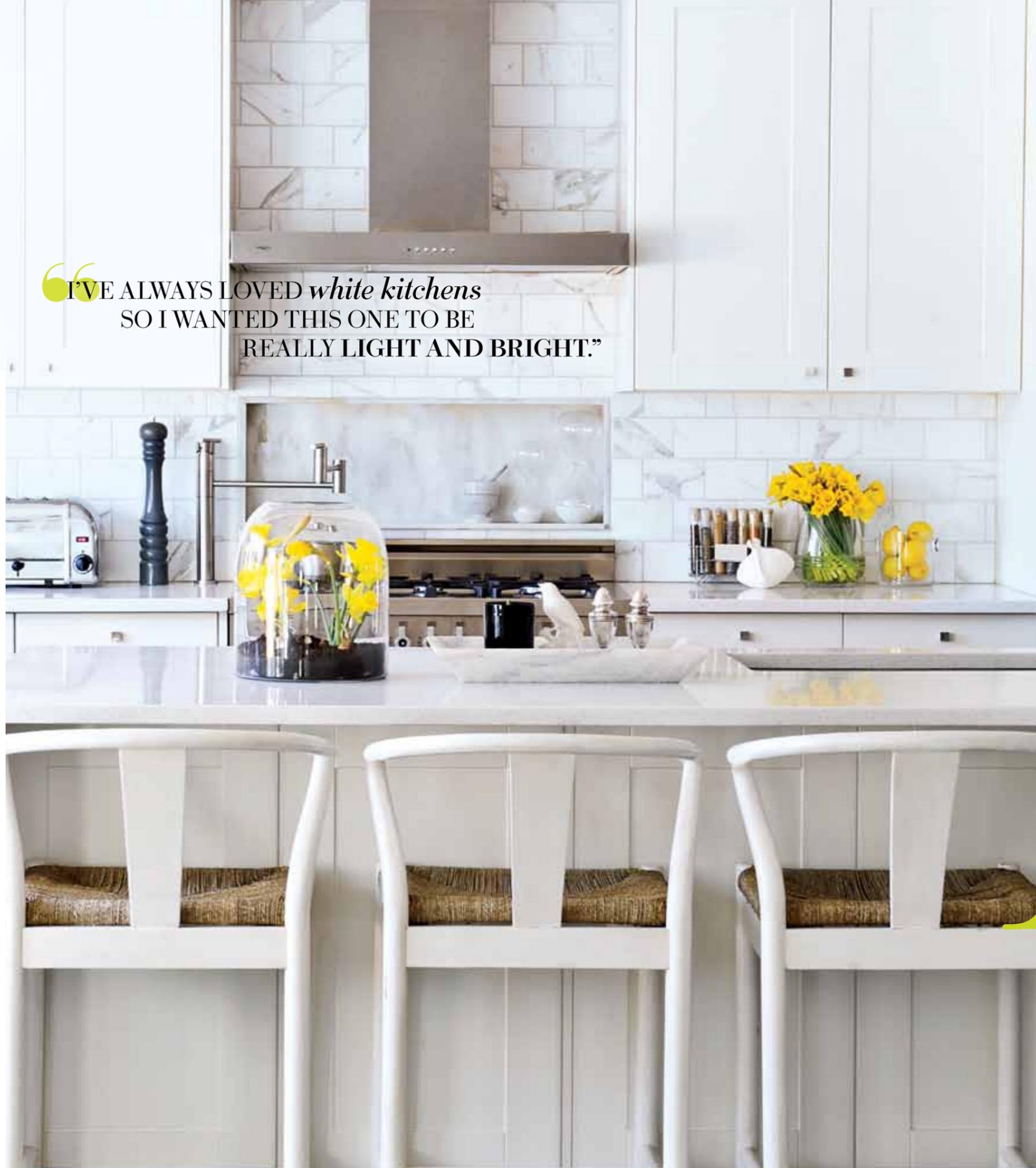
TEXT JENNIFER HUGHES | **PHOTOGRAPHY** TRACEY AYTON

RIGHT Erica designed the new kitchen using IKEA cabinetry and durable quartz countertops in an all-white palette. Carrara marble subway tiles, running from counter to ceiling, create a dramatic backsplash. The island can seat up to six at a time.

CABINETRY, HanStone Quartz
COUNTERTOPS in Swan Cotton, IKEA;
CABINETRY HARDWARE, Lee Valley
Tools; **BAR STOOLS**, HomeSense.

