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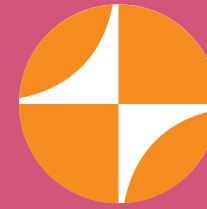
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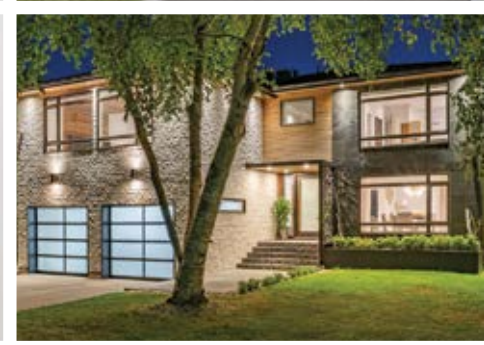
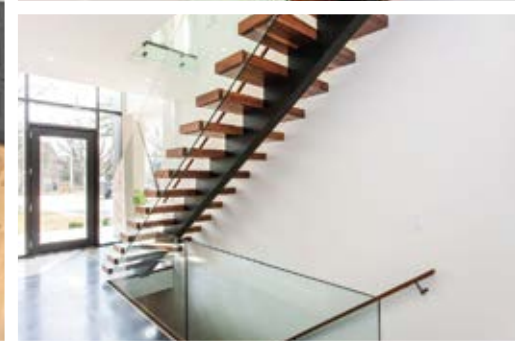
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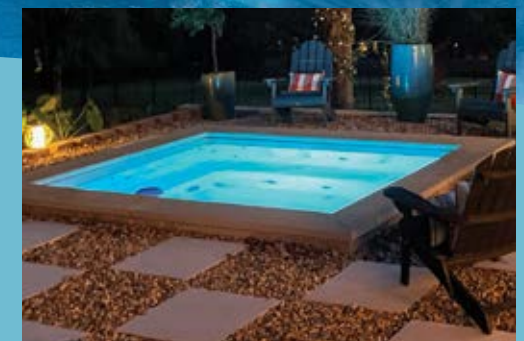
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REGIONAL PUBLISHERS Jamie Jefferson
Georgette McCulloch

REGIONAL MANAGING EDITORS Gina Makkar & Melissa North

REGIONAL PRODUCTION MANAGER Lynn Derrick

MARKETING & ADVERTISING Marie Gallagher, 905.399.0717
marie.gallagher@ourhomes.ca

Lisa Ormsby, 705.445.5065 x200
lisa.ormsby@ourhomes.ca

Dianne Brown, 905.975.0280
dianne.brown@ourhomes.ca

REACH US EASILY: firstname.lastname@ourhomes.ca

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	MANAGING DIRECTOR, SALES & MARKETING Jamie Jefferson jamie.jefferson@ourhomes.ca
ART	MANAGING DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS Georgette McCulloch
ART DIRECTOR Tara Chattell	ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE & DIRECTOR OF DISTRIBUTION Lisa Ormsby
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTORS Sheila Britton, Robynne Sangiuliano	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Kelly Craig
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Jason Hartog	ACCOUNTING Tyler Annette

CONTRIBUTORS

Jennifer Backstein, Sheila Britton, Anders Chan, Joyce Gionet, Laura Hay,
Jason Hartog, Kelly Horkoff, Jillian Jackson, Gina Makkar, Georgette McCulloch,
Jenelle McCulloch, Tamarisk McNalty Stephens, Melissa North, Melanie Rekola,
Erin Rochon, Vanessa Rogerson, Denise Willson

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A NOTE FROM *Hamilton*

SPRING IS EVER THE SEASON OF RENEWAL, never more so than after this past Omicron winter. Well, hello sunshine and new growth! Welcome back birds! Good day, neighbour!

After all the shutdowns and gathering restrictions, I felt positively giddy visiting our local merchants and tradespeople for this issue. It's no exaggeration to say that I have developed real fondness for these lovely and talented people who make my job such a pleasure. I am so happy that they have found ways to roll with the punches and continue to thrive despite difficult times.

If you are looking for that something special to brighten your home or you have work that needs doing, you will find the right contacts in these pages. And I would love you to support the businesses that support our communities.

We have four beautiful homes to inspire you, too. Four! From a NYC-feel condo (page 56), to a young family's house in transition (page 88), you are bound to come away with some fun ideas.

