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Living Big in a Small and Sophisticated Space

Yanic Simard, principal designer of TIDG and guest expert on City Line, opens up the big door of his small home and outlines the design challenges while demonstrating ways to maximize the chic-factor in **640ft² two-bedroom** Victorian home in Toronto.

Toronto, ON (June 14, 2010) When living in a small dwelling or home, the task of creating a sophisticated and comfortable space may seem too large, however Yanic Simard, principal designer of the Toronto Interior Design Group, took the challenge. Yanic Simard moved into a compact 640ft² two-bedroom Victorian home in Toronto, for the sole purpose of proving that the challenges outlined below could be overcome by following these creative design tips.

Location, Location, Allocation! Choose a Solid Foundation

“Choosing a house with a good frame is key when wanting to design a space that feels bigger than it actually is,” states Yanic Simard. His small Bloor West Village Victorian home bolsters 10’ and 11’ vaulted ceilings, proportionate 8’ doors and over-sized baseboards, which kick-started the design project.

Small Spaces? Create Continuity through Design and Colour

In any house with small rooms, visual flow is paramount when looking to simulate more space. In Yanic Simard’s house, the visual flow plants its roots through interior finish in black, white and gray. Yanic Simard’s signature Classic Grey Benjamin Moore wall colour, along with an unorthodox gold and chrome combination on hardware lends the space a twist of modernity and dynamicity. Adding accent colours to distinguish each room, such as mossy green, bright green, brown and baby blue, brings variety to the unified landscape.

Nearly identical tri-coloured silk drapes provided by **Drapica** luxuriously adorn almost every wall—connecting kitchen and living room with wall-to-wall drapes, while even extending beyond window frames to give the space unity as well as an added dramatic flare. Walk into the den to find the sunken window flowing with yet another rendition of the custom drapes in linen and suede.

“Tying elements of each room together is the easiest way to create visual flow,” says Yanic Simard, “... and with these gorgeous drapes, I was able to create a connection between all of the rooms beautifully.”

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Lack Rooms? Multi-Task!

By positioning a custom sofa that snugly accommodates a posh round Saarinen marble table, the functions of both a living room and a dining room are fused seamlessly.

Yanic Simard had the sofa bed re-invented by **Re-Wrap Custom Upholstery** for his lucky houseguests. The sofa bed's unusual—yet extremely comfortable—design not only turns sofa bed skeptics into believers, but is also turns the den into a guestroom stylishly and with ease.

Awkward Layout? Magic will do the Trick

The main hallway at approximately 3' wide and 20' long (fondly referred to as “the tunnel”) was one of Yanic Simard's biggest challenges. With cleverly employed graphic wallpaper on both walls, as well as an Artemide light fixture that provides illumination both upwards and downwards, the hallway is bestowed with artificial depth. A floor runner with horizontal lines is placed down the hallway and three shapely gold mirrors are mounted on one wall to also artificially widen the hallway. “The tunnel” then becomes a warm invitation to and from the heart of the apartment.

To create a capacious feel in the den/guestroom, Yanic Simard employed a textured and semi-reflective wallpaper by **Woeller** to dress up the indented wall, which allows the pool of sunlight from the opposite side window to radiate throughout the room.

Stagnant Style? Mix It Up!

Yanic Simard's home is a testament to his signature style of mixing old and new. A risqué, yet beautifully polished chrome armoire that can accommodate all guests' personal belongings stands proud in the den/guestroom. The custom laminate folding screen furnished by **Abet Laminati** positioned beside the original Victorian fireplace creates balance through diversity in style. Mid century mixed with antique, Art Deco and 70's, unique light fixtures and understated pieces of all sorts dot the apartment to provide a visually stimulating flow of class, culture and style—all uniquely Yanic.

“I personally love chairs,” discloses Yanic. “They are also an easy way to make a strong and unique statement, without too much commitment.” Yanic boasts at least six different styles of chair at any given time, with a partiality towards legendary chairs such as Wagner's Wishbone from 1950's Denmark, or Xavier Pauchard's Marais AC chair, which epitomizes the French café lifestyle.

Still Cramped? Furniture Layout is Key

“A good and well-planned furniture layout is key to a sophisticated environment,” says Yanic Simard. Finding creative solutions and maximizing space is among top-priorities in a small environment.

The stainless-steel trolley from **IKEA** finds a home on the opposite side of the kitchen to store various kitchen utilities, but can easily be trundled to the living room and used as serving centre.

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A cramped closet in the bedroom is remedied by the ingenious use of foldaway storage techniques by **Closet and Storage Concepts of Canada Inc.** Ironing board, tie rack, shoe storage and added seasonal storage all act as parts of an oversized utility knife and whip into action only when needed.

Storage throughout every room is key in keeping a chic abode—armoire in den/guestroom, closet organizer in bedroom, French antique chest and hidden storage under sofa in living room, baskets within the ceiling-high cabinets in the kitchen, closed vanity and stainless steel cart in the bathroom all provide extra storage and reduce clutter.

