

# INSPIRED

PEOPLE • PRODUCTS • PLACES

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## LIVING

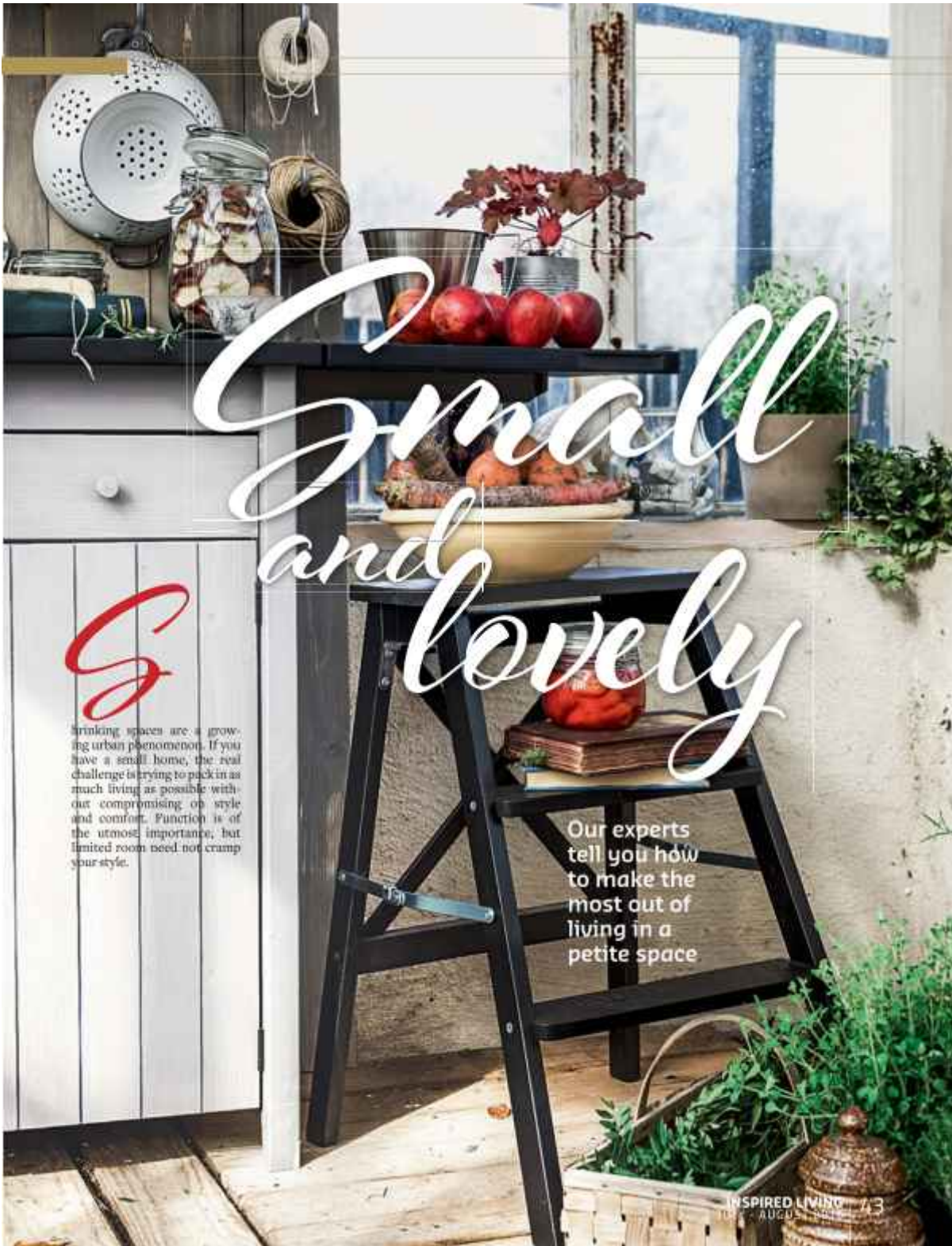
# Modern warmth



**SMART LIVING**  
The experts' guide to living in small spaces

**SKIN DEEP BEAUTY**  
Surface treatments for floors and walls

**EASY BREEZY**  
How to bring home a resort vibe



# Small and lovely

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Smaller spaces are a growing urban phenomenon. If you have a small home, the real challenge is trying to pack in as much living as possible without compromising on style and comfort. Function is of the utmost importance, but limited room need not cramp your style.

