

# GLOWING REPORT

*Abundance of light in kitchen with glossy cabinets, glass countertops and stainless steel tile backsplash*

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*Admittedly a desultory cook, Jennifer nevertheless spends much time in the kitchen. At the island, she can see across to the living room windows and their terrific view. Even when she's at the stove or sink, her work area is still bathed in light reflected from the glass countertops and stainless steel tile backsplash.*



**JENNIFER COOPER WAS EXCITED.**

Not only was she going to buy a condo in Yorkville, she was also going to get an iconic Toronto view. “That’s what sold me,” she says. “When I walked off the elevator into the foyer, there was this amazing view: you can see the CN Tower, you see Queen’s Park, you see the ROM. I go into the unit and it’s gorgeous, it’s three bay windows... but in the kitchen there was a half wall and a fridge blocking the view! So it was ‘OK, how do we get rid of that?’”

Not content to merely open up the view, Jennifer opted for a total gut of the unit. “The building was about 25 years old, and I don’t think it had ever been renovated,” she says. “It had really good bones but was very outdated.”

Jennifer had a good idea of what she wanted in the unit, and it’s a strong reflection of her design sensibility. “I had one or two meetings with designer Penny Dimos at the beginning with respect to the entire space, but I did it mostly on my own,” she says.

*“I’m a minimalist; I don’t like clutter.”*

With input from her general contractor, Geoff Woodmansey at GPW Construction; her kitchen supplier, Shawn Pinarreta of Rosedale Kitchens; and Dimos, Jennifer worked out an approach for the unit in general and the kitchen in particular.

“We’d come up with an idea where I wanted something, and then Geoff would bang on walls and tell me whether I could move certain things or couldn’t do certain things,” Jennifer recounts. “It was a collaborative effort.”

“I’m a minimalist; I don’t like clutter. With that in mind, Penny helped me sort out the size of the island and, between her and my contractor, the relocation of the wall. The problem with a condo is you can’t change the plumbing or other infrastructure, so certain things (the sink, for example) had to stay where they were. The only thing that we could change was where the fridge was and then the island. And we removed the partial wall. That was a no-brainer; I didn’t need any design skills for that decision!”

*Condo rules forbade major changes to infrastructure, so Jennifer was constrained in where she could place appliances. The expanse of the island more than adequately compensates for the interrupted counter surfaces along the walls.*



The resulting kitchen is about the same size as the previous one—12 feet by 18 feet—but feels much more open and light. Two elements in particular contribute to that feeling: the backsplash and the glass countertops.

When the stainless steel tile backsplash went in, “it made the room come alive,” Jennifer says. “When the light comes in it bounces off the backsplash, and because all the cabinets are glossy it almost makes the place glow. It’s gorgeous.” As for the countertops, “they’re actually glass, a solid piece of white glass. They look amazing.”

Jennifer readily admits that she’s no gourmet cook, so the compactness of the work area suits her fine. “It’s more of an open space for entertainment. When people come over, it’s a gathering area.” However, this does not mean that she took shortcuts in finishing the space. She opted for high-end appliances, all by Jenn-Air; a Blanco stainless steel double sink; and cabinets with Blum hinges and full-extension, soft-close slides. The dual-temperature wine fridge is an important part of her kitchen, and throughout the unit she has a Sonos sound system with built-in speakers, all controlled from her laptop.

“I spend probably 60 percent of my time in the kitchen, because the island is the perfect place and it has the best view,” she says. “It’s great!”

*Even before buying the place, “I already had in mind the finishes I wanted: very modern and glossy and sleek and white,” says Jennifer.*

