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A penthouse condo defies Vancouver's overcast weather by being designed in an all-white palette

BY KAREN SEIDMAN • PHOTOGRAPHY: EMA PETER





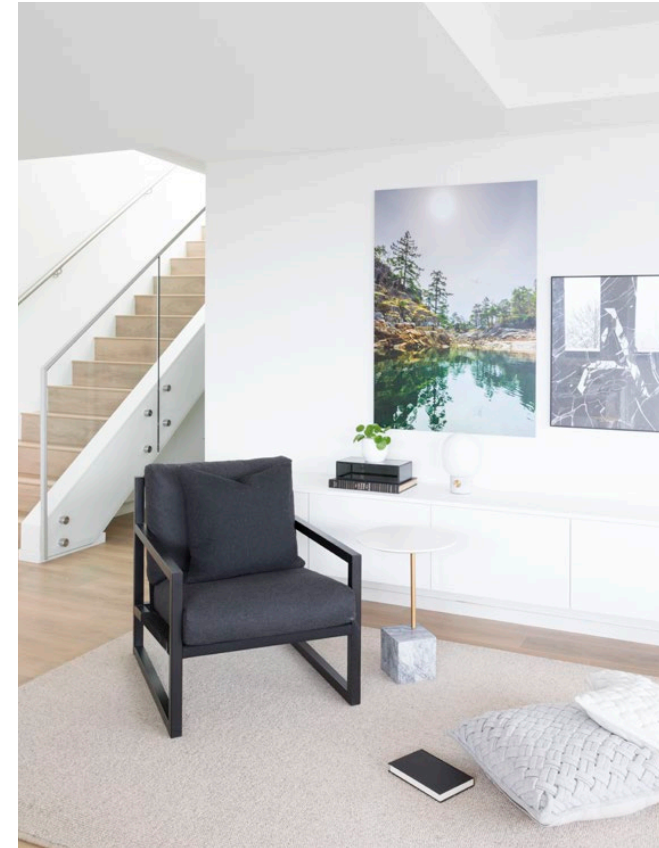
WHEN DESIGNER JAMIE DECK got her instructions from a young couple who were decorating their new penthouse condo in a trendy area of Vancouver, there were two main conditions: Keep it on budget and make it white.

Well, it is white. "They love modern design and wanted a bright, organic, modern home," Deck says of the couple, Melanie and Chris Adkins.

As for the budget, Deck, owner of Shift Interiors, says they worked on a high-low premise, going for some custom items but reining in costs by also using inexpensive Ikea pieces that fit the condo's modern decor.

"The budget was the challenge to get the look they wanted," Deck says. She offset the cost of some premium items, such as the stylish Bensen sofa, with some inexpensive

ones, including the Ikea console that sits beneath the TV in the living room and offers great liquor and wine storage as well as a bar that opens up when the homeowners entertain. Next to that console is a custom light-oak cabinet. And that sits next to the inexpensive but trendy dining room chairs from Article. ☛



The whiteness of the condo is complemented by such black accents as this contemporary-style chair, while a nature photo, by photographer David Haakonson, adds colour to the space. Art image on the right by Playtype.





“Her use of neutral tones really creates a calm space and allows for the beauty of the outdoors to come in.”

Designer Jamie Deck used Oxford White by Benjamin Moore, a “warm white,” on the walls to prevent a stark aesthetic. The custom-made bed, from CF Interiors, provides additional and much-needed storage.

Despite the couple’s request for an all-white look, with a few black elements – which Deck encouraged them to include for some dramatic effect – she believes the outcome is surprisingly warm and inviting. “It’s contemporary-modern but not cold-modern,” she says. The designer can take credit for part of that, including the decision to use Benjamin Moore’s Oxford White paint, which creates a warm white, and for integrating texture and richness from the wood floors and accents. But part of the warmth comes from the panoramic views; wraparound windows and a balcony on the 1,263-foot corner penthouse condo brings the outdoors inside. The condo faces northwest and has sweeping views of the mountains and all the way from

Burnaby to Queen Elizabeth Park, with parts of downtown.

“It’s a modern space but around it is organic, there’s greenery and mountains that bring in colour and warmth,” Deck says.

And let’s not forget that this is Vancouver, where the weather can best be described as grey. The pervasive white, the wall-to-wall windows and the skylight all work to make the home bright and warm even on those dull, overcast days.

Another challenge Deck faced with the project was creating ample storage space. Some cabinetry helped, but she also chose a bed from CF Interiors and customized it to create storage. It lifts from one end to store winter clothing.



A staircase in the condo leading to a private rooftop patio provided an opportunity for custom storage underneath; it houses overflow kitchen appliances and dishes, shoes and books. “All of the storage that she created is a condo owner’s dream,” says homeowner Melanie Adkins.

She says Deck overcame all obstacles to provide her clients with the stunning, white contemporary home they wanted. “We are beyond thrilled with the home that Jamie created,” Melanie says. “She took all of the ideas that were in our heads and brought them to life. Her use of neutral tones really creates a calm space and allows for the beauty of the outdoors to come in.” ➔

(Left) Storage was a critical issue but the staircase up to a private rooftop patio gave Deck some extra space to add customized storage units. “This is where extra kitchen supplies, books and shoes are stored,” she says.

A mix of custom-made shelves and Ikea boxes create a unique wall unit in the office. The whole condo, highlighted by wrap-around windows and stunning views, has an almost “mystical” feel, according to Deck.

