

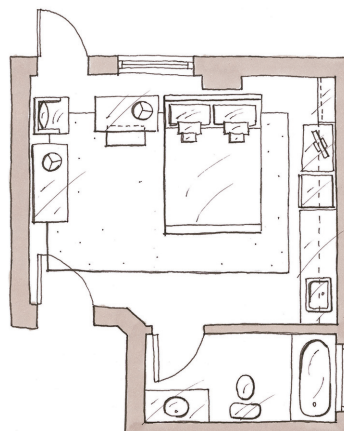


## Small is Grand

IN THE HANDS OF A TORONTO DESIGNER WITH A PASSION FOR BOLD PALETTES AND FINE ANTIQUES, A CLOSET-SIZED APARTMENT BECOMES A CHIC GENTLEMAN'S RETREAT.

180 square feet

For Thomas Smythe, a pragmatic choice resulted in an unexpected treasure. After selling his house (featured in *H&H*, January 2006), the cast member of HGTV's *Design Inc.* and *Sarah's House* moved into this inexpensive Toronto apartment while looking for the right place to remodel. "I can live here while renovating a house and not have to deal with the dust and noise and everything that makes a reno difficult," he says. He treats the space like a room in a boutique hotel, often ordering in from the restaurant downstairs; to make it feel like a retreat, he painted the walls dark, curtained off the kitchen and incorporated his favourite furnishings and collectibles.



## KEEP WITH TRADITION

Thomas rejects the belief that small spaces should be furnished with contemporary elements and instead gravitates toward traditional items with a sense of history. An antique writing desk serves as Thomas's dining table, night table and desk. "It's the best thing I own," he says. "It's not some piece of convertible modern furniture, but it does the trick for everything."

LEFT: Blind fabric, Designer Fabrics; pencil drawing, Patina Antiques; lamp, Of Things Past; bench, Chair Table Lamp. RIGHT: Ralph Lauren Home goblets, Kate Spade dishes, William Ashley China; lamp, Of Things Past. ABOVE: Eyeglasses, Rapp Optical; plate, 21 Club; alarm clock, Cartier.

Go to [houseandhome.com](http://houseandhome.com) for a video tour of Thomas's tiny apartment.





## MASK UNSIGHTLY ELEMENTS

Knowing he wasn't going to be investing in a new kitchen in the rental space, Thomas installed luxurious black drapery to conceal the apartment's dated kitchen, which he also uses for storage. "The only nice things behind there are my clothes and dishes. Everything else is just functional, so I wanted to make it disappear," he says. "I can't do magic, so I made drapes." The chandelier was passed down from Thomas's late grandmother, Dorothea Smythe, also a designer. The checkered blanket was made by his sister as a Christmas present one year; the vibrant quilt is an antique. Drapery fabric, Designer Fabrics; television, Panasonic; pillows, Ralph Lauren; bed, L'Atelier.

## DON'T BE AFRAID OF DARK

Thomas's hectic life means he doesn't get home until the sun goes down, so he created a space conducive to his schedule. "I wanted a nighttime space, so I didn't do bright and white," he says. Instead, a rich charcoal wall colour imbues the room with depth and drama, and sets off the wood tones of his antiques, such as the Biedermeier chest of drawers and English sleigh bed. Chair, chest, mirror, horns, Chair Table Lamp; pillow, L'Atelier; photograph, Canvas Gallery; vase, Hardware; ebony box, Absolutely North; lamp, Of Things Past.