We also get a peek inside Crodon Kitchen and Bath Centre's new showroom (page 104). I've seen their work in homes we've featured previously, so I knew it was going to be special.

On page 52, you'll find the various colours of the year selected by the major paint companies. Hint: grey-green is a hit for 2022. But I can't figure out which one I like best.

Back in 2013, when I took on the Managing Editor position, I also began working with photographer extraordinaire Kelly Horkoff. I've lost count of how many homes we have visited together and shops and workplaces we have explored looking for the right shot. He has taught me so much about his craft, and entertained me, and put up with me. Now Kelly is taking time away to embrace his new role of grandfather to adorable Maxwell. Congratulations, Kelly! It's been a blast, and you'll be missed.

And now, in the words of *The Bugs Bunny Show* "On with the show, this is it..."

Happy, happy spring!

Melissa

Melissa North, *Managing Editor*
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editor's note



A NOTE FROM
Oakville
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Mississauga

Large lots aren't always feasible (especially in this market!) but making the most of a petite property can be equally challenging.

We live in a subdivision where yards and windows face one another and stepping onto your deck sometimes feels like stepping onto the main stage. Hello neighbours!

We love our backyard oasis and while we don't have room for a pool, we have enough space for a dreamy retreat.

A small space can still be stylish. Here are a few of my favourite tips for creating a backyard haven no matter the size or budget.

1. Define your space. A deck off the kitchen is practical because it extends living space, but in close quarters it can feel like a fishbowl. The solution? A retractable awning. It adds shade, provides privacy and acts like an extra room. *Bonus:* It cools down the house.
2. Add multi-purpose furniture to entertain without feeling cramped. Instead of a traditional table-and-chairs combo, we went with a large sectional and fireplace table that allows us to eat or lounge outdoors. *Bonus:* It's easy to add or take away pieces when needed.
3. Buy or build flexible furnishings. My husband built adorable folding tables that can be tucked away when not in use. *Bonus:* They are easy to find at garden centres or seasonal departments.
4. Grow up. No space for a full garden? Grow vertically. My husband built beautiful cedar planter boxes that allow us to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers. *Bonus:* It adds to the view.
5. Add night lights. You can hardwire new lighting or use widely available solar options. A few string lights illuminate and add ambience.
6. Establish privacy. Tall plantings to the rescue! Column oaks and emerald evergreens are the best investments we've ever made. They create a tall, dense barrier that adds a lot of privacy. *Bonus:* The evergreens look beautiful year-round.

There you have it. A small space doesn't have to equal small style. We can have all the things on our wish list if we get creative.

Gina Makkar

Gina Makkar, Managing Editor
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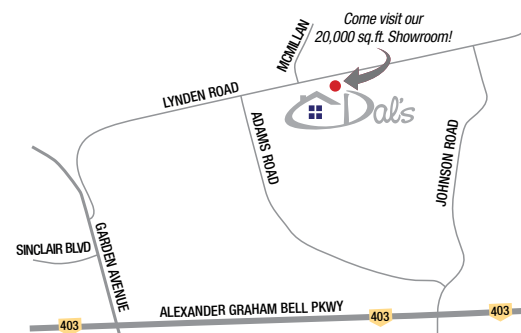
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ON THE COVER

A stunning condo renovation in an old Hamilton school. Story, page 56. Photography by Kelly Horkoff.



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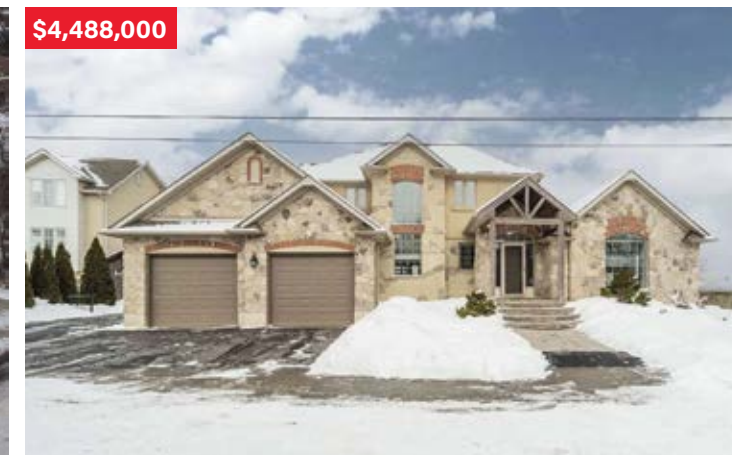
Attention all investors and first time home buyers! This home features a 3 + 1 bedroom detached home, with 2 +1 baths. On the main floor there is an updated kitchen and family room. The lower-level features a 1 bedroom separate apartment with separate entrance, kitchen, family room and 3-piece bath. Many recent upgrades including kitchen, all exterior doors (2017), a/c (2017), hot water tank (2017), all windows (2017), roof (2011).



