

## ASK THE DESIGNER: Small Scale Holiday Decorating

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?We are hosting the holidays this year but have recently moved from our large family home to a much smaller condo. How can I decorate without overwhelming our new cozier surroundings??

With beautiful new buildings popping up, many people are making the move to condo living. Because the average new condo in Toronto is under 800 square feet, furniture companies are now manufacturing more and more ?apartment sized? styles of furniture and décor items.

It's really important to make sure your pieces are the correct scale so that they don't overwhelm your space.

The same goes for your holiday décor.

Companies are now starting to make condo-sized Christmas trees so that smaller living spaces can be festive and still be comfortable. When choosing ornaments for the tree, be mindful of their size. Buying oversized ornaments can make your pint-sized tree look small and cheesy. Simplicity is key in tight spaces. Keep your ornaments simple and elegant.

If fitting a tree into your condo just isn't an option try one of these ?outside the box? ideas: Put some evergreen branches in vases and hang some ornaments off of them, or hang ornaments from a wall in the shape of a Christmas Tree. Even go as far as hanging some ornaments from the ceiling or even from an existing chandelier.

Another great way to pack punch into a small home or condo is by creating a beautifully decorated mantelpiece to star as the focal point of the room.

Start by switching out your regular art that you may have hanging above the fireplace for a wreath. Consider putting a mirror over the fireplace as it will help to reflect light making your space feel larger. It will also reflect the colour of any decorations you add to your fireplace making it feel even more festive.

Drape a garland across the mantel, and anchor the ends of it with clusters of red carnations or poinsettias. Why not add a grouping of hurricane vases with red or white candles? This will create an elegant and comfortable feel. Are you having kids over for the holiday festivities? If you're looking for a funky and colourful holiday look, fill mason jars with brightly coloured ornaments, candy canes, string lights and gift bows for a fresh take on mantel décor.

Entertaining during the holidays always highlights the fact that we never have enough seating in our homes ? especially if we've just downsized. One way to downplay this problem is to use an eclectic mix of dining chairs. By having various styles of seating you can easily get away with pulling some chairs away from the table and adding them to your living space while your guests are visiting.

To conserve space, especially when adding additional pieces of holiday décor, try to include multifunctional furniture in your design scheme. A bench by the front door or at the foot of your bed can be pulled out into the den for additional seating during a gathering.

The last thing I'll mention is that there is a lot to be said for ambience. Decorate the front door to set the holiday inspired tone for your guests as soon as they arrive. Light some pine or gingerbread scented candles -whatever scent makes you feel ?home for the holidays?. Throw on some Christmas tunes and you're good to go!

From all of us here at Niche Decor, Happy Holidays!