

SMALL SPACE BIG IMPACT

AN INTIMATE LOFT PACKED WITH STYLE

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Paul Corrie, seated on a sofa that he designed, Steve Ewens, and Cindy, their Shih-Poo, live stylishly in an 800-square-foot Adams Morgan loft.

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Corrie and Ewens painted the kitchen cabinets white and the floor black to create a strong contrast.



An eclectic chandelier from Theodore's.

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Sometimes great things come in small packages, or in this case a loft in Adams Morgan that’s just shy of 800 square feet. Paul Corrie, a designer at Theodore’s in Georgetown, recently transformed his loft into a sophisticated and serene space for himself, his partner Steve Ewens, and Cindy, their Shih-Poo, who is half Shih-Tzu and half poodle. Part of Corrie’s secret is his spare design; another is a wonder closet that holds almost everything, including a wireless home office.

A neutral palette, black floors, and carefully chosen furnishings define this pristine, clutter-free, one-bedroom loft. Corrie, 28, who earned a law degree from Dickinson School of Law in Pennsylvania before turning to his true passion – designing interiors, efficiently uses every inch of his new abode. “In spaces like this, less is more. You have to pick and chose so what you have is what you love,” Corrie says. “You definitely have to pare down and get rid of anything that’s not a necessity. We sold old furniture on Craig’s List.”

Ewens, 32, adds, “It’s a small place, but it’s big in the right areas. We’re never bumping into each other. It’s very easy for two people to live in.”

ADAPTING TO THE SPACE

Working within an industrial space with exposed pipes and 10½-foot-high concrete ceilings in a former office building that was converted into lofts challenged Corrie to stretch beyond his more traditional aesthetic.

“You really have to stay true to the architecture of the space. While my taste is more traditional, the lines had to reflect a more modern feel here,” he says. For example, Corrie chose a chandelier with small exposed bulbs and chunky smoked glass pieces on metal strips that gracefully wrap into a spherical form, a design he calls “urban eclectic,” for the entry. “It has an old feel to it, but still would only work in a space like this,” he says. The small, clean-lined sand sofa that he custom designed for the living room illustrates his point, too. “The lines are true to the architecture, but I wouldn’t necessarily use it in a more traditional setting,” Corrie says.



Entryway and ceiling
Benjamin Moore
Iron Mountain
2134-30*



Living room sofa
Glant Textiles
The Salsa Collection
Cha Cha 9683
Sand 02



Living room sofa pillows
Donghia
Relaxed Linen 7900
Basil 14



Draperies
Donghia
Pluscious Wool Velvet
10028
Pecan 08



In the bedroom, Corrie uses a carved wood panel from Thailand that he found at Theodore's to create a headboard, a 1970s Kent Coffey nightstand he purchased on Ebay (right), an X end table from Theodore's, Frette bedding, and an Oushak rug circa 1920 from Timothy Paul Carpets + Textiles.



Bedroom
Benjamin Moore
Fairview Taupe
HC-85*



Dining room chairs
Barclay Butera
Eggshell Tuscany
Linen 60-7S



Since this loft only has windows on one wall, in the combined living/dining area, Corrie bought an 8 foot by 5½ foot mirror with a 19th century French frame and leaned it against the "dining room" wall. It reflects light beautifully from the street outside the window. "I knew it would open up the space and it was a way to incorporate something old into the space," Corrie says.

MONOCHROMATIC MAGIC

Keeping his palette neutral, Corrie subtly connects the entire space. As you enter, Benjamin Moore Iron Mountain colored walls, which are sort of a dark taupe tone, segue into Fairview Taupe in the bedroom, which is slightly lighter, Berkshire Beige in the bathroom, and Super White in the living/dining area.

Corrie intentionally painted the bedroom a dark shade. "A lot of designers believe that you can't use color in small spaces, but I think it provides a more intimate setting. When you are in a small

space, one of the ways to give visual interest is to add color," he says. The overall effect in this elegantly appointed room is a bit like a cozy cocoon, especially when the barn doors are slid closed at night.

