



A soothing soft grey palette and low modern furnishings put the focus on the loft's unique architectural features like the stunning arched windows, painted brick walls and raw cement ceiling. The bulkheads house lighting and frame the living area within the larger space. **Design, sofa, ottoman, tables,** De Poitiers; **rug,** Y&Co; **grey chairs,** Montis; **white table lamp,** Foscarini; **boxes,** Celadon; **wall colour,** Balboa Mist (OC-27), Benjamin Moore.

The Modern Age

RENO NO. 1 THE PIED-À-TERRE

DESIGNER JULIE CHARBONNEAU
BRINGS A DATED MONTREAL
LOFT INTO THE HERE AND NOW.

Text by CATHERINE SWEENEY | *Photography by* MONIC RICHARD

Against the clean, white kitchen, the large, dark-wood dining table takes centre stage under a showstopping light fixture. With no rug beneath the table, the legs of the chairs create an intriguing reflection in the glossy epoxy floors. **Pendant light**, Artemide; **table**, Treebone Design; **cabinets**, Eurosystems; **chairs**, stools, Avant-Scène; **vase**, Celadon.



Owner Julie Charbonneau added focus to the kitchen by dramatically framing the door to the bedroom and the window beyond with extra-wide wood trim. **Wood island section, doorway,** Treebone Design.

The lights are on, and the heat is turned up all before designer Julie Charbonneau arrives at her Montreal pied-à-terre. Talk about a warm welcome; the smart home is wired so she can remotely let someone in, look around her loft, adjust the heating and music — all from the touch of her iPad. No wonder Julie feels like James Bond when she's here. "It's upbeat; it's young. Maybe it's my midlife crisis," jokes the designer, who owns the elegant interiors shop De Poitiers, located in historic Old Montreal. Julie is known for her classic French interiors rife with antiques, and richly layered with colour and luxurious fabrics, so this year-long project took her well outside of her usual comfort zone.

With this dreamy pied-à-terre came an opportunity for Julie to hang up her toile hat and express her modern side. "I felt like I needed some clean, white space. The other style comes out very naturally for me. This was a challenge, but it was very refreshing," she says. "Lofts are cool, but from wherever you stand you can see everything," she says, noting that a very spare hand was needed to turn this space into a cohesive whole.

And though Julie has veered from her classic French style, she has put the emphasis on the beautiful bones of the space, something she has always done when designing homes with detailed coffered ceilings and incredible millwork. Here, the arched windows are the star attraction, and the concrete ceilings and white flooring act as a seamless cocoon in which Julie's designs can flourish.

When she purchased the space in 2010, it was chopped up into different "rooms," where new colours and materials appeared at each turn. To make the space work better, she pulled out several half-walls and took down superfluous window coverings and light fixtures, allowing natural light to flood the

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IT HAD TO GO!



PROBLEM: Poor use of space.
SOLUTION: The walk-in closet was removed to open up the bedroom.



PROBLEM: Choppy division of space.
SOLUTION: A large, clunky fireplace was removed in the living area to improve traffic flow and views.



PROBLEM: A mishmash of finishes looked cluttered and dated.

SOLUTION: Some upper cupboards were removed, and the old cabinets were refaced in a cohesive high-gloss lacquer white.



PROBLEM: Dated finishes and awkward steps up to the tub.
SOLUTION: The steps were removed, and a new freestanding tub was installed in a sleek all-white space.



TOP RIGHT: Julie (*above*) installed an exquisite wood vanity in the powder room that's made from the same palisander wood used elsewhere in the loft. The subtle cutout handles and dramatic round mirror are luxurious touches in the clean-lined space. *All flowers, Flore; vanity, Treebone Design; Grigio Saraceno floor tile, Ciot.*

Saarinen table in the striking black and white entry is a modern take on the centre hall pedestal table. *Bocci light, Artemide; art by Robert Longo.* BOTTOM CENTRE: The original built-in shelves in the lounge area were painted out in an understated white. *Bag sculptures by Jonathan Seliger, Galerie de Bellefeuille; paintings, Robert Rauschenberg.*

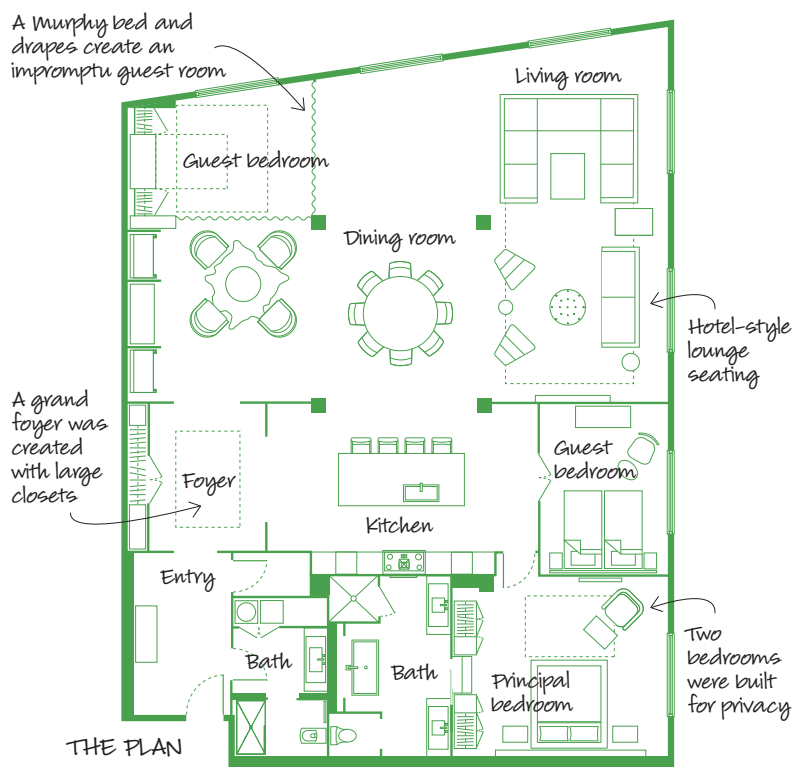




JULIE'S RENO WISH LIST

1. **Create continuity.** Julie removed any obstructions to the gorgeous views, and used a seamless palette for the open-concept space.
2. **Close off a few rooms.** For privacy within the loft, Julie added a principal bedroom, and a second room that can be used as an office or a breakfast room.
3. **Update finishes.** A hodgepodge of styles was streamlined by using palisander wood throughout, refacing kitchen cabinets, and coating the entire floor in white epoxy.

A bold woven photograph dominates the all-white bathroom. The sculptural bathtub has a unique built-in soap dish. **Artwork** by Martin Rondeau, Galerie LeRoy.



TOP RIGHT: The ensuite's floating white vanity is mounted on a dramatic full-height mirror. The chrome faucet punctuates the neutral space with its unique shape and tone, and continues the black and white palette. **Vanity**, Ebenco.

BELOW: The principal bedroom feels like a luxurious hotel suite with its floor-to-ceiling drapes, cosy chaise and soft upholstered bed with wall-to-wall headboard. **Bed, drapes**, De Poitiers; **rug**, Y&Co; **table**, Minotti; **art**, David Drebin.



Floor plan illustration by Jenn Lawrence