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### Why I Love My Apartment: Andra Alvis

By Andra Alvis  
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Last summer, I moved into a studio apartment in the Mercury, one of the new apartment buildings that recently went up around the town square. Since then I have been bombarded with calls from friends - and even casual acquaintances - eager to stop by and check out the new spaces. It occurred to me that in featuring my own apartment I could perform a valuable public service for many curious Bloomingtonians.

So why do I love my home? Because it's a studio apartment that feels like a house.

The house-like feel of the space was the first thing that appealed to me when I viewed it last April. Unlike the cramped studio apartments I had rented as a starving student, this 650-square-foot unit felt incredibly generous, with a full-scale kitchen (complete with dishwasher), a large walk-in closet, and a washer and dryer.

Once I moved in, however, maintaining this impression of a house became quite a challenge. I had an extensive wish list of the spaces I wanted to carve out: a sitting area for guests, a small home office, reading and meditation corners--not to mention room for a queen-size bed. How could I put everything in without making the room seem cluttered, and destroying the spacious, house-like feeling I wanted to keep?

I came up with two basic strategies. First, I took advantage of rugs, screens, and various features of the apartment to define each space and create the feeling of separate "rooms." For example, I placed my home office against a concrete pillar on the far wall, defined the sitting area with a chenille loop throw rug, and set off the meditation area with a Japanese screen.

Second, I used mostly vintage and other small-scale pieces of furniture. My sitting area, for instance, consists of a futon love seat, a 1950s tile end table, and two director's chairs. For my office, I chose a 1920s oak library table and piano stool--both courtesy of my mother, who used to be an antique dealer.

The result? A space I love: a studio apartment with the soul of a house.

*Do you love your home? If you would like to be featured in this column, contact [homes@heraldt.com](mailto:homes@heraldt.com).*



Ceilings are high, and textures include stone, wood, and concrete. Photos by Andra Alvis



Kitchens at the Mercury come with polished limestone counters

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