

NEW YORK

Design Hunting

"I Just Gave My Tiny Walk-up a Park Avenue Makeover"

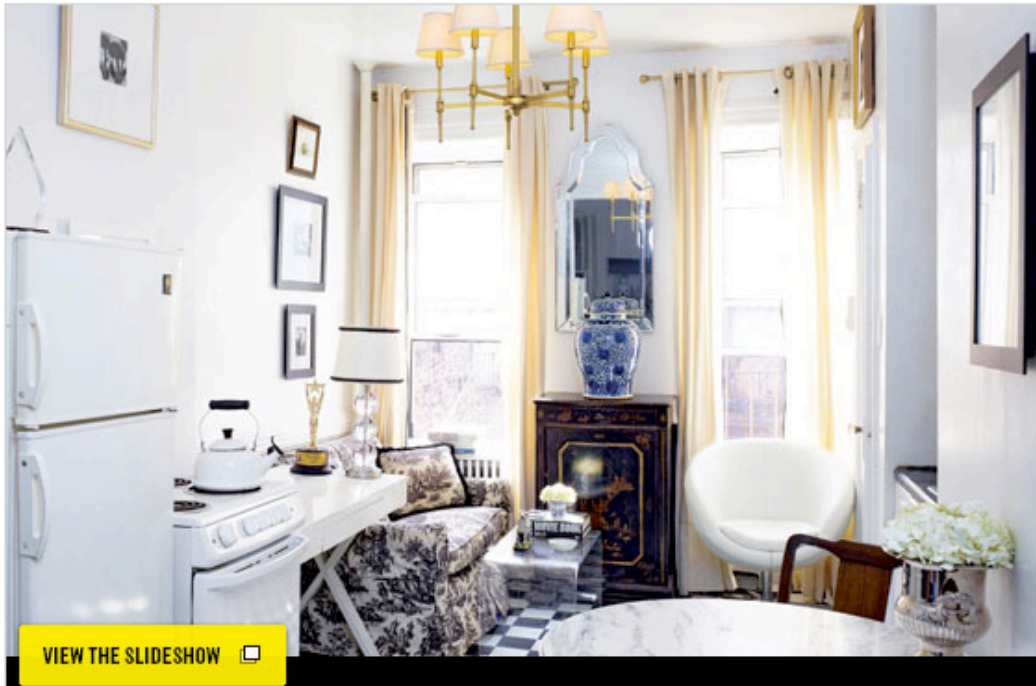
by Laura Fenton

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For her uptown apartment, Meaghan Kimball didn't settle for anything short of elegance—albeit on a smaller-than-usual scale. Meaghan Kimball's walk-up apartment's moldings have become soft focused under decades of paint, the main living space is tiled in black-and-white-checked linoleum that likely predates the Second World War, and there is hardly any closet space to speak of. In short, it's an archetypal first New York apartment.

But for Kimball, it's not a starter: It's home. "I wanted a little place of my own that I really enjoyed," says Kimball. Despite its modest 286 square feet, the studio charmed her on first sight. "The old prewar bones make it so New York to me," she says. Over the course of a year, Kimball has filled the apartment with a mix of old and new furnishings, some inherited and the rest purchased with an eye to scale. "I bought everything proportionate to the apartment's size," she notes. Since there was nothing she could do about the linoleum floor, Kimball embraced the black-and-white palette. A set of blue-and-white china from her family provides some of the only color in the space.



Unafraid to get her hands dirty, Kimball removed the existing light fixtures, installed ceiling medallions, and hardwired glam fixtures that she plans to take with her when she leaves (the apartment's crusty old lights are stashed in the butler's cabinet for reinstallation upon her departure). Kimball crafted a custom valance for the bathroom window with a yard of fabric, a glue gun, and some foam core. She installed floor-to-ceiling drapes that lend elegance to a less-than-picturesque view.

The kitchen, living room, office, and dining room are each clearly defined, even though they are merely inches apart. "I have a very pared-down lifestyle," says Kimball. Kimball notes that quality light fixtures are a quick way to elevate a ho-hum space, and appropriate for renters, too. "Just screw one in, and when you leave, pop it out." An oversize ginger jar purchased on eBay sits atop a family heirloom. The mod swivel chair doubles as a desk chair.

"A small space can still be luxurious and glamorous," insists Kimball. But the secret lies in restraint more than anything else: Kimball has stuck to her limited color scheme and eschewed clutter of any kind. "It requires work," she says of her style. "I edit every day."

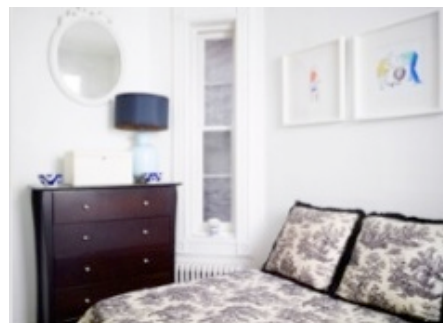
Kimball topped a Saarinen-style tulip table base with a circle of marble sourced from eBay. The wooden chairs are another eBay find, which Kimball reupholstered in a graphic Greek key pattern. A grouping of dishes on the wall and a monogrammed dish towel elevate the humble sink nook. Kimball stocked the apartment's built-in hutch with crystal, silver, and English dinnerware.



It's all in the details: Meaghan crafted an elegant valence for the bathroom window using foam core, a yard of fabric, and her trusty glue gun. "My inspiration came from old-school beach-club cabanas. I bought the towel from Target—including the monogram." In the kitchen, the *faux* black-and-white marble counter paper is from [Interior Place](#). "The steel knife set is from Ikea—their Grundtal series is amazingly designed and essential for any small space kitchen."



I just kept minimalizing everything in the bedroom and kept to the toile material in the living room. The lamp was found at Housing Works. The illustrations on the wall I drew myself when I lived in Los Angeles. I like to have objects in my apartment that remind me of travels and places I have been." As a film producer, she says, "I'm always facing the challenge of how to get production value within a budget, and this was the same with designing my apartment."



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