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Has the Coolest  
Loft in Vancouver**

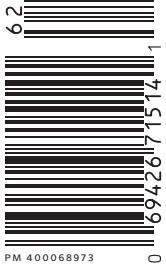
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## At Last

It took a decade of renovations, but this Main Street loft finally feels like home.

Any homeowner who's lived through a renovation and design overhaul knows all too well that Rome wasn't built in a day. But for one Vancouver entrepreneur, the transformation of a stark Main Street loft into his dream abode was an especially taxing practice in patience.

"It's been kind of a 10-year process, to be honest," says Gary Baerg. "I started renting the loft in 2005 and I was running my business out of there. It was definitely a live-work space."

Baerg, who owns an information technology support company, eventually moved his work into a separate office but decided to transition from tenant to homeowner when the loft went on the market a few years later. He commissioned Shape Architecture's Alec Smith to make over the entire space, relocating the cramped kitchen and installing a second bathroom on the upper level in a two-phase project that spanned four years. But because he hadn't consulted Smith on furniture and finishing touches, the suite still felt incomplete.

"It was a really beautiful place, but it was cold—my old furniture just didn't fit," Baerg recalls. "I didn't want to sink into the couch when I came home for the day. It almost looked half not-lived-in."



"The space was really airy, floaty—just kind of out of balance," says designer Jamie Deck. "So we grounded it with dark elements."

**Wood Works**  
Behind the electric fireplace you'll find a 12-foot-tall installation of birch panels. Even when the fire is off, it adds a warmth to the loft's cool palette.



The design team played off the loft's oak flooring, echoing the wood in varying tones throughout different parts of the home.



Enter interior designer Jamie Deck, director of local design firm Shift Interiors, who devised a plan to finish the renovated bachelor pad once and for all. On the agenda: creating a clean, enclosed feel in each room to offset the loft's open-concept layout, maximizing seating for entertaining, and incorporating ample storage for Baerg's hoard of personal treasures, which includes an extensive and well-rounded whisky collection.

These goals needed to be met while maintaining Baerg's penchant for minimalism and juxtaposition of dark and light colours. The walls were to remain white, as were the ceiling, the bulk of furnishings and decor. As a result, Deck introduced a variety of shades of black and grey to create contrast, and punches of texture—like

custom drapery and plenty of lush greenery—to help ground the breezy all-white space.

In the living area, a charcoal Nathan Anthony sectional, oversized BoConcept floor lamp and plush leather armchairs lend weight to the room's 15-foot ceilings and unadulterated walls. A grid-tufted headboard and quilted two-toned bedding exude a similar sense upstairs, countering the glossy white nightstands, DIY-hacked Ikea dressers and custom shoe cabinet.

"The space was really airy, floaty, kind of out of balance," says Deck. "So we grounded it the best we could with dark elements, creating contrast."

Deck and her team also played off the loft's oak flooring (installed during the reno), echoing the wood in

**Just Right**  
Though many pieces in this bachelor pad are off-the-shelf—like the charcoal Nathan Anthony sectional sofa and leather Melbourne armchairs from Mint Interiors (opposite)—other elements are tailor-made for the space (custom curtains from Layers and Layers and a custom credenza, top right, designed by Shift Interiors).



varying tones throughout different parts of the home. Both the coffee table and custom media-console-slash-planter unit are made from rift-cut timber, while the dining area exhibits its own natural grain with a custom oak table that's large enough to seat up to 12 people.

Small hits of low-maintenance foliage by Greenstems enhance the loft's earthy vibe, further grounding the space without compromising Baerg's staunch, streamlined aesthetic. Tucked behind the living room's electric fireplace, however, is perhaps the pad's most striking organic feature: a 12-foot-tall wood installation, hand-crafted from panels of real birch tree. "That was kind of an important piece, just to bring warmth into the space and make it feel really homey," explains Deck.

The sentiment is certainly appreciated by Baerg's many guests, who hightail it to the nook at every visit.

