



INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Downsizing from a family home in River Heights, one Winnipeg couple makes a fresh start in a historic Exchange District Condo

design by TAMARA ECKSTEIN B.ENV.D. IN HER FORMER CAPACITY AS INTERIOR
DESIGNER OF GATEWAY KITCHEN AND BATH CENTRE
photography STUDIO 448

Once the centre of the Canadian grain industry, Winnipeg's Exchange District flourished between 1881-1918. Today, the Exchange District is Winnipeg's cultural hub. It is truly a unique community, complete with a wide array of retailers, restaurants, nightclubs, art galleries and theatres.

The Exchange District is also home to the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, the Winnipeg Jazz Festival, as well as the Centennial Concert Hall, which is host to the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

For the owners of this condo on Bannatyne, the Exchange District was a no-brainer when they were considering downsizing from their family home in River Heights. The cultural amenities suited the couple's lifestyle to a tee, and the actual location also couldn't have been any better; one half of the couple, a partner at a large accounting firm, was already making the long commute downtown every day, and the other half ran his consulting business from his home-based office. They didn't see any problem with relocating downtown, where they spent most of their social time anyways; the move made complete sense for both of them.

Once the final decision had been made by the couple to downsize, they jumped on the opportunity to purchase a condo at 181 Bannatyne. Although they loved the bones of the condo, the existing finishes were not consistent with the couple's tastes, and represented an opportunity to expand their interior creativity. The couple enlisted the help of Gateway Kitchen and Bath Centre, for which the Interior Designer Tamara Eckstein was designing and project-managing at the time. Tamara and the couple began hammering out a new identity for the condo; one that would be comfortable for the owners' day-to-day life, yet provide a show-stopping atmosphere perfect for all the entertaining that the couple enjoys.

Tamara's design vision was to "create a space for the couple that reflected the sophistication and culture of their busy lives." The interior design of the condo seamlessly combines sleek modern finishes with the old historic character of the building. The result: a modern vision, warmed with history.

The most striking materials that compose the condo's design are natural walnut, stainless steel, glass, and leather. Serious and muted colours were chosen for the space, ranging from grey-blue whites to the stark ebony stain of the 8" plank hardwood floors.

In the living space, the television is hidden within a beautiful piece of stainless and walnut architecture; the middle walnut panel slides open effortlessly for TV viewing, and easily conceals the television when company has arrived.

The height of the ceiling in the condo provided a bit of a challenge, when considering a light fixture over the dining room table; Tamara did not want to see a length of stringy cables running up to the ceiling; she felt that all the excess space above the lights would actually detract from their beauty. The problem was solved by Tamara's design of a natural walnut bulkhead, matching the dining table below, suspended from the ceiling. Tamara felt that "the bulkhead immediately anchored the dining space, creating an more intimate dining experience; a room within a room."

The delicate hand-punched Egyptian pendants hang gracefully and with purpose from the bulkhead, casting a warm glow through their patina'd shells.

The condo's second bedroom was converted into a modern den, complete with a workspace for the home office, custom stainless steel and natural walnut bookshelves, and a day bed perfect for an afternoon read or an unexpected overnight guest.

The ensuite, though nestled deep within the confines of the master bedroom, still maintains the sleek modern industrial

