

Condo Living

MODELS OF DESIGN

There's more 'freedom' with less clutter

ALEX NEWMAN
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Designer Melissa Davis was conscious of the challenges of major life transitions when she designed the model suite at the Claridges condo on Bayview Avenue.

Aimed at an older, urban, and more affluent market intent on

downsizing, the condo is a balance between having all the comforts of home, but in a smaller space. "Downsizing is an emotional process, so it's important not to feel you've left your whole life behind in terms of style and function," Davis says.

It should be about reducing quantities — paring down the amount of items you have — while leaving the emotional tenor of the home with high quality furnishings and an up-to-date colour scheme, she adds.

The first step was to create an open space. "Less clutter makes getting around a lot easier. And there's freedom from having less to maintain and manage."

Davis also kept floor finishes neutral, from the natural stone and porcelain tiles to the oriental carpeting. "When you're wearing glasses, you don't want anything too contrasty or jarring," she explains. "It's important that the eye can move gently from one spot to another."

While safety and functionality were key considerations in the design of the suite, Davis points out that the buyers here are still young, and style is important. "These are urban, sophisticated retirees who are young, active and healthy. They're also familiar with current home trends. So I wanted the interior to be classic, upscale contemporary with a lot of warm and comfortable reminders of home."

To that end, furnishings are traditional with a twist. In the open concept living and dining area, two bergere chairs mix happily with a taupe ultrasuede



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The den in the model suite of the Claridges is cozy and sophisticated, with taupe camelback sofa, Oriental carpet underfoot and dark credenza; the bedroom, below, is a calm, cool, collected space with crisp white linens and a blue cable-knit throw.

Details

► **Project:** Claridges, Amica at Bayview

► **Builder:** Amica Mature Lifestyles and The Daniels Corporation

► **Designer:** Melissa Davis, UW Design Group, www.uwstudio.com

► **Location:** 16 Rean Drive (access from Barbary Place, one block east of Bayview Ave., south of Sheppard.

► **Size:** 723 to 1,630 square feet

► **Price:** \$250,000 to \$553,900

► **Amenities:** One underground parking space per unit, storage locker, party room, fireplace, bar area and garden terrace; connected access to Amica at Bayview's fitness and social activities and full amenities

► **Sales office:** Call 416-987-8837. Hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

► **Website:** www.amica.ca

► **Occupancy:** Summer 2006

sofa and brown leather ottoman. A baby blue cable knit throw in the bedroom contrasts nicely with crisp white cotton bedsheets.

In the den, a linen camelback sofa in linen has contemporary toss cushions in blues and greens; a dark wood credenza holds woven baskets and sleek tailored accessories while a plasma screen TV hangs in a niche on the opposite wall. "These are seniors but they're urban and they're used to the latest technology," Davis says.

Davis chose a current scheme in a calm sand-and-sea palette of taupes, greys, caramels and varying shades of blue. She selected fabrics that are warm and

nurturing but decidedly upscale — velvets, damask, silk accents.

Textures are layered, like the upholstery and wood pieces in the master bedroom. Too much wood, Davis says, can render a space cold.

"On the other hand," she adds, "you also have to be careful not to go overboard with fabrics because that can quickly become claustrophobic."

Though the overall effect is subdued and calm, accents like nickel fixtures and silk drapery add sparkle and sheen to the space.

"Making change isn't easy, and downsizing can be emotional. But if this is the future, it looks pretty good to me," Davis says.

