





PEAK PERFORMANCE

Interior designer Elaine Lau brings a dash of vintage charm to a sleek contemporary kitchen in this breezy duplex.

Text by Kelly Lo, photos by Happy Yuen and Samantha Sin

It's only six years since lawyer Sharon Zhang had the kitchen renovated in her Peak duplex, but the open-plan design was never quite right. So when she had a chance to give it a makeover, she turned to Elaine Lau, director of LP Architects. As a lawyer and mother of three, Zhang wanted a simple living space in which to relax at the end of a busy day. Stepping into her new kitchen, it's clear Lau has given her exactly that.

The spacious, deceptively simple interior treads the fine line between finesse and function, with a host of clever space-saving solutions, starting with the island that stretches the length of the kitchen.

"This counter used to be connected to the wall," Lau explains. "We moved it out to make

an island for more space. The counter has multiple uses, not only can you prepare food on it, it also has storage space and connects the dining room to the window."

An ornate wooden dining table and antique Chinese chairs, beloved possessions of the Zhang family, are placed conveniently close to the kitchen, allowing diners to peek over the island to see what's cooking. Antique and contemporary designs seem to be an odd pairing, but Lau successfully marries old and new.

"Sharon's criteria were to keep an open kitchen and the antiques. LP Architects has always opted for a simple but elegant modern style. We worked the antiques in by giving the space some

consistency with wooden veneer on the cupboards. The grey glossy surface of the walls acts as a neutral background for the furniture and gives a sleek sheen to the space."

One of many eye-catching features is a row of compact wine coolers built into the wall, lining up with the built-in oven and toaster. This controlled repetition of sharp and uniform lines brings consistency to the kitchen, reinforcing the smooth, streamlined look that characterises contemporary style.

"This used to be a window facing a wall," Lau says. "While on a trip in southern France, Sharon was inspired by ceiling-high coolers in the wineries. The hard part was figuring out what kind of wine cellar to install. Initially, we were going to add a cellar that covered the whole wall, but it looked a bit tacky, so we chose a smaller model."

A perfect fusion of design and functionality, Lau has managed to create a balanced, soothing and modern living space without missing a beat when it comes to efficiency. ■

EATING IN

1 Wine Storage

The space boasts a neat row of wine fridges that are aesthetically pleasing and consistent with the modern lines of the kitchen. Extra appliances and ingredients are stored in compartments that do not disrupt the sleek and fluid design.



2 Appliances

Having an island instead of an attached counter frees up space in the kitchen, providing room for bustling about when cooking with the high-end appliances.



3 Dining room

The antique furniture brings warm, round tones to the sharp modern setting. Zhang also had work done on the balcony, sacrificing a flowerbed and some steps to create a flat, wood-panelled space – perfect for enjoying breakfast and the breathtaking view.

