

TEXT  
JENNIFER HUGHES

PHOTOGRAPHY  
STACEY BRANDFORD

STYLING  
JESSICA WAKS

# Puttin' on the *Ritz*

Designer Meredith Heron renovates this Toronto couple's condo in classic finishes and a subdued palette, creating the perfect backdrop for silver and crystal that's synonymous with holiday entertaining.



**LEFT** When entertaining, having a selection of hors d'oeuvres catered means one less thing to do!

**CATERING**, Toben Food by Design, Catering and Event Management, [tobenfoodbydesign.com](http://tobenfoodbydesign.com).

**BELOW** "I love to mix as much pattern as I can into a space," says designer Meredith Heron. For example, the low, feminine armchairs in the living room boast paisley fronts and trellis-patterned backs.

**DESIGN**, Meredith Heron Design, [meredithheron.com](http://meredithheron.com); **ARMCHAIRS**, Meredith Heron Design; **ARMCHAIR FABRIC**, Robert Allen; glass **VASE**, Elte.

**LEFT, TOP** The charcoal chenille sofa has a bench seat - rather than the typical split seat - which allows for three people to sit comfortably.

Silver **BOWL**, gold **BOWLS**, *Harper's Bazaar: Greatest Hits* **BOOK**, Cecil Beaton: *The New York Years* **BOOK**, Elte.

**LEFT, BOTTOM** A marble mosaic backsplash, Carrara marble countertops and high-end hardware give the simple cabinetry a luxe look. Sparkly pendant lights are small enough that they don't block sightlines.

**CABINERY**, IKEA; **BACK-SPLASH**, Salttilo Imports; **PENDANT LIGHTS**, Uttermost; **KITCHEN FAUCET**, Brizo; **TRAY**, Elte; **PLATTER**, **ICE BUCKET** with tongs, William Ashley China.



## "He's a little bit country, I'm a little bit rock 'n' roll," jokes homeowner Brigitte Talevski.

When it came time to tackle her and husband David Axelrad's dated 1,450-square-foot condo in downtown Toronto, they were overwhelmed by not only their disparate tastes but also the many demands on the main living area. "We needed a space that could let us relax and watch television yet still be elegant enough for entertaining," says David. And, because the couple loves to host a wide circle of friends and family, a proper cook's kitchen was at the top of Brigitte's wish list.

Enter designer Meredith Heron, who eased the couple's different styles into a cohesive, functional and beautiful space. First, Meredith had the tiny, closed-off U-shaped kitchen opened up to the main living quarters, the dated stucco ceilings hand-scraped smooth and new dark hardwood floors laid throughout. With the dividing wall gone, an extra-wide peninsula separates the new kitchen from the dining and living areas, granting plenty of room for spreading out while entertaining. The wide counter with a waterfall edge - another of Brigitte's must-haves - also →

## Designer Meredith Heron shares her tips for creating an ideal entertaining space.



**1** Work in **plenty of storage** for extra dishes, glasses, trays and serving pieces.

**2** Look for a **dining table that expands** to seat a generous number of guests when needed.

**3** Provide a **variety of seating** options in the living area, such as stools, a large-scale ottoman and a pair of armchairs.

**4** Opt for a **bench cushion**, rather than three separate seat cushions, on a three-seater sofa. This allows for three people to sit at once without the risk of having anyone sink into the cracks.

**5** Create a **bar on top of a console table**, ideally not far from the home's entry. Trays of already-poured drinks are easy to hand out as guests arrive.

**6** **Elegant and comfortable end chairs** in the dining room can be pressed into service as extra seating in the living room without looking like they've migrated from the dining table.

**7** Have **lots of trays** handy to corral empty glasses and discarded plates and napkins. This helps whisk away the mess as the party progresses.

In the living area, a pair of clean-lined armchairs – upholstered in grey chenille with a slight mauve cast – are actually recliners ideal for watching movies. The soft rug incorporates greys, creams, yellows and blues from around the room. Furry sheepskins atop a pair of stools are a cozy touch for winter.

Windham 33-11 **WALL PAINT**, Pratt & Lambert; **ARMCHAIRS**, Meredith Heron Design; silk **RUG**, **STOOLS**, velvet wood grain **TOSS CUSHIONS**, velvet ombré **TOSS CUSHIONS** (on armchairs), **CANDLE HOLDERS**, wire **BOWL**, Elte; Bull's Eye **TOSS CUSHIONS**, West Elm; **STORAGE CABINET**, IKEA; round silver **TRAY**, Michael Aram New Molten **NUT DISH & TRAY**, L'Objet Bambou **BOWL**, **SALAD PLATES**, Hermès Bleus d'Ailleurs **TART PLATTER**, William Ashley China.



“Guests often comment  
that they feel like they’re in  
a Manhattan apartment.”

BRIGITTE TALEVSKI, HOMEOWNER

A gilded console table turns into a makeshift bar for serving drinks to guests as they walk in the room. Meredith chose black and white photographs with deep perspective to create the illusion of more space.

**CONSOLE TABLE**, Alexandra **SIDECHAIR**, **ARTWORK** by Charlie Waite, Elte; Monique Lhuillier Waterford Collection Arianne **CHAMPAGNE FLUTES**, L'Objet Bambou **CHAMPAGNE BUCKET**, silver **TRAY**, William Ashley China.



**LEFT** Cobalt blue plates are a welcome pop of colour in the otherwise muted decor scheme.

Hermès Bleus d'Ailleurs  
**BREAD & BUTTER PLATES**,  
William Ashley China.

**BELOW** Homeowners Brigitte Talevski and David Axelrad enjoy a pre-party drink with designer Meredith Heron in the kitchen that was customized with crown moulding and gables to make it look built-in. Cabinets on the dining room side of the peninsula hold extra dishes, glasses and serveware for when the couple is entertaining.

**LEFT, TOP** A pair of beautiful handcrafted bowls with delicate bead detailing continues the sparkle theme from the dining and living areas right into the kitchen.

Michael Aram New Molten  
**SERVING BOWL & NUT DISH**,  
William Ashley China.

**LEFT, BOTTOM** The simple espresso-stained Parsons-style dining table can extend to seat up to 12 people. The plush upholstered end chairs and dining chairs are comfortable enough to sit in for hours, allowing guests to linger longer after dinner.

**CHANDELIER**, Uttermost;  
silver **CHAMPAGNE BUCKET**,  
William Ashley China.



allows for back-to-back cabinetry below, providing loads of storage. Features like double wall ovens, a convection microwave oven and a deep sink make cooking and cleanup a cinch, whether hosting an intimate dinner party or cocktails for a crowd.

Since both Brigitte and David are screenwriters and film buffs – which is evident by their prized wire sculpture of Fred Astaire by artist Rudy Kehkka – the living room needed to accommodate their love of movie watching, so Meredith introduced a pair of custom armchairs with clean lines that belie the fact that they're recliners. A variety of other seating options, such as an elegant sofa, a pair of curvy paisley-clad armchairs and upholstered stools, means the space can also handle gatherings of friends and extended family with ease.

The subtly glamorous design – thanks to a muted palette with restrained hits of gold, silver, mirror and glass and a few dark-hued accents – brings together masculine and feminine elements in a space that caters to the everyday as well as special occasions, appealing to both husband and wife and visitors alike. Just like your favourite holiday flick, this home is a classic in the making and one you'll want to revisit over and over again.

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