Corrie and Ewens (pronounced Evans) painted the cabinets in the open kitchen white and added classic hardware with an antique bronze finish. They painted the oak floors black throughout the loft to make a dramatic statement. "The look is fantastic, but it's a lot of maintenance," Corrie confides. "The extreme contrast is what makes it pop."

CHOICE FURNISHINGS

Accenting the loft with personal touches makes a big difference, too. One wall in the bedroom, for instance, is filled with black and white photographs of Corrie and Ewens' families. Images by Washington photographer Betto Ortiz, which Corrie finds irresistible, also punctuate the space. "He captures moments that you just sit there and wonder," Corrie says.



The closet efficiently holds everything from clothes, a bicycle, and spare folding chairs to a wireless home office.

A round pedestal table and two white wing chairs from Theodore's, a Restoration Hardware throw, large mirror with 19th century French frame from David Bell Antiques, and Thomas O'Brien chandelier from Theodore's define the dining area.



SMALL SPACE SOLUTION

Every inch of the loft has been carefully considered. Ewens, art director for the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, converted what was designed to be a coat closet in the entry next to the kitchen into a pantry. He added shelves and wire mesh drawers and had a motion-sensitive light installed so that when the door is opened, the light goes on.

But the most efficient use of space in the loft is the asymmetric, roughly 95 inch long by 65 inch deep by 126 inch high walk-in closet in the bedroom. In addition to clothing, the well-organized closet, which Ewens designed after thoughtful planning for months, has 24 wire mesh Elfa drawers of varying sizes, pictured left, that he bought at The Container Store.

"We don't really have room for a dresser in the bedroom, so we use this as a dresser," Ewens explains, glancing at the drawers. They use the overhead space to store luggage, out-of-season clothing, a bicycle, and two bamboo folding chairs. The last are used as dining room chairs for company.

But the compact and complete home office tucked onto shelves on the lower half of one wall is the most remarkable component of the closet. A computer, scanner, printer, and fax machine all sit at the ready. Everything is hooked up wirelessly.

Says Corrie, "It's a matter of how functional things are and how well they work for your lifestyle. We've made less than 800 square feet liveable for two people and a dog." **ws**

RESOURCES

- **Betto Photography**
202.320.8395
midcityartists.com
- **Theodore's Furniture**
202.333.2300
theodores.com
- **David Bell Antiques**
202.965.2355
- **Timothy Paul Carpets + Textiles**
202.319.1100
timothypaulcarpets.com
- **Framesmith DC**
202.518.2500
- **Urban Archaeology**
212.431.4646
urbanarchaeology.com
- **Granite and Marble Express**
703.378.9520
graniteandmarbleexpress.com
- **Waterworks**
202.333.7180
waterworks.com
- **The Container Store**
202.478.4000
containerstore.com

*Colors shown may not be exact.
Visit benjaminmoore.com for more information.

Paul Corrie's 10 Tips on Making Efficient Use of Small Spaces

1 Take advantage of vertical space. It can provide extra storage in small spaces.

2 When a particular space fills up, make sure that when you add something to it, you remove something, too. For example, if your closet is full of clothes, and you bring something new home, remove an existing item.

3 Be realistic about how often you use something. If you haven't used it or worn it in two years, get rid of it.

4 Work with a monochromatic color palette or with neutral colors that transition well from room to room. They open up the space.

5 Look at the scale of the furniture you're using or purchasing. Scale is very important and can determine whether a space feels balanced or crowded.

6 Multi-functional areas make efficient use of smaller spaces. For instance, a closet that houses your office or a pantry that holds your china maximizes function and organization.

7 Whenever possible, increasing the height of kitchen cabinets or adding built-ins to a space is a great way to increase storage.

8 Ask yourself, "What's my lifestyle?" Whatever you do has to work for you, socially, physically, and aesthetically.

9 No matter how small the space, make sure to incorporate pieces that are a true reflection of you, whether it be through art, family photos, or collected objects.

10 Less is always more.