

# ‘Honey, I shrunk the condo’

► Feel like you're living in a shoebox? You're not alone ► What to do when your family starts to grow and a detached house isn't an option

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As Toronto condos get smaller and smaller, and prices go higher and higher, potential buyers are looking for ways to get the most amount of space from their investments.

With the intent of keeping condos more affordable, builders have opted to make smaller units geared toward those downsizing, and the single, urban businessperson. They've managed to cleverly fit two bedrooms into floor plans as small as 570 square feet, albeit at the expense of a closet and living space.

For a young couple look-

ing to start a family, a detached home may be out of their league and condo living may be their only viable option.

Real estate analyst Brian Persaud says that Toronto buyers are getting frustrated with the detached housing market. "What we're seeing with detached homes a lot of people complain; there's bidding wars, I'm getting \$800,000 and it's going to be a two-bedroom with one washroom."

## Knock down some walls

One creative solution for creating more space is to purchase two units side-by-side and to remove the adjoining wall in between.

This has been a popular condo trend in other cities and Toronto builders may now be looking to do the same. Persaud was "following trends of what was happening in other places that have had a significant condo market for a couple of years, and in New York it's very popular."

Toronto purchaser Vicky Zemelman found a practical solution for her family, but without removing any walls. "We bought two units at the Yorkville Plaza. They are side-by-side to each other, but one unit was for my use personally and one unit was for my parents who are snowbirds. They're not here most of

the year and so basically it's just a way of me keeping an eye on the place for them."

## Time to take the 'mini' out of condominiums?

Tarik Gidamy is the co-founder and broker of record at TheRedPin.com realty. He questions the wisdom of merging units together. "You would pay for two kitchens and two sets of everything, and then for resale, I have to sell this to someone who is exactly in my type of situation."

He says the solution lies in simply making bigger condos. "There is a need for two or three bedrooms in 1,200 square feet. I think a lot of developers are actual-



► Many developers are aware of the need for bigger condos, says Tarik Gidamy, co-founder of TheRedPin.com realty.

ly in the know of this and they do their research. They know they have a location

that is conducive toward either families or kids that are studying."