



HDB 3 ROOM FLAT | 968 sqft | RENO PERIOD 3 MONTHS | BUDGET \$70K



SECOND awakening

The most dramatic point in the renovation of this 20-year-old resale unit was not that everything was gutted; but a newly configured bathroom that made a world of a difference

TEXT Chia Tan PHOTOS Artist Room

What's there to suggest when you have little room to play with? Though this tiny HDB flat affords few ways to configure space, its appointed design team from Artist Room had big plans. They looked past its narrow layout, worn-out condition, and the fact that it only has one bathroom. All it needed were the right cosmetic touches to look as good as new. Fortunately, the homeowner was on board with a clean-cut style as the bachelorette herself was not a fan of loud design elements and clutter. With both designer and homeowner on the same page looking to carve out a modern and clutter-free haven, the renovation was off to a promising start.

OVERALL

Looking more like a chic Swiss apartment than a humble old bedroom flat, the modern look style belies the resale unit with a visual lesson in space. Adding texture, colour and more character to the home for two also the green mosaic tiles, woodgrain accents and an exposed sliding track. Without these stylish design elements, the modern white canvas would look flat and cold.

During the overhaul, the team was the most excited about altering the layout of the single bathroom. The classic 'open-concept bathroom' might immediately come to mind, but these ambitious designers really wanted to up their game. Since the bachelorette has to share this area with her tenant, they had to factor in privacy issues. Addressing this concern turned out to become the home's highlight: a communal bathroom with separate wet zones. Says Mark Chen, the team's project consultant: "We thought it was really different to incorporate two back-facing sinks, instead of the usual double sinks. Creating two new entrances, one from the service yard and another from the master bedroom, also really opens up this space."

With this versatile bathroom system in place, the team proposed other fresh changes to bring the dated-looking home back to 2015. Save for the enclosed toilet and shower stall, the



Industrial dining table from ghilly.com

COMMUNAL SPACES

Merging the kitchen and living zones went beyond having the same homogeneous floor tiles and a shared cabinet fixture. The designers noticed the kitchen's ceiling was lower so they flushed the living area's ceiling with the cooking space. Besides offering a seamless effect, the slightly lowered ceiling hides all the unsightly wiring in the living area.



entire home is laid with 750mmx750mm grey homogeneous tiles. Mark explains that these wider tiles display less grout lines, and therefore lend a more spacious and uniform appeal to the entire space. True enough, when teamed with the whitewashed walls, the home does appear larger than its 968 of square footage. The former swing-in bedroom doors were then replaced with sliding doors in favour of its space-minimising ways. Aesthetically, these new woodgrain patterned doors improve the look and serve as a warm visual

contrast to the cool white walls. The designers opted for an exposed track, as opposed to a hidden one, to add more texture and character to the living space.

The woodgrain patterns also make an appearance as laminate finishes on the kitchen cabinetry. It complements the sliding doors fittingly and highlights the fact that the cooking space has been integrated with the living area. After hacking away the boundary wall, the designers installed a cabinet fixture which literally covers almost the

LIVING

Once the boundary wall between the living and kitchen was taken down, the designers merged both areas to make the best of the long and narrow layout. They sealed the deal with an elongated cabinet fixture, which embraces the two zones with its dual-functionality as storage and a counter base.



DRY BATHROOM

For the homeowner and her tenant to enjoy their private space in the shared bathroom, the designers conceptualised back-to-back sinks. The cleverly-separated vanities allow the two occupants to use the dry area at the same time and at their own pace.

"We modelled the re-configured bathroom after the homeowner's needs and preferences. She requested for her own private space and preferred muted shades. In the end, we found it to be very 'her!'"

Mark Chen, Project Consultant, Artist Room



MASTER BEDROOM

A secret door was crisscrossed towards the en suite bathroom. When closed, it is flush with the walls and is subtly hidden with its whitewashed finish. The existing bedroom layout did not provide direct access to the bathroom so the designers worked it in for the homeowner to have her own semi-private bathroom.

WET AREAS

Enclosed with frosted glass doors, the toilet and shower stall are outfitted in different tiles of a light, sandy tone. The change in tiles indicates a visual demarcation between the wet zones and the main dry area. Also seen here is the other bathroom entrance from the service yard.



MATERIALS

BATHROOM FLOOR
750mmx750mm homogeneous tiles from Milano Ecru

KITCHEN AND BATHROOM WALL TILES
Green mosaic tiles from Bisazza Mosaics

SLIDING DOORS
Sierra Oak Granada laminate from Lamitak

entire width of the newly merged living-kitchen area. Serving as the TV console at the living zone, the laminate fixture in a matte white finish trails down towards the kitchen as a counter base with pull-out drawers.

Adding lustre and colour to the cool white and soothing brown hues in the communal zones is the dark green tile backsplash. The

striking mosaic tiles serve as form of visual demarcation for the open-concept kitchen from the living area. For design consistency, they also serve as a backsplash for the bathroom vanities. This was the final design breakthrough the designers were pursuing as they reckoned the space would look too flat and dull with the same old design details.