

DESIGN

INTERIORS

# Made for two

*An interior designer's marital home in Wan Chai is a masterclass in how to create space in a tiny flat.*

TEXT **JANE STEER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **FAN WU**  
STYLING **SHANA BUCHANAN**

**Living area** The sofa was HK\$3,990 from Pricerite ([hongkong.pricerite.com.hk](http://hongkong.pricerite.com.hk)). The Cobrina stool (HK\$3,000) and bench (HK\$9,400) were from Out of Stock ([store.outofstock.com.hk](http://store.outofstock.com.hk)). The Plane triangle pendant light was HK\$4,500 from Tom Dixon ([tomdixon.net](http://tomdixon.net)). The Calcic oak laminate flooring is from Sunwood Building Materials (308 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai, tel: 2827 0990); it was also used on the raised study floor, which was custom made by Mister Glory Contracting ([misterglory.com](http://misterglory.com)) for HK\$25,000.

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**W**hen it comes to purchasing property, the smart money makes location the priority. It is advice interior designer Glory Tam Chi-kiu, founder of Mister Glory, seems to have taken to heart. Over the past few years, he has purchased not one but three apartments in the same tower block in Star Street, the fashionable heart of Wan Chai.

"I love living here," he says. "It's a great area, and close to work."

So when he and his bride-to-be, head-hunter Eli Wong Wing-man, decided to live together, he sold his small bachelor pad and the couple bought a slightly larger apartment upstairs. (Tam also owns another flat in the building, which is rented.) They married in March; her dried bouquet is one of the few ornaments in the apartment.

"It's my 'third episode' here," Tam says. "I've owned three apartments in this block and they have all had different themes: retro,

futuristic and timeless. This is the timeless episode. I wanted it to be eternally modern."

It turns out that Wong was quite influential in setting the brief.

"She'd seen the retro and futuristic looks in the other apartments, but she wanted something more practical. This is her favourite of the three apartments I've designed here. I like it best, too," he adds, loyally. "Simplicity was the key – not much colour variation. White is comfortable, but when you do add colour, you really see it."

He used a limited palette of materials: pale-wood laminate floor, pale-wood veneer furniture, smooth white walls and white marble details for a touch of luxury. The neutral colours help the apartment feel larger and more airy. With only 369 square feet to play with, Tam used every trick in the book to maximise the space. Planning was crucial.

"We started with the bathroom," he says.

**Bedroom** The glass partition allows light from the two bedroom windows into the living area. It cost HK\$35,000 and was custom made by Mister Glory Contracting, along with the bed (HK\$17,500) and headboard (HK\$8,000). The side table (HK\$500) and bedlinen were from Muji ([muji.com/hk-en](http://muji.com/hk-en)).



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"We moved it from the centre of the apartment into what used to be the kitchen, and moved the kitchen to the other side of the apartment."

In the new floor plan, the bathroom door is flush with the living-room wall and "disappears" when the door is closed. The kitchen nook opens into the small dining area, which flows into the living room and, up a step, into the study.

A half wall separates the study and living area, and there's a glass wall to the bedroom, both of which make the space look larger and allow light to flood into what would otherwise be a dark living room.

"The glass wall also lets us watch TV from bed," Tam says.

Thinking ahead, he added details that will allow the couple to adapt the space for more privacy. A groove in the ceiling next to the bedroom wall is ready for a blind, and Tam says, "We installed a track in the ceiling above the study so we can easily insert a door if we have a child and need to make that a separate room."

As always with small apartments, storage is an issue. Here, it's discreetly tucked into every conceivable space. There's a storage space under the raised study floor, including a drawer, used for socks, in the step itself.

Floor-to-ceiling cupboards line entire

walls in the bedroom, living area and kitchen. In the bathroom, as well as a classic mirrored cabinet, there's a second large wall-hung cabinet hidden behind a marble panel. Even the headboard contains a hidden cupboard. To maximise storage in the living area, the TV is fixed to a sliding wall in front of a large cupboard, where the couple keep their audio-visual equipment (see *Tried + tested*) and myriad other possessions.

It's not the only ingenious solution. In the study, tucked against the half wall, the built-in desk is hinged so it can be folded back out of the way to allow another panel, under the window, to drop down and Tam's full-sized electric keyboard to slide out.