Our experts tell you how to make the most out of living in a petite space

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SMALL SPACE LIVING



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When decluttering, only keep things that you know you will need or that have sentimental value.”

**EWA LUNDGREN**  
Design and product developer, **THE ONE**



Alpine House designed  
by Amrit Lattimore



Small bedroom  
designed by  
Amrit Lattimore

## BEDROOMS

"Space efficient, multi-functional furniture is almost an essential for small spaces," says Marianna Piccolo, CEO and Founder of MyPickOne Studio Design.

"From sofa-cum-beds to tables with storage or a folding iron board that doubles up as a mirror, there are lots of smart furniture solutions out there. Find solutions that suit your space and style."

Small homes often have to accommodate dynamic changes. Marianna's advice is to opt for furniture scaled down to suit small spaces and try furniture on wheels. It makes it easy to rearrange pieces and clear out space as and when needed.

Michelle Dinamore, head of visual merchandising, Home Centre, recommends a bit of optical illusion to make a small bedroom look bigger. "Large mirrors create an illusion of space, both horizontally and verti-

cally. Go for horizontal lines: from the pattern of curtain blinds, wallpaper and wall shelves within a room to create an illusion of a wider space."

Michelle's top tip is to select furniture such as pullout beds that take up less space and beds with storage underneath.

"A sliding door wardrobe provides easy access, despite a lack of space, proving it to be an effective method of storage," says Michelle. "If the bed does not have storage built into it, under bed storage boxes are a great solution for storing seasonal clothes, extra bedding and blankets."

For a small bedroom, make sure you choose wardrobes carefully. Go for designs that have many storage compartments and can be used to stow away all kinds of odds and ends: from scarves, belts and cuff links in pigeon holes to vertical compartments for trouser hangers.

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Every nook and cranny can be customised and converted into something useful

**MARIANNA PICCOLO**  
CEO and Founder,  
MyPickOne Studio Design



## SMALL SPACE LIVING



Don't give over valuable floor space to furniture that could be mounted on the wall."

**HAZEM ALJESR**  
Managing director,  
Cities



## LIVING-DINING ROOMS

Hazem Aljesr, owner and founding managing director of Cities store, has some tips for tiny living rooms. "All of your furniture does not need to be small as well. Be selective with large furniture items to maintain functionality," he says. "Enjoy your full-sized sofa, but opt for small, moveable end tables instead of a traditional bulky coffee table."

Don't think of giving valuable floor space to furniture that could be mounted on the wall, Hazem advises. "Swap out bookcases for hookshelves; floor lamps and table lamps can be replaced with pendant lamps or wall-mounted lighting. Vertical space is an asset, so

utilise shelves for books and to display your favorite decor items. Wall-mount the television to avoid the need for an entertainment center. Curtains should be hung as close to the ceiling as possible to give the illusion of height and spaciousness."

Michelle says, "Do not be limited by the number of square meters. Consider using the space in cubic meters instead! Use the height of the room for storage. Corner sofas are a winner for petite living rooms as they accommodate multiple people without crowding the room. When choosing a corner sofa, lighter colours make a room look larger and increase design possibilities."



Bed from Cuckooland with integrated storage



Collecting newspapers and toys in baskets makes it easier to find what you need. *Viktigt basket from IKEA, Dhs49*



India Mahdavi's multipurpose Bishop stool is perfect for small spaces. *From Comptoir102, Dhs6000*



These nesting accessories from Marina Home can save table top space. Dhs5,500



### KITCHEN

Don't despair over the size of your diminutive kitchen. Amrit Lattimore, senior designer at New Ltd Interiors says, "With a smaller kitchen, you need to take a pragmatic approach and stick to the necessities. No matter the size, you should always decorate your space so that it fits the way you relax, live, entertain, then you will feel at home. It is still possible to achieve a beautiful interior even when you have a tiny space to work."

Hazem recommends installing a shelf along the kitchen backsplash, underneath the cabinets, to keep spices and cooking accessories handy with-

out sacrificing counter space.

Multifunctional gadgets are a clever way to save space and very practical for more modest homes as they serve more than one purpose - using half the cabinet space. "Instead of a large dining table, try using a coffee table that can also double up as a dining table," says Amrit. "Extendable furniture that can be made more compact or folded away are also great for smaller spaces. Nests of tables are a versatile option. Ottomans are perfect for smaller spaces too as they can be used as a coffee table, seating and storage all in one."



