



PHOTOS: ALAN LIM

UP, UP AND HIDDEN AWAY. Inspired by overhead cabins in airplanes, home owner and interior designer Nicholas Tay built storage cabinets around a living room ceiling beam that could not be moved.

Project runway

Life!Design
on Saturday

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Fasten your seatbelts for a nifty storage idea off airliners

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DESIGN REPORTER

WHEN interior designer Nicholas Tay encountered a structural problem in his apartment, he let his imagination take flight – literally.

A ceiling beam jutted awkwardly into his living room and, as it was a structural support, could not be moved or removed.

He got around the problem by incorporating overhead cabinets – much like the ones in aircraft – around the beam, thus turning the living room ceiling into a storage space.

"I got the idea from airline cabins," says Mr Tay, whose wife Josephine is – you guessed it – an air stewardess.

More concealed storage in the living room

comes in the form of a feature wall whose blocks are really cabinet doors. Next to these is a platform box that hides a single-size mattress. A folding door allows this nook to be turned into an extra bedroom when needed.

And while most home owners have their TVs on or against a wall, Mr Tay used an island arrangement instead. This also allows the TV to be swivelled around, so it can be seen from either the living or dining area.

The dining area is also where Mr Tay works

– the Serangoon Central apartment is used as his office for Altogether Designs.

To save space in the 1,200 sq ft flat, his dining table is fitted with castors, allowing it to be rolled nearer the kitchen for meals or against a wall for drafting.

Clients who visit his home-office are often impressed by his flights of fancy. We say, with no folding tray tables instead?

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MARK THIS SPACE: The wooden flooring demarcates the living area, which allows it to blend with a platform-storage nook at the far end.



SLIDE AND HIDE: Sliding doors turn a platform nook-cum-storage space (above) beside the living area into an extra room when needed. The adjoining feature wall (left) adds both texture and storage space.