A golden Tom Dixon pendant lamp hangs like a piece of jewellery amid the neutrality. There's no art and few decorations. However, the glass bedroom door opens outwards, framing the side of a kitchen cabinet, which doubles as a whiteboard for magnets, postcards and notes. Other than that, the couple plan to keep the apartment as uncluttered as possible.

"Eli doesn't really like pictures – we want to keep it clean. It's a choice to not hang any art," Tam says. "We have busy lives – stressful – so when we come home, we want somewhere plain, comfortable and calm. Timeless." ■

**Dining area** The table (HK\$12,000), grey chair (HK\$5,000) and chair with blue cushion (HK\$5,000) were all by Cobrina from Out of Stock.



**Kitchen** The marble splashback was from Wing Ming Marble (164 Lockhart Road, tel: 2802 3041). The built-in cabinets were HK\$45,000 though Mister Glory Contracting. The mixer tap (HK\$1,500) was from Classic Bathroom Accessories (245 Lockhart Road, tel: 2802 0382).

**Study** "I used the same oak laminate on the floor, walls and cupboard doors because I wanted to make this a unique area – it provides separation from the rest of the space," says Glory Tam. The chair (HK\$4,000) was from Out of Stock. The white oak veneer desk (HK\$5,000) was custom made by Mister Glory Contracting.

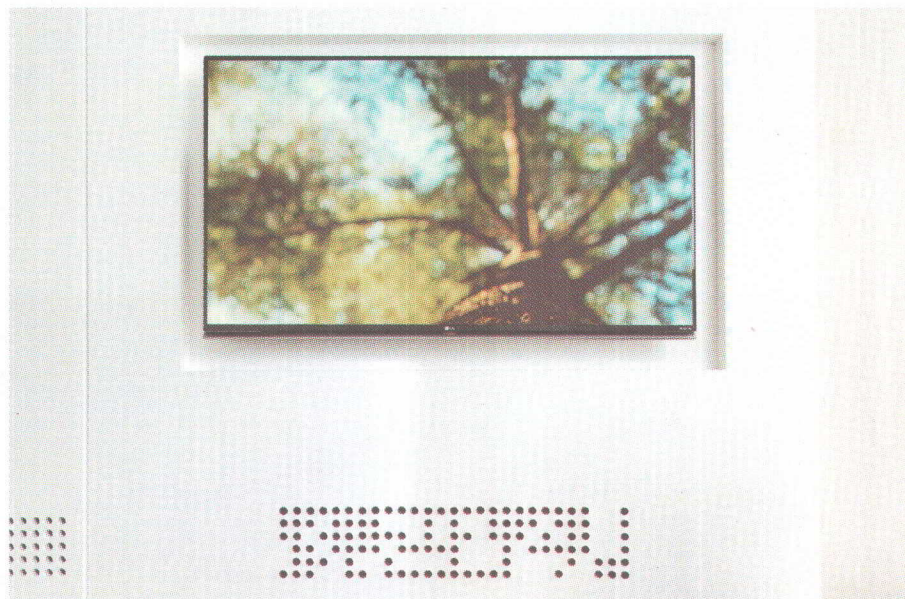




**Keyboard cupboard** A clever solution to fitting both a desk and a keyboard into a restricted space, the desk is hinged and folds away to allow a drop-down door to open and the keyboard to slide out. The cupboard was designed by Tam and built by Mister Glory Contracting for HK\$7,500.



**Bathroom** Instead of installing a bath, Tam created a tub by building a low wall around the shower. "I wanted it to be lower than a typical tub," he says. The ceramic wall and tub tiles were HK\$890 each from Anta Building Material Supplier (antahk.com). The bronze shower was from Classic Bathroom Accessories and the marble sink was designed by Tam and custom made by Wing Ming Marble. The custom-made mirrored cabinet was HK\$3,200 from Mister Glory Contracting.



## TRIED + TESTED

**Holes in the wall** The usual spaghetti of wiring behind the TV is hidden away inside the sliding wall, and the AV equipment – DVD player, cable box – is tucked neatly into the cupboard behind the sliding door. Glory Tam drilled a series of holes into the sliding wall to allow the remote controls to work.

"We used copper pipe seals to line the holes – they were the perfect size and shape," says Tam. "Do the holes mean anything? No ..."

The sliding wall (HK\$24,000) and built-in cupboards (HK\$28,000) were designed by Tam and installed by Mister Glory Contracting.