



**Daily dose of style:** Despite its designer showflat appearance, functional furniture such as a pedestal that doubles as storage space for a home entertainment system in Jack and Pui Sang Goh's Glentrees apartment gives it a lived-in feel

# Multi-task your homeware

Sleek space-savers lend a touch of class to an elegant abode, CHEAH UI-HOON finds

**M**ODERN design isn't just about saving space nowadays, but making it go an extra mile. Given that space is of the essence in today's living environment, the ideal apartment is perhaps one designed and filled with furniture that has "multi-tasking" ability. Which is of course, easier said than done.

Thirty-something couple Jack and Pui Sang Goh tasked designer Terri Tan of Designworks, to do just that with their 1,430 sq ft, three-bedroom apartment, and the results were even better than they'd hoped for.

Enter their Glentrees apartment at Mount Sinai area and the first thing to catch your eye is the solid pedestal set near the wall that an abstract sculpture is placed on.

Just as you wonder whether a side table would have sufficed instead of the pedestal — even though it's a contemporary design with mirrored sides — Mr Goh swivels it around to show the shelves of equipment for the home theatre system.

It takes a few seconds before you register

that there are no wires running from the plinth to the flat screen LCD Loewe TV on the other side of the living room, and that the Bose Lifestyle system music player is housed inside the pedestal too — all the result of painstaking effort in designing and planning the living rooms layout.

"It was an idea that Terri had come up with," says Mr Goh, giving credit to the designer.

Planning the interior for the condominium took almost half a year, he says. The Glentrees unit is the first private condominium they own, purchased while the couple were working in Hong Kong.

"We used to have an HDB apartment, which we didn't even get to stay in before we were posted to Hong Kong," says Mr Goh. The couple lived in Hong Kong for five years, returning only in 2003.

The Glentrees purchase was a bit of a spur-of-the-moment buy, in 2002. They had come home on vacation, saw the showflat, and signed up for a unit on the spot.

"We liked what we saw, and it helped that my alma mater was around the corner," says the old boy of Henry Park Primary School. Al-

ter that, it was scouting around for the right designer. "We had a few requirements — we needed space for Pui Sang's (designer) bags and shoes, and we wanted an interior that was contemporary, simple and functional," he says.

Mr Goh of course had a valuable collection of his own to reckon with — his extensive DVD collection of movies, and books, mostly on World War II. "I'm quite a fan of military history," shares the credit risk manager in Lehman Brothers.

Incidentally, she gets all the concealed cupboard space in the dining/living area, while he gets a study with a floor-to-ceiling in-built cabinet.

The layout of the apartment is a nice square — with the living room on the right side of the apartment, as visitors walk in. Beyond the dining area and half-open kitchen on the left, that's where the master bedroom, study and children's room are situated. The architectural award-winning Glentrees being one of the condominium developments built with big balconies in mind, the living room area opens to a wooden-decked balcony, overlooking the lushly landscaped garden.

With just a few specifications in mind, the couple were willing to give the designer free rein to suggest the look and feel. "We didn't want to make too many suggestions as we didn't want the designer to be constrained, and to work with a clean slate."

The result is an apartment with an air of understated sophistication, but despite its designer showflat appearance, is very practical and designed for everyday living. Different textures and colours are used to provide visual interest, as in the way the earthy, neutral slate colours of cream to dark brown, with accents of gold and green. "We were not very comfortable with wallpapering the wall at first, but we're glad we got persuaded to do it in the end, because it does make the apartment cozier," says Mrs Goh, who works at Credit Suisse.

The couple's appreciation for top-of-the-line furniture and gadgets, especially the German kind, is evident. "Even our light switches are German!" quips Mr Goh. Besides the TV and the music system, the couple picked a modular sofa from Rolf Benz for its flexible design and also durability.

The Liebherr stainless steel refrigerator in the kitchen is also of German make, although in this case, that wasn't the reason why they got it, say the Gohs. They just happened to like the design, and were sold on its features.

Glentrees was the Goh family's weekend home at first — as they were staying at Mr Goh's parents' place for a while, for their two young sons' sake. But they've since moved in, so the children's weekend retreat — with the condominium's well landscaped grounds, extensive movie collection coupled with a cool home theatre system — is now their permanent abode.



**His and hers:** He gets a study with a floor-to-ceiling inbuilt cabinet while the lady of the house gets all the hidden cupboard space in the dining/living area

