

# Magdalena and Artur Kurylowicz's Monochrome, Minimalist Killarney Duplex

An interior designer, an exterior contractor and a little blonde boy built their dream home with a decidedly minimalist bent.

BY KAIT KUCY PHOTOGRAPHY BY JARED SYCH

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Magdalena and Artur Kurylowicz and their two-and-a-half-year-old son, Maxwell, have become pseudo-professionals at putting things back where they belong. Subscribing to the minimalist lifestyle, the three moved into their 3,700-square-foot, custom-built home in mid-2015.

Magdalena, an interior designer and Artur, an exterior contractor, came together under their own design company, **MAKhouse Design**, to create their Killarney duplex. Living on the right-hand side of the structure (when facing it from the street), the pair have put their own personal stamp on the property and have customized every inch of it.

Previously in a 600-square-foot condo, the young family was definitely used to living without excess, and being able to start from scratch in their new spacious, four-storey home was practically a new lease on life. “Everything and everyone has space. We were able to create a wide-open space on a relatively narrow footprint with 11-foot ceilings. You can breathe in here,” says Magdalena. “The rooms feel like they’re doing their purpose, which was really our intention in designing this home.” A bold concrete wall separates the two properties and adds an organic element to the otherwise unabashedly stark home. The duplex took two years to build from the ground up, and controlling every single aspect of the build was simultaneously good and bad for the couple; however, it was ultimately a positive experience.

Being detail-driven, Magdalena didn’t want to rush the process, although she was eager for her family to start their lives there. “I’ve had people ask if there is anything that I would do differently, and the answer is always, ‘Absolutely not,’” she says. “When I walk through this house, I’m so happy — so much so that my husband and I have talked about when we’re going to do it again.”

## **The marble slab kitchen**

The Kurylowicz's kitchen is a place where multiple meals take place every day, and where friends are welcome anytime. The design is monochrome black and white, with a focus on wood and marble details. With everything stripped down to the natural elements, the stage is set for food magic to happen.

Magdalena found a natural balance with her materials and emphasizes that over-embellishing your kitchen can be problematic. "It is about creating a beautiful canvas for anything that happens in the kitchen," she says. "Placing a bunch of yummy red tomatoes on the unadorned, white island instantly brings this place to life. It becomes all about the food, instead of the decor or clutter."

Storage is key in any kitchen, and Magdalena also needed to find unique ways to keep little hands out of the cupboards. Her solution was to install custom seamless white cabinetry, with not a single handle in sight. The appliances were all integrated into the cabinetry, allowing the kitchen to showcase the family's gatherings and meals instead of brand names and dishwasher buttons.

"We have a busy life with our little toddler. So, when we come in here, it becomes a really beautiful experience focused on the cooking or the baking," Magdalena says. "Or, if we are entertaining, the focus is on the social interaction instead of the visual clutter behind you."

## **The minimalist state of mind**

Minimalism is more than just a design trend for Magdalena Kurylowicz and her family — it has become a state of mind. While designing the home, their mandate was to decrease quantity and increase the quality of every single fixture, finish or texture through the entire space.

While you'd think "minimalism" means they might have gone with the plainest products on the market, it was quite the opposite. Attention to exquisite detail was thoughtfully executed

throughout the entire home, from the tile work in the front entrance to the lighting details in the master bathroom. They were left with an awe-inspiring space that truly speaks for itself. “I need to have a clutter-free life, both mentally and physically,” says Magdalena. “I bring a lot of clutter with me throughout the day, whether I am designing for a client or setting up a play area for Max and his friends.

“For me, my home needs to be a really beautiful backdrop, like a canvas for all of the colourful chaos that life brings to the table. I am all about being true to function and space when you are designing or decorating your home,” says Magdalena. “Whether you are renovating or building from the ground up, like we did, there are many different elements you need to consider. You need to figure out how to create storage solutions that literally disappear. We’ve become incredibly good at hiding things!”



**Indoor and outdoor living blend seamlessly thanks to tall sliding glass doors.**



**The kitchen is the heart of the home for the Kurylowicz family, who gather frequently to cook and dine together.**



**The Scandinavian-style dining area is bright and airy, with warm wood furniture and bold black-and-white accents.**



**The minimalism of the house is punctuated by artfully chosen lighting in the master bedroom and bath.**



**Maxwell has a fun and artistic bedroom that includes a custom-built bed and classic interactive toys.**

## **Magdalena Kurylowicz's tips for achieving a minimalist aesthetic in your home**

### **Do more with less**

Well-selected materials and beautiful, simple pieces go a long way. Choose timeless, unique and functional items that can be dressed up or down.

### **Use form and function to your advantage**

Design with clean lines and simple forms. Stick to the true use of the space.

### **Consider colour and light**

Try a white wall colour — it's a great canvas for beautiful artwork and a perfect contrast to the showcase furniture pieces in your home. Opt for big windows and select light fixtures that are simple, yet make a statement.

### **Get plenty of storage**

Hidden storage and optimal use of space is key to a great minimalist home.

### **De-clutter your life**

Less is always more. If you don't know you have it, then it shouldn't be in your home. Cleanse your belongings; your brain will thank you.

## **Get the Look: The Max Impact**

Six Max-inspired items that won't cramp your minimalist design aspirations. — *Fraser Tripp*