Over-accessorising can make tiny rooms look very cluttered."

**AMRIT LATTIMORE**  
Interior designer



Kitchen designed by Anna Casa Interiors

## ACCESSORIES

When it comes to decorating with accessories, keep it simple, says Anna Grace Davidson, founder of Anna Casa Interiors. "Select the statement vases and or sculptures you'd like to have on show for the season and store the rest away for later use."

"Mirrors are one of my favourite devices for smaller homes as they can be used in every room."

In the bathroom, hallway, lounge and even the kitchen, I like using antique styled mirrors that look gorgeous and are very on trend at the moment."

Amrit adds, "One of the best ways to use mirrors is to install a floor-to-ceiling mirror which creates the illusion of a bigger room but can also serve as a feature wall."



Kitchen shelves from IKEA

## COLOURS AND TEXTURES

When it comes to colour, experts have differing views. Hazem encourages you not to shy away from colour just because your space is small. "While lighter hues can make an interior seem larger, bright colours through accessories and textures show your personal style and add energy to your interior, without overwhelming your space. My tip is to be selective and be yourself when decorating a space of any size. The result is sure to be an inviting and cosy home that you'll be happy to live in."

Amrit votes for neutral shades like taupes and creams, whilst keeping

bold or dark colours to a minimum.

"I would recommend layering neutral shades within a room and keeping dark colours to a minimum," says Anna. "For example, using lighter colours for the walls, carpets and and larger furniture pieces, whilst accessorising with accents of darker colours. Like colours, textures and materials used in your design should be kept light too. Heavy textures such as velvets and wools can sometimes be stifling so I like to keep smaller spaces cool and airy, with fabrics like cotton and linen for both upholstery and window treatments."



Table from Marina Home, Dhs2,250

## MAKING SPACE

Ewa Lundgren, design and product developer, THE One, outlines the steps to decluttering:

**Prepare:** Before you start, make sure you have everything you need.

**Invest:** Shop for shelves, hooks, clear stackable boxes and baskets to help you make organising easy.

**Focus:** Take on one room or even one drawer at a time. Feel good when you have completed one task instead of looking at what you still have to do.

**Start:** Make three piles: one for keeping, one for giving away or selling and one for donating. Only keep things you know you will need or that have sentimental value. If you have not used something in the last year you probably will not use it again. Why not give it to someone who will appreciate it?



Cabinet from Chatta's & More

## CHILDREN'S ROOMS

A common trend for children's rooms is that they are often shared by siblings. Brothers and sisters often share a room as well, and it is necessary to consider the preferences of all siblings when styling a room for children. Michelle has some sound advice for these situations, based on her experience of leading the creative team for Home Centre's Room Makeover contest.

"Avoid clutter by assessing the orientation of the room when working on the furniture layout, and remember that it is not necessary to cover all of the available space with furniture," she says. "Bunk beds are great options to maximise space, while making sure the siblings have room for activities! Use colours that work for all of the siblings' ages, genders and styles when working on a shared room. Style the room with accessories that work for all siblings, while considering function and style. These include accent pieces and wall ornaments which are neutral for different ages and genders. Using unique painting and vinyl techniques on walls is an easy way to create a themed room. Themes can be completed by using bedding, lights, rugs and toys in a similar theme to bring the room to life. Since these techniques are temporary, you can easily update the room as your child's style change as well!"



“Mirrors are one of my favourite devices for smaller homes, as they can be used in every room.”

**ANNA GRACE DAVIDSON**  
Interior designer

## LIGHTING

"There is nothing like natural light to brighten up interiors and make it look larger," says Marianna.

"If the rooms in your house have access to natural light, make sure you don't block off the windows with heavy drapes. Use sheer curtains or light filtering roller blinds instead. Hang the curtains as close to the ceiling as possible to make the ceiling look higher and extend the rods beyond the window so that the window appears wider."

While great lighting will always boost the appearance of your home, copious natural daylight isn't always available. In this case, "use strategically placed lighting, such as up lighters, which can work wonders in making rooms appear more spacious," advises Amrit. "Use lighting fixtures (warm LED lighting) creatively to create interesting visual effects," Marianna adds. "Avoid standing lamps that take up extra floor space and go with scones (wall lighting) instead to provide ambient lighting."

