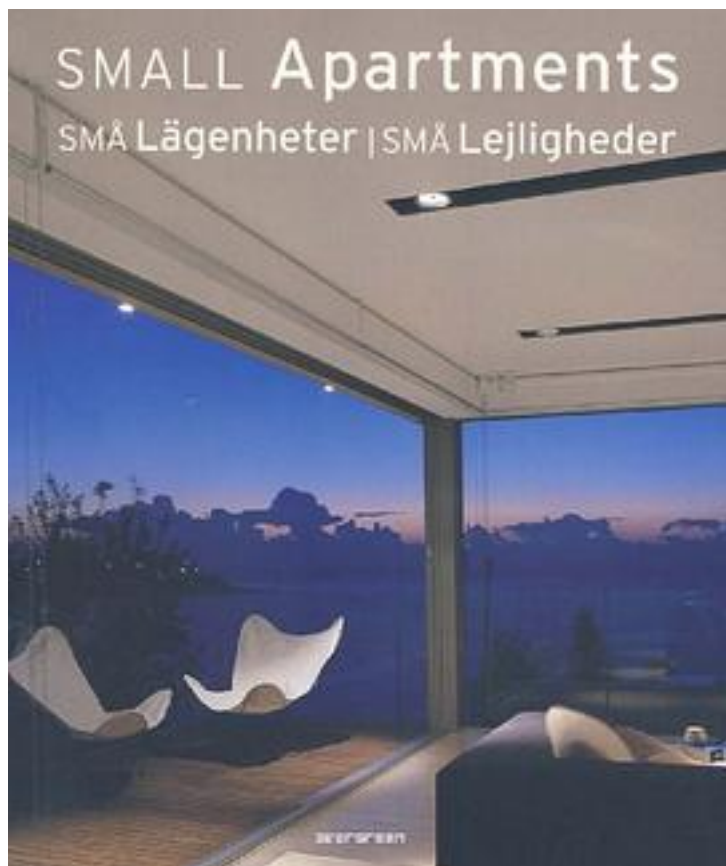


Small Apartments



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In the second half of the 20th century, two main trends in modern living emerged, in response to the characteristics of our times. On the one hand, residences now act as interior landscapes and, along with other compact elements of contemporary life, they serve to save time, motion and money. These developments typify life in today's big cities and they have impinged on the design of small living spaces. On the other hand,

the density of large cities and the desire for an individualized home is constantly increasing, bringing in their wake a new kind of space: the small apartment. The deterioration of habitable areas is reflected inside homes by a reduction of the surface area to minimal proportions.

The layout of small apartments is similar to regular-size dwellings, and even the tiniest of apartments can have some extra touches, such as studios or reading niches. The major difference lies in the strategies that architects and designers use to take full advantage of the space and emphasize the architectural features of each home. These apartments stand out precisely because of the ingenious way in which housing needs have been adapted to minimal space without sacrificing quality or comfort.

Many interior design strategies are common to all these apartments. We can find many examples in which the same space serves a number of different functions. Innovative strategies include walls that stop short of the ceiling or side walls; sliding doors that disappear; mobile screens that permit changes in an apartment's layout; or openings and translucent materials that allow light to flow through separated areas.

Although they all find their own particular solutions, by combining design strategies that use space to full advantage, they share five aspects

that are essential to successful interior design and the most important features of such an apartment: functional furnishings, color, movable panels, restraint, and the exterior.

This compilation of projects from around the world pays special attention to the particular features of each space, within the common restriction of a limited surface area. The range of projects will be of interest to not

only architects and designers but also residents of modern cities, thereby creating a basic tool for understanding how architects, designers, or owners of small apartments approach a project involving minimal living space.

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