Finish Strong! The Icing on the Cake

“To make the space feel comfortable and luxurious, various types of fabric have been used, sometimes unusually,” concludes Yanic Simard. Linen, silk, velvet, chenille, suede, and sheers, all exclusively by **Robert Allen**, provide the visual and tactile finale to the project. A final touch of fresh cut flowers by **D&D Floral Designs** gives the house a splash of colour and fragrance.

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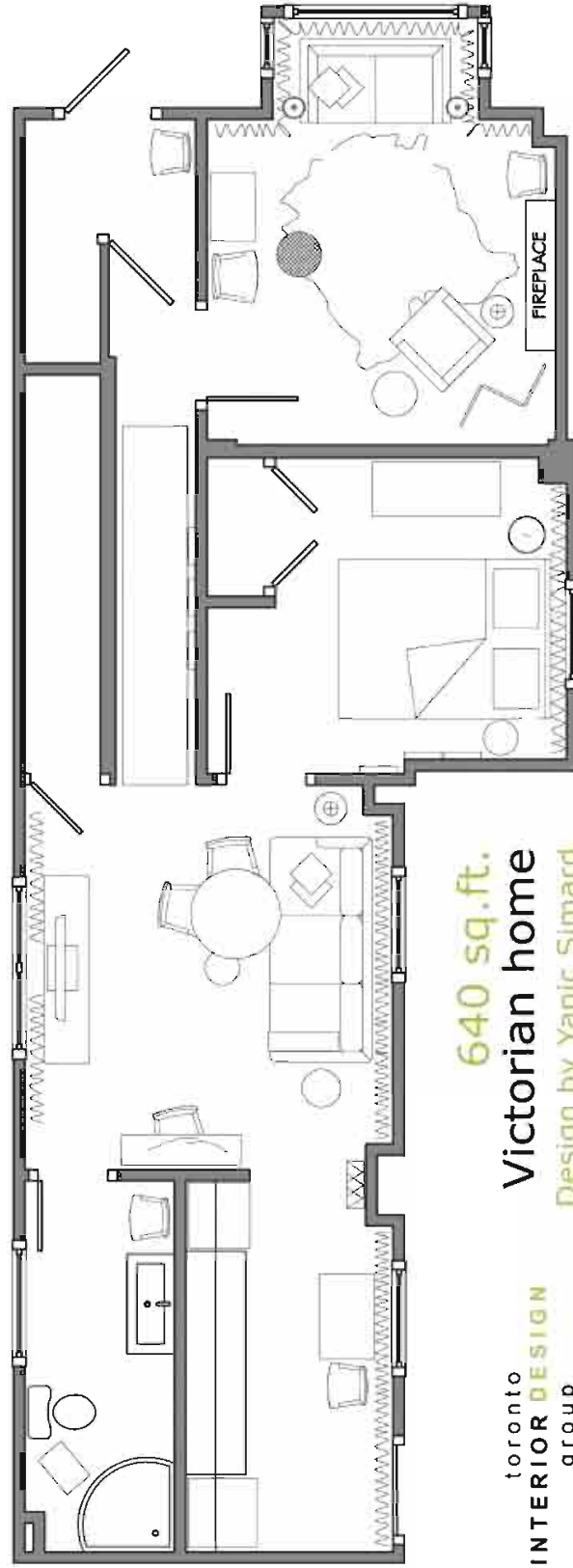
640 sq.ft.
Victorian home

Design by Yanic Simard

*Full-size images available on
media disc enclosed



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Yanic Simard comes from a long line of industry professionals in Montreal that based their successes on the fact that good design and quality workmanship are the cornerstones to the art of living. Yanic has synthesized his experience in the building trade with his unrivaled creative talent to found the Toronto Interior Design Group (TIDG)—one of Canada's leading design firms.

The road to design success for Yanic did however take some detours along the way. After exploring Interior Design in Montreal, he spent several years in television where he enjoyed a successful career as a host for an entertainment show. Despite a promising career in media, Yanic never abandoned his love for Interior Design. A keen market observer and creative thinker, he came to believe that Transitional Design was the way of the future—which became the modus operandi for the Toronto Interior Design Group itself.

A talented team of professionals based in Toronto supports Yanic as TIDG strives to create new and innovative spaces for a wide range of clients. Their design spectrum is anything but narrow—from minimalist to modern to elaborate traditional. Practicality and functionality play a vital role in the development of projects, while mixing "old and new" and "high and low" allows the uncompromised grand design scheme to work even on a budget.

You can find Yanic in many Canadian and international publications. He is also a recurring design guest expert to the Canadian acclaimed City TV show City Line. Yanic is now handsomely dressed by Sand Clothing—proud sponsor of Yanic Simard and the TIDG.

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