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T H E _ F U T U R E _ I S

DOWN S I Z E D



A STAR DESIGNER SHOWS THE HOMEOWNERS OF TOMORROW HOW TO PASS UP THAT WHITE PICKET FENCE.

by Erin Feher

photographs by Matthew Millman

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THE SMALL AND SEXY LIVING ROOM OF DESIGNER JAY JEFFERS, WHO TRADED AN OLD HOUSE FOR A SLEEK NEW CONDO.

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THE

last six years have ushered in a new era for San Francisco. A building boom has brought more than 10,000 new homes to the market, 90 percent of them within multifamily developments. And for anyone who has tried to open a 100-year-old window bearing a dozen different coats of paint, these shiny new dwellings have some serious appeal. Local developers have taken a cue from other successful, high-density cities like New York and Chicago and started teaming with big-name architects and designers; the result has been sought-after homes stacked one above the other within iconic structures, from the multimillion-

dollar residences of the Pacific on Webster Street to the Orlando Diaz Azzuy-designed skyscraping units at 181 Fremont.

For designer **Jay Jeffers** and his husband, Michael Purdy, it was a brand-new building on a desirable Hayes Valley corner designed by local architectural darling Anne Fougerson that officially lured them away from the single-family home in Twin Peaks that they'd owned, renovated, and lived in for 10 years. "I felt like the energy of the city was changing," Jeffers says. "We were doing more design work in high-rises like Millennium Tower, and we had this idea: What if we just pared down, lived smaller and in a place where



we could walk everywhere we need to go?"

After selling their Twin Peaks house, the couple spent a few years renting at the Argenta, a new 20-story apartment building on Polk and Market Streets, where a proliferation of tech offices has brought with it high-end rentals, such as the Nema and Ava, brimming with amenities. "The Argenta was a test—did we like living in a community of people and taking the dogs up and down the elevators?" Purdy recalls. "It passed."

From left: INSIDE JAY JEFFERS AND MICHAEL PURDY'S 800-SQUARE-FOOT "CITY COCOON," THE LIVING ROOM AND BEDROOM SHARE A WALL FEATURING DRAMATIC WALLPAPER BY AREA ENVIRONMENTS. JEFFERS DESIGNED AN ISLAND ON WHEELS FOR THE KITCHEN BELIEVED ART TAKES PRIDE OF PLACE. THE ENTRYWAY IS A WORKHORSE, SERVING AS SITTING ROOM, CLOSET, BAR, AND LAUNDRY ROOM; THE EXTERIOR OF 400 GROVE.

So when the couple found out that New York-based developer DDG (of 8 Octavia and 450 Hayes) was about to release the 34 units in its third San Francisco development, the Fougerson-designed 400 Grove at the corner of Gough Street, they jumped on it. "I think the architecture of new condo developments in San Francisco has become much more interesting over the past few years," Jeffers says. "DDG in particular brought a real New York sensibility to design—small buildings, small lots, small spaces."

And small it is. The couple's fourth-floor one-bedroom clocks in at just 800 square feet. But Jeffers embraced the coziness, painting nearly all the walls a deep midnight blue with black trim: "I wanted this to be our little city cocoon—to accentuate that fact

and make it be moody and sexy." And while their furnishings are decidedly more refined than the Ikea hacks of postcollege apartment living, Jeffers and Purdy aren't above employing some ingenious, and necessary, space-saving tricks. The custom island is on wheels and can be negotiated around the combo living room—kitchen to make room for guests. The entryway doubles as a laundry room when clothes need to be hung out to dry (a rod folds down out of a hidden corner near the ceiling). And a single large pantry stores everything from their pared-down collection of pots and pans to linens to passports.

Faced with the necessities of scaled-down living, the couple aren't backing away. In fact, they're thinking of doubling down. "We joke about retiring in Manhattan," Jeffers says, "and upgrading to an even smaller place there." ■

