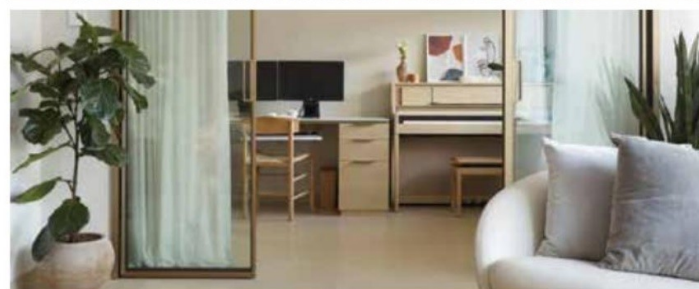
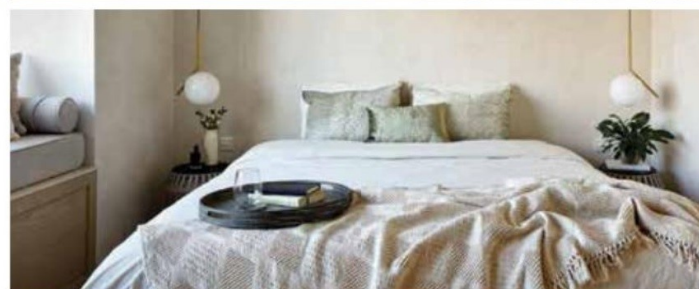


# RIGHT AT HOME

with Kate Springer

Rowena Gonzales (right) has always been interested in wellness and the environment. Growing up in Montreal, Canada, she says sustainability was second nature to her. So when she founded her interior design studio, Liquid Interiors, in 2009, it was only natural that she bring her eco-conscious mindset to her work. Rowena became a LEED Accredited Professional (AP) and strived to create living spaces that left a smaller footprint on the earth.



The mother of the home, who also works in the sustainability industry, wanted to have a calming, meditative space that celebrated nature and reduced stress. As a result, the 1,520-square-foot apartment feels like an urban oasis, showcasing arched doorways and windows, textured stone, solid wood furniture, lots of houseplants and an earthy, neutral palette.

"We are cautious about materials, even down to glue, adhesives and ventilation. We work with locally sourced, sustainable and low-VOC [volatile organic compounds\*] materials," says Rowena. "The more natural the furniture, the better - so we don't need to worry about toxic finishing, hardeners or glue."

From sideboards to rattan cabinets, several tasteful storage solutions keep clutter at bay while a versatile home office overlooks the children's play area. "There's no TV in the living room because the mother was adamant about creating a living area that revolved around quality time, music, conversation... and we love that," says Rowena. "The dining room is also very minimal and refreshing. We used a specific kind of low-VOC plaster paint that has a beautiful texture with a LED light in front of it with a wave-like design."

Liquid Interiors also installed circadian lighting, which the family can adjust throughout the day to mimic the sun's colour temperature - it's blueish in the morning to help you wake up and warmer in the evenings to increase melatonin and help you fall asleep. "Sleep is so important to wellbeing, as is having a place in your home that is just for you, your place to unwind," says Rowena. "The mother's favourite place is at the foot of her bed, where warm night lights cast an amber glow underneath the bed's skirt. That's her place to do yoga every night - she closes the doors and can truly relax."

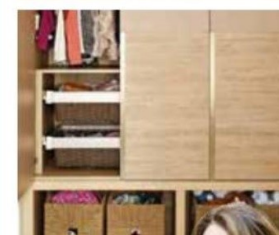
*\*Volatile organic compounds (VOC): gases released into the air from certain solids and liquids, which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects.*

## ROWENA'S TOP 3 HEALTHY HOME IMPROVEMENT TIPS:

**BREATHE FREELY:** To minimise chemicals in your space, Rowena recommends investing in a dehumidifier, an air purifier and low-VOC furniture, paint and flooring.

**STAY ORGANISED:** Your home should be a place to recharge and rejuvenate. To relieve stress and clear your mind, keep your place as clutter-free as possible.

**BEDROOM 101:** Sleep is essential to your wellbeing. Treat your bedroom as a place to switch off by keeping all electronics out of the bedroom, installing blackout blinds and regularly cleaning your air-con.



Kate Springer is a Hong Kong-based lifestyle writer who contributes to Vogue, CNN, Home Journal, Tatler, BBC Travel, Forbes Travel Guide, Fodor's, Vice, and more. You can follow her on Instagram @katespringer. Send news about exciting home and design stories to [kate@kate-springer.com](mailto:kate@kate-springer.com).