BELOW One end of the long living room has become a dining area with the addition of a round table and chairs. The artwork by Toronto artist Sharon Barr is a focal point in the space.

ARTWORK by Sharon Barr, Canvas Gallery.



“I’VE ALWAYS LOVED *white kitchens* SO I WANTED THIS ONE TO BE REALLY LIGHT AND BRIGHT.”



Anyone who’s lived through a major renovation can attest that it’s a stressful experience, but homeowner Erica Cook’s story takes the cake. Six years ago, having recently relocated from Toronto to Calgary, she was in the midst of a huge renovation of her 2,487-square-foot home while pregnant with her fifth son.

When the 1950s home was purchased, “It was a real peach,” says Erica with a laugh. It was riddled with 1980s country-style honey oak cabinets, stencilled accents and a cramped kitchen. But Erica, a designer who worked at Toronto’s Sarah Richardson Design right before moving west, saw plenty of potential behind the dated decor.

The biggest change was moving the kitchen from its small area at the front of the house to a much bigger space at the back overlooking the garden. “I knew with a family full of boys, the kitchen would always be the hub of the home,” Erica explains. “And since we spend so much time there, I wanted to move it away from the front of the house, where it felt like we had no privacy.”

The kitchen almost tripled in size with the switch, taking over what had previously been an underused dining room. Erica did a lot of the kitchen remodel herself, including building all the cabinets. She mixed different materials, but kept everything white: “I’ve always loved →



RIGHT In the sophisticated living room, Erica used a hot glue gun, black gros-grain ribbon and black pompom trim to jazz up the simple cream sofa and the inexpensive drapery panels.

SOFA, Pottery Barn;
DRAPERY, IKEA.

OPPOSITE This wall in the living room contains some of Erica's most meaningful treasures, including a pair of her own ink drawings, a framed moth (the namesake of her blog) from her mother, a gold wishbone and a vintage postal bag one of her sons found in the park.

Fauteuil **ARMCHAIRS**, Darrell Ternes; zebra **ARTWORK**, Carly Martin; horse **BUST**, HomeSense; bee **ARTWORK** by Annette Kraft van Ermel, Canvas Gallery; gold **WISHBONE**, Zhush; feather **ARTWORK**, Amber Alexander.



“*MY style* HAS ALWAYS BEEN DEFINED BY LAYERED NEUTRALS.”



“THE BEDROOM IS A *very calming space* FOR ME. I LOVE THE TONE-ON-TONE LOOK OF LAYERED GREYS, WHITES AND IVORIES AND THE SILVERY GREY SILK DRAPERY.”



OPPOSITE The living room's fireplace was refaced in marble tiles that Erica found for a song. As for how she keeps such a pristine room looking great with five boys? "No one goes in there!" she admits with a laugh.

LEFT Greys, whites and creams make up the soft, neutral palette in the master bedroom, which acts as Erica's serene retreat from life with five boys. She framed the agate slices, which hang above the bed, herself.

ABOVE Erica, pictured here with her youngest son, Lawson Luke, is a designer and blogger.

TOP Whenever possible, Erica insists that her design clients select nightstands with plentiful storage. She lives by this rule in her own bedroom, where substantial drawers hide lots of stuff.

NIGHTSTAND, Pottery Barn.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

white kitchens so I wanted this one in particular to be really light and bright."

A large centre island makes a casual gathering and eating spot for the family, and a smaller dining area tucked into one end of the spacious 23-foot-long living room stands in for a more formal dining room. Now, where the old kitchen used to be is a comfortable family room, with a white leather sofa and loveseat that invite lounging and stand up to use by the boys and the family's much-loved chihuahua-Scottie mix, Molly.

With the major remodel done, Erica turned her attention to the decor and furnishings. Her trademark aesthetic of layered neutrals with crisp

detailing is seen throughout the new kitchen, living room and master bedroom. The living room is a chic study in black and white, thanks to its simple white furniture and drapery paired with black embellishments and accessories that offer sophisticated contrast. Erica had the fireplace refaced in large marble tiles for an elegant modern look that mirrors the kitchen's marble niche that faces it at the opposite end of the house.

In the master bedroom, serene layers of cream, white and pale grey offer a calming sanctuary from hectic days. Here's where Erica enjoys post-renovation life. Those long, crazy days are long past, and life, along with the dust, has settled.