



Learning About Small Spaces at Insight School of Interior Design

HONG KONG'S INTERIOR DESIGN SCHOOL OFFERS FRESH IDEAS AND HANDS-ON LEARNING



Written by - Isabel McKenna on May 3rd 2018



Renovating your apartment can be a delight for some and a daunting task for others. Some choose to bring in the pros, but when you like to try things out for yourself, where do you start? For a hands-on approach, and a place to pick up some skills, it's time to take a class!

Last week I attended a short course at Insight School of Interior Design. This Hong Kong-based interior design school offers full diplomas, online courses, and even organizes an annual trip for students to Paris. But the perfect starting point for curious home improver enthusiasts is one of [Insight's short courses](#).



Insight School of Interior Design

Housed on the top floor of an industrial warehouse in Chai Wan, in the eastern part of Hong Kong island but still easily accessible from Central, the elevator doors open up to a bright and cheerful foyer. So much space!

The school is Hong Kong's only dedicated interior design school, with a growing roster of students. Set up in 2013 by French interior designer Eve Mercier, the school's intention is to provide vocational training, mixing theory with practical experience.



Small Spaces Short Course

The short course I took was a one-day workshop about small spaces, which is perfect for Hong Kong. Before starting off, we eased in by getting to know our classmates. Some were in completely different fields looking to flex their creative muscles and try out something new, while others were already thinking of starting their own businesses, picking up interior design classes to bolster their toolkit.



Group Learning

Our teacher was friendly and knowledgeable about the material. We started off the morning going through a gallery of small spaces and discussed them in the group. It was fun to look through and dissect the plans and see how our styles, tastes and opinions on design all differed around the room.

We touched on design points and studied ways to make a room more spacious; mirrors in the powder room, creating surprise elements to draw the eye's attention, and why recessed handles are a good thing (particularly if you're as prone as I am to bumping into things at hip height).





Lunch with Rooftop Views

The pantry has a gorgeous lookout over Chai Wan harbor, beautiful rooftop views!



After lunch we swiftly moved into designing! With a design brief and floorplan in hand, we began to measure, cut out and stick down our ideas onto paper. How much space is there for the passageway? Does it matter which way the window is facing? Does the client prefer more space for a bedroom or is it a party house? We tackled these questions and scribbled down notes.



Floorplan Challenge Accepted

While we got to work on the layouts our teacher Elspeth, an architect and interior designer, made a few loops around the room to check in with us and look over our designs. She was light-hearted about the activity, which helped alleviate any feeling of pressure about completing the task to perfection.

I enjoyed the hands-on challenge, imagining where the sliding doors and extra storage niches would go. Always gotta think about the storage! The final chapter was the perfect opportunity to combine everything we'd learnt that morning and round off the day.



We presented our designs. Ta dahl With the same floorplan and brief, we all had totally different concept ideas! It was a fun way to cultivate my thirst for interior design, taking the topic of small spaces and really putting it to work straight away. Finishing off the day, I had a lot of fresh renovation ideas and a final piece to take home.



Classrooms and Courses

There are a lot of other interesting short courses to try next! Some of my classmates had already done a few, and really enjoyed them. I took a look around the school, as there are two other classrooms and a computer lab on the campus. There's a studio room for lighting too, so you can test out how different materials work with lights to create warm or cool textures.

I spoke with one of the students taking a longer course. "You actually meet with real clients," she enthusiastically explained. With all of the students creating something unique for the clients, they can end up with eight or nine different designs to choose from. Additionally, the students already have a range of projects for their portfolio.



Full time students earning their certificate in interior design



I really enjoyed my short course. The school's beautifully lit space is a refreshing learning environment and the teachers are knowledgeable, with a series of projects under their belts. Now it's just a question of which course to do next...