

**All-White palette adds colour to cool off: Designer escapes ubiquitous taupe Downtown locale mixes old and new; (ONT Edition)  
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**Full Text (580 words)**

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**Armchair travelers can get to London just by a jaunt to Toronto's Esplanade, where they'll find Cityzen's new London on the Esplanade condo project.**

**It really is like London, says Andrea Kantelberg, designer of the project's model suite and public areas.**

**The existing neighbourhood in the St. Lawrence Market district is like London's downtown core, with its old buildings, pubs, bookstores, and theatres.**

**"You've got beautiful Palladian archways on one side of the building and the great Toronto skyline on the other," she says.**

**Kantelberg was a serendipitous choice of designer.**

**"The project was already named when I was hired, but London is one of my favourite destinations, and I go often now that my sister lives there. I love the refreshing blend of old and new –the exposed brick is so warm, And so cool. too."**

**Tired to the ubiquitous taupe palette, Kantelberg was looking for something different that would still foster a feeling of space.**

**Although nine-foot ceilings and big windows can do that on their own, she took it one step Further with an all-white palette.**

**It's also a departure from previous trends, except for the one set by English socialite and interior designer Syrie Maugham, when she shocked 1930s designers with the first all-white interior.**

**White can be a challenge –it can be austere, shadowy and lacking in interest. By drawing on textures-a fine wool chenille on the two living room chairs, and ultra-soft brushed cotton on the sofa-and by grounding the room in a warm wenge stained floor, Kantelberg says she was able to counteract these challenges.**

**Plus, whites have their own rainbow of hues-the sculpted stools, for example, are mushroom, and not actually white.**

**To balance the hard materials (hardwood floors, marble counters, glass on the stairs, stainless steel stair tread), Kantelberg softened the space with natural upholstery fabrics. The diaphanous drapery, for instance, is actually mosquito netting. Sunlight renders it transparent, but darkness makes it almost opaque.**

**Creating an inviting nighttime atmosphere was hugely important to Kantelberg. "Entertaining at home is one of the great joys in life," she says.**

That's also why she paid close attention to the kitchen and dining area.

"Lots of people who have a small space won't entertain because there is no space to prepare food or for friends to sit: but in this unit you can do that," she says.

With the cooktop in the island, the host can cook while friends sit around, which is more conducive to relating and talking.

"You don't want your back to the people you're entertaining. And you don't want to have a lot of dirty dishes in your face, either, which is what happens when you have a sink in the island."

Kantelberg abides by the philosophy of minimalism.

"It's the best way to live but it doesn't have to be austere. Living in a flat is more than okay. It's great, it simplifies your life, and it forces you to be part of the bigger neighbourhood."

#### Models of Design

By day, the suite is open, airy and spacious. A cooktop in the island lets the host converse with guests while dinner is being prepared. Filmy whites enshroud the bed in the loft overlooking the main space below, while mushroom stools serve as functional art. Filmy whites enshroud the bed in the loft overlooking the main space below, while mushroom stools serve as functional art.

Credit: SPECIAL TO THE STAR



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