#### **What's Cooking?**

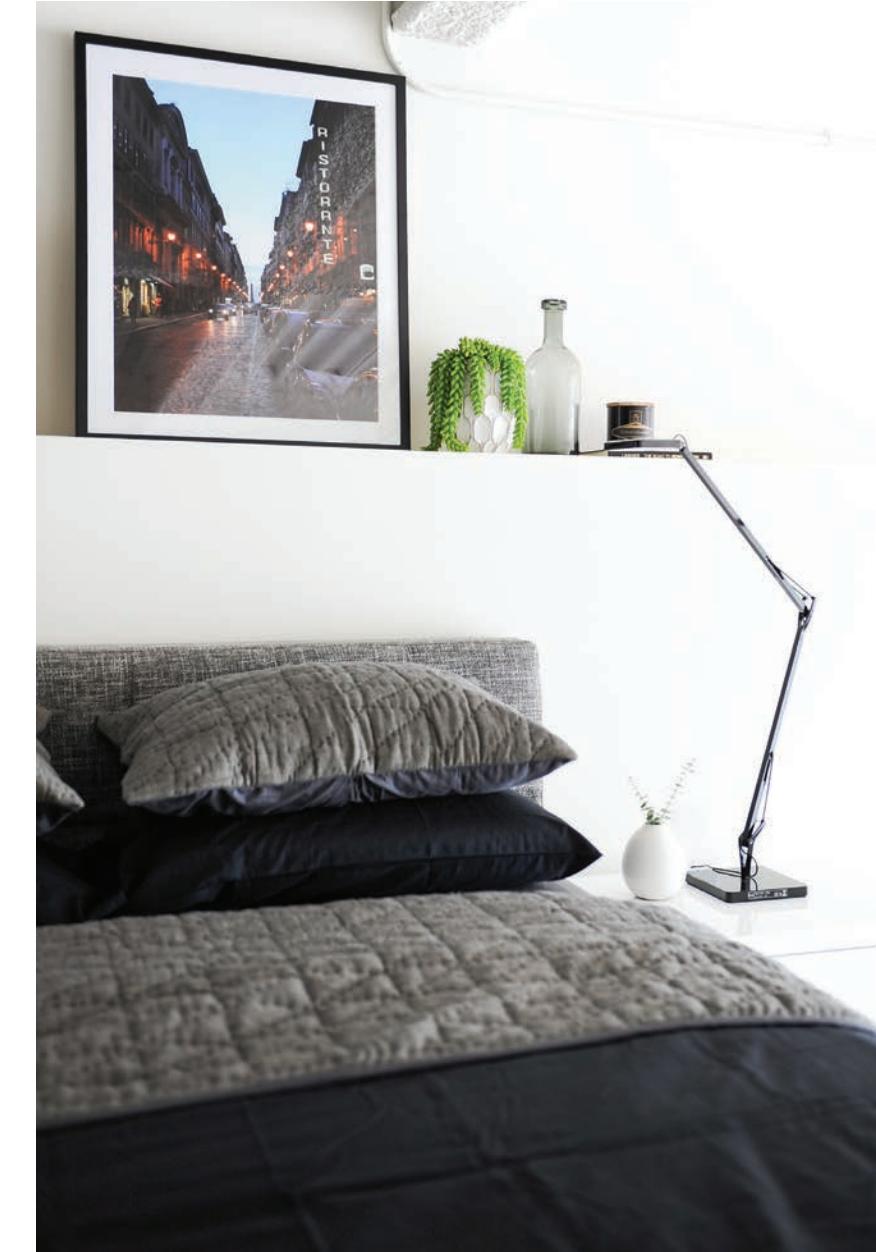
Though there's no formal dining room in this bachelor pad, four black leather Mobital Bond bar stools line the waterfall island in the kitchen (above). A simple glass backsplash adds a subtly reflective element to the minimalist space.



**Off the Wall**  
Open shelving in a room with extra-high ceilings is a smart choice: pretty ceramics, plants and even framed artwork help break up the expansive Chantilly Lace-white kitchen wall.



**Art Walk**  
In the loft entryway, Baerg's travel photos are showcased in generous black frames with ample white space for maximum impact.



"It's like they're tractor-beamed into the corner by the fire," says Baerg. "People love being in a blanket there; it's unbelievably cozy."

Before reaching the living room, visitors are also wowed by the loft's entryway, which showcases a series of photographs snapped by Baerg during his travels. The images, displayed in generous black frames (with extra-wide matting) that float as high as the ceiling, turn the foyer into a quirky gallery space that's amplified by a sparkling, multi-orbed pendant lamp and an avant-garde arrangement of metal wall hooks.

"I'm really, really happy with the way it turned out," says Baerg. And what do his friends and family think of the completed space? "It's a mix of 'finally' and 'this is awesome,'" he laughs. **CONDO**

What do his friends and family think of Baerg's completed space? "It's a mix of 'finally' and 'this is awesome,'" he laughs.