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Stunning 4 bedroom, 4 bathrooms waterfront, executive home on lake Ontario beside Marina Conservation Area. Panoramic views of the Golden Horseshoe and breathtaking sunrise/sunsets over the lake from 24 windows. Home boasts approximately 3741 sq ft above grade living space, vaulted ceilings, porcelain flooring on main, and floating staircase. Sun-filled, open concept living room and updated kitchen with lake views. In-law suite on main floor with walk-in closet and walk-out to covered patio.

*For dollar volume sold on the Toronto Real Estate Board for 2011-2021.

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Where to begin?

The desire to have a space that feels finished the moment you move in is understandable. However, we must move away from instant gratification and towards playing the long game. The reality is that making environmentally-conscious choices takes time and energy – and that's okay. Plus, curating a space over time will create a finished product that is much more personal and reflective of your unique style.

FURNITURE

One of the easiest and simplest ways to be more sustainable at home is to purchase fewer items.

Before buying, ask yourself: Is this a "need to have" or a "nice to have"?

You can hunt antique markets, local second-hand and vintage shops, estate sales and online e-commerce sites for furnishings. Investing in pre-loved pieces is a great way to contribute to the circular economy.

You can often find high-quality pieces in good shape and for a great price! Antique and vintage pieces provide the opportunity for you to express your style with character, charm and uniqueness that homogeneous,

run-of-the-mill, mass-produced furnishings simply cannot.

Use your creativity to reimagine a piece of furniture by giving it new life with a fresh coat of paint, learn how to refinish wood or experiment with basic reupholstery.



MY BACK SHED: Refurbished Furniture



STYLUS: Ramos Sofa

And when you do buy new, invest in quality, locally-made pieces that will stand the test of time. The life cycle of fast furniture is often short and it will need to be replaced in five to 10 years. More product equals more resources – and there's nothing sustainable about utilizing more raw materials and consuming more energy.

Purchase goods that you can envision loving long-term and avoid trends. Buy for style and longevity.

APPLIANCES



Reduced energy consumption is only one element to consider when purchasing appliances. Support companies that prioritize environmental initiatives, such as manufacturing durable products, utilizing metals that can be easily recycled, restricting hazardous materials during manufacturing and providing a recycling program at the end of the product's useful life.

You can often find second-hand appliances that function perfectly well and are in great shape. Also, peruse the scratch-and-dent section of local stores – you can find quality-made appliances with minimal aesthetic damage. You can always put a grocery list or piece of art over top of a small scratch on a

fridge. If you don't like the colour or finish, research how to paint appliances to suit your desired aesthetic.

Finally, learn how to fix things (or be willing to pay someone who can). The cost of goods has become so affordable that instead of repairing something we replace it. That mentality is simply not sustainable.



GRAHAM AND BROOKS SALVAGE: Salvaged Lighting

ACCESSORIES

Accessorizing your home is where you can let your resourcefulness shine. There are so many second-hand accessories available for you to upcycle, recycle and reimagine. See how creative you can be!

Vintage rugs are worth the investment and no one will have the same one. They have already been around for many years and with proper care they will last for many more. Plus, they are often made of wool and other natural materials and will biodegrade more easily than carpets made from synthetic materials.

Support local artists and artisans by purchasing a unique piece of art for the walls or everyday utilitarian items, such as hand-thrown coffee mugs. Buying local isn't just sustainable, handcrafted items add a different energy to your home.

Another way to instantly accessorize your home is to introduce houseplants – it is one of the simplest and most affordable ways to add texture, interest and colour to a space. **OH**

RUG & WEAVE: Antique Persian Hamadan Wool Rug



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