



Room of the Week: This Open-Plan, Shared Space is All About Zen

A redefined layout and a consistent palette keep this living and dining space light and cosy

Verlaine Marquez · 08.11.2016

This renovated apartment adopts a contemporary Zen approach – with an emphasis on lightness and sensibility – while maintaining the flow of spaces and good access to sunlight. “The owners live a busy life but fully appreciate spending time together as a family. Hence, hosting family events is a staple activity and the environment responded to their brief for a contemporary setting with clean and minimal modules,” says Alex Liu, principal designer of Right Angle Studio. To achieve a more warm and welcoming space conducive to family bonding and hosting gatherings, the design team created a more sensible arrangement in the common area and custom-designed furnishings to integrate perfectly within the existing open-plan layout.

Room at a Glance: Living-Dining-Breakfast Area

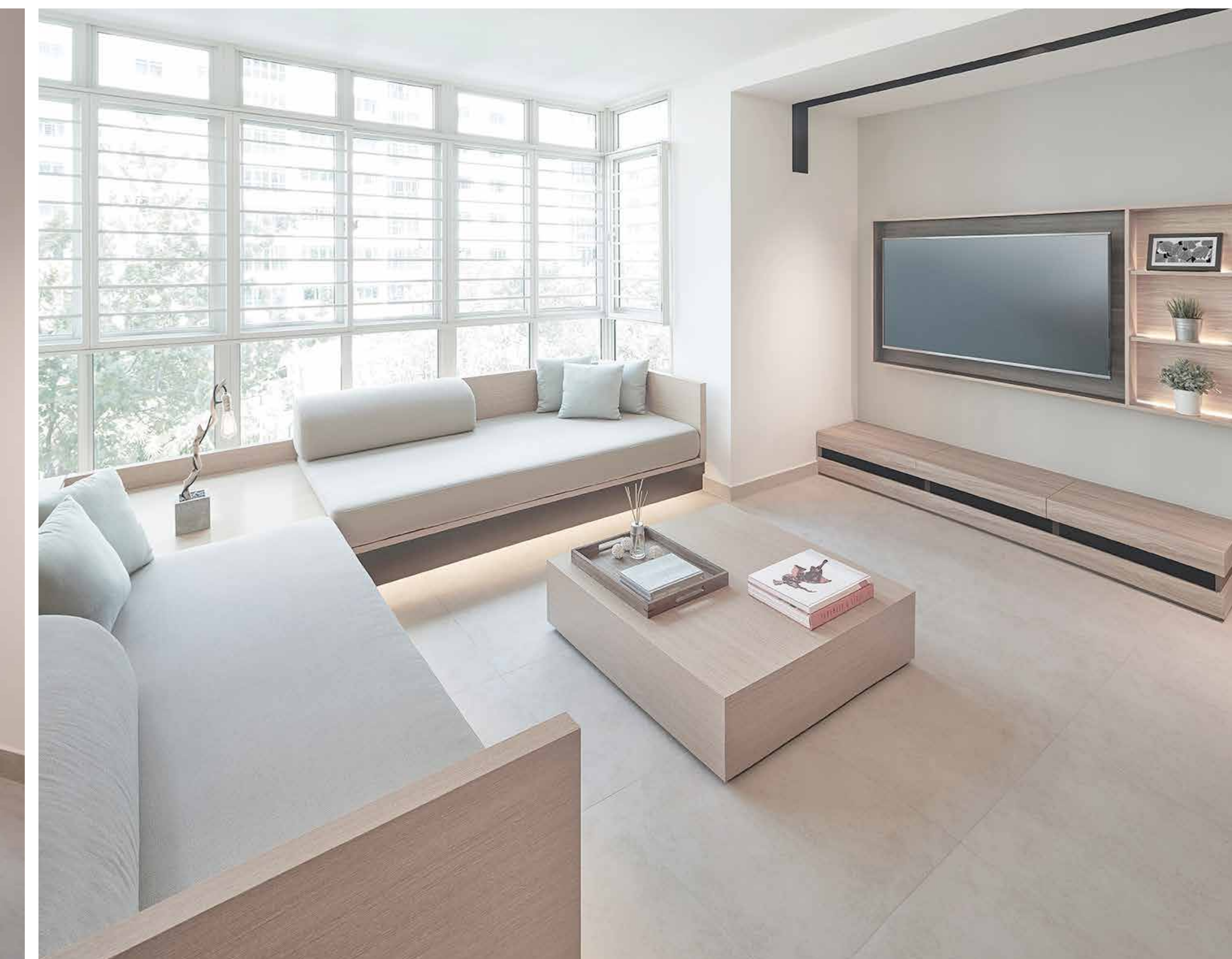
Who lives here: A family of four

Location: Northeast Singapore

Size: 1,150 square feet (107 square metres)

Designer: Alex Liu of Right Angle Studio

“The common area in the apartment was rather challenging to reconfigure as there was a space outside



of the kitchen intended for the dining area as well as an extended balcony which made the placement and selection of furniture tricky,” says Liu. To address these awkward spaces, they decided to redesign the layout. Placed outside the kitchen is a counter with an acrylic solid surface top, which also doubles as a breakfast-cum-serving area. This new arrangement also allows more storage space beside the counter.

The L-shaped sofa was designed to have a slim outline as the design team wanted to veer away from the bulky form of typical custom-built furniture. “To accentuate the ‘lightweight-look’, the base was recessed to create a difference in depth. The use of black finishing conceals the base, allowing the seating to stand out. Concealed under-lighting further enhances the floating effect,” says Liu.

The dead space between the two ends of the sofa was turned into a practical tabletop. A bench was also appended to the back of the sofa to serve as seating for new dining area. Ample daylight and strategic ambient lighting work together to make this room bright and airy. Aside from the concealed lighting under the sofa

and on the display shelves, there is also a continuous black ceiling channel that extends from the entryway. “The idea was to draw the attention into the living hall, so this language extends onto the wall, expressing the relation between the ceiling and the wall,” says Liu.

Oak wood veneers were used throughout the space to maintain uniformity and enhance the Zen sensibility. To harmonise with the natural look, the flooring was also replaced with tiles that resemble limestone.

Form and function is explicitly expressed in the space. The streamlined TV console, for example, has two identical modules sandwiching a black void. “As traditional consoles access devices from the front, it can be cumbersome for cable management. Thus, this design allows access from the top by simply flipping up the individual panels,” explains Liu. Rounding up the wood palette is the minimalist dining table. A sliding panel, meanwhile, acts as a partition between the public and private quarters.

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