

FINISHING TOUCH

Hide and Eat

In Manhattan, where space is the ultimate luxury, a clever design workaround makes a dining table disappear after supper.



Budgets beget compromise when it comes to design, and Jon Handley is an architect adept at navigating the balance between splurge and steal. When he was commissioned by a young couple to maximize the space in their minimal 700-square-foot Manhattan apartment, his solution for the main living area was a clever table that easily stows away against the wall when not in use. "Architecture helps influence the mood and set the scene," Handley says. "The transition becomes a kind of ritual: It goes up for a movie night—the TV is across the room—or down for a dinner party."

The inexpensive, lightweight MDF surface operates on a custom-built fulcrum system that utilizes lead weights like a see-saw. Once in motion, gravity is the only agent needed to engage the leg. A relatively pricey panel of fabric by Dutch designer Hella Jongerius functions as a "quirky surprise," lining the back of the vertical box where the unit is housed. ■



By Jordan Kushins