ABODE



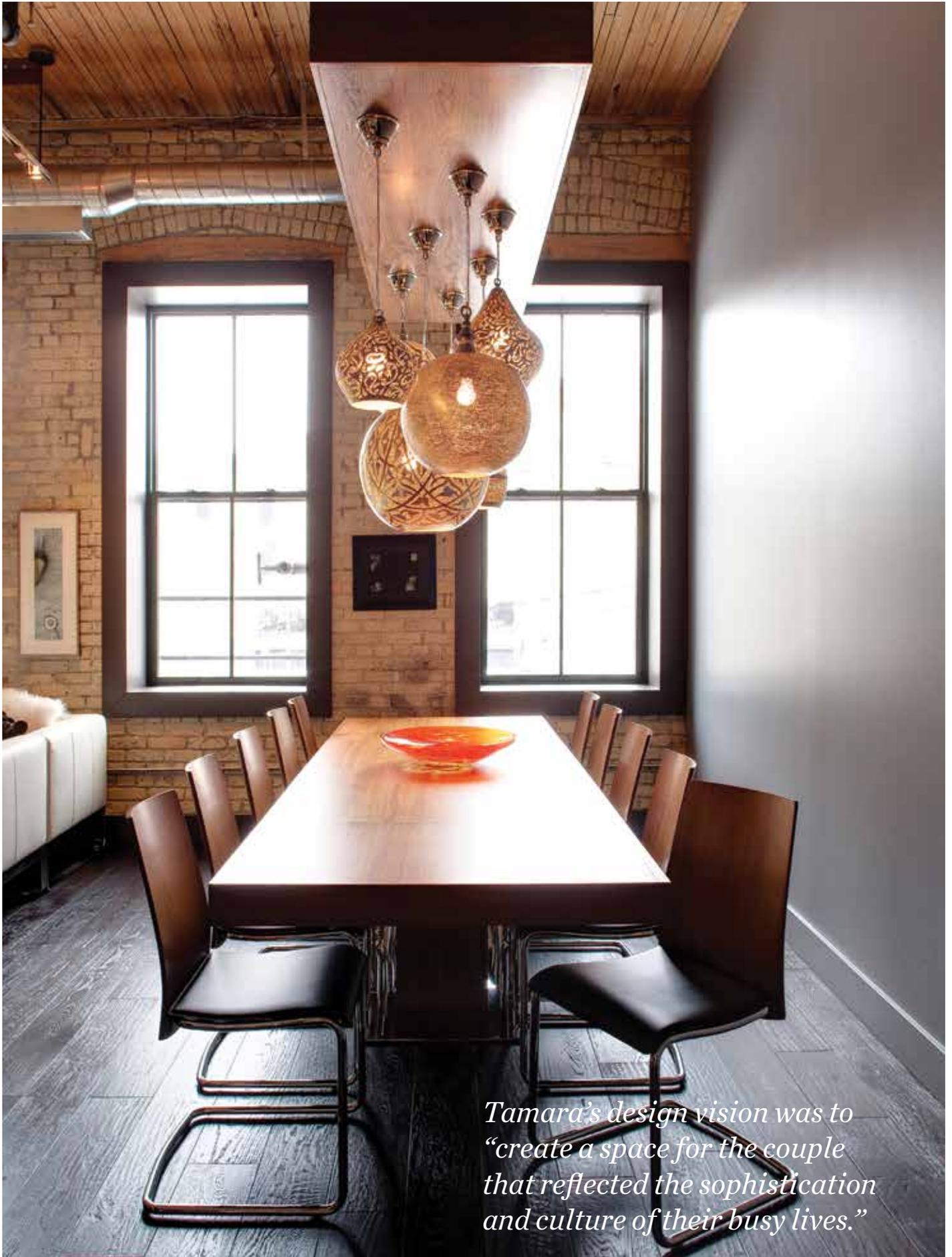
Left top: The kitchen exudes a sleek aesthetic, through the use of stainless and glass cabinet doors, and modern stainless steel appliances.

Left middle: Intricate hand-made Egyptian copper pendants hang over dining table from custom walnut bulkhead. Lights from Snob 388 Carlaw Avenue, Toronto Ontario

Left bottom: The character of the exposed brick wall creates a dramatic and textural backdrop to the vibrant artwork, and creates a gorgeous contrast to the smooth modern furniture. A neutral paint colour was used on the opposite wall so as not to create a visual conflict between the two walls.

Since completing the design and renovation of this condo while at Gateway Kitchen and Bath Centre, Tamara has since opened her own Interior Design Company here in Winnipeg, called Eckstein Design Group.





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Left top: The custom stainless and walnut shelves in the home office offer a more stylish alternative for displaying sculpture and books. The reflective glass desktop is light, airy, and incredibly easy to maintain.

Left bottom: Floor-to-ceiling glass completely encloses the steam shower in the ensuite. The charcoal Caesarstone bench within the shower, which affords a relaxing perch while enjoying a steam, penetrates the glass wall to create a seat outside of the shower as well.

Below: The continuity of form in the en suite is created through the repetition of rectilinear shapes, from of the Reve toilet by Kohler, the custom stone wall-hung sink by Blu Bathworks, and the custom Echo Wood veneer makeup vanity and tower designed by Tamara.



feel of the condo's main living area. The varying degrees of charcoal of the wall and floor tiles contrast expertly with the cool, sleek porcelain and chrome finishes of the plumbing fittings. The tone of the custom makeup vanity and storage tower, at the end of the ensuite, echoes the natural tone of the exposed ceiling beams seen elsewhere in the condo.

The transformative lifestyle created by downsizing was also expressed in the furniture chosen for the new digs. The space is punctuated with iconic furniture chosen by Tamara and the couple, as well as the vast collection of eye-catching artwork the couple has been acquiring for years.

In every way, the condo is a spirited reflection of the couple and their new Downtown life. ▣

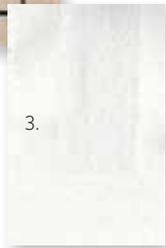
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6. CC-40 Cloud White, Benjamin Moore
7. Hc-80 Bleeker Beige, Benjamin Moore

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