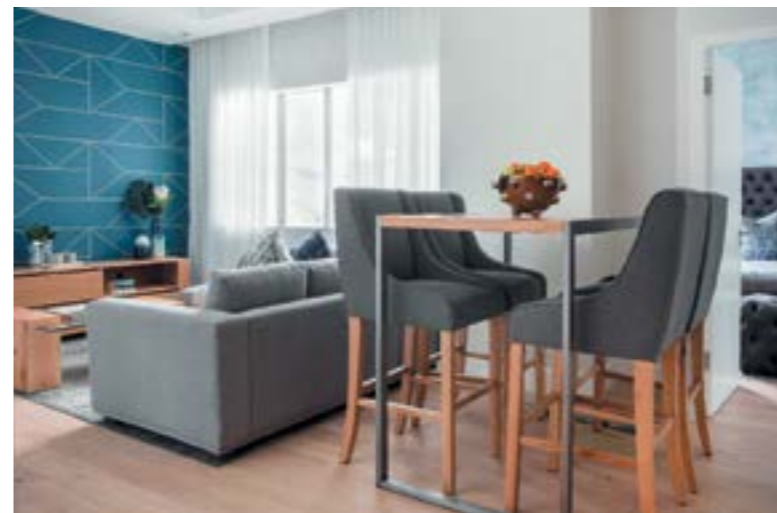


Problem SOLVED

Mismatched furniture, dark corner, or small space? These experts solve three common design dilemmas in a few easy steps

Vases and accessories from Arabesque.

TEXT DINA VENTER AND CANDICE BOTHA PHOTOGRAPHS KARL ROGERS AND SALLY CHANCE



DESIGN DILEMMA: FURNISHING A SMALL, OPEN-PLAN LIVING AREA

“When it comes to small spaces, every decision you make has to have a positive impact,” says interior designer Kimberley Richmond of Beautiful Spaces who designed this 48m² open-plan kitchen, living and dining room for a client in Cape Town. She has the following tips:

● **Choose light furniture** “Here I opted for a combination of pale grey upholstery and pale wood furniture that doesn’t overwhelm

the space. While it serves a purpose, it makes the room feel light and bright at the same time.”

● **Have furniture custom-made** “Do some planning on paper and make sure that there is enough room to walk around the furniture once it’s in position. If necessary, have it custom-made to fit, it’s not as expensive as you might think. This way you can add extras, for example I included drawers in the narrow TV cabinet to hide the clutter.”

● **Dress windows with sheer fabrics** “Sheer white linen provides privacy while letting in light and doesn’t make a room feel too closed in.”

● **Introduce height** “Furniture that’s all the same height looks very one-dimensional. I came up with this high dining table especially for small apartments. Visually it doesn’t take up room and it can also serve as a bar.”

● **Consider lighting** “Lighting can transform an open plan living space. Here, I had a perimeter bulkhead installed with downlights placed 1,2m apart, which makes the room seem larger.”

● **Keep it sleek** “In the kitchen area, integrate appliances and choose cabinet doors without handles to keep visual clutter to a minimum.”

● **The wow factor** “Always include a focal point to lift a room. I introduced my own geometric wallpaper design in the living area to visually stretch the focal wall. Using wallpaper also means that you can have pattern and interest without filling walls with pictures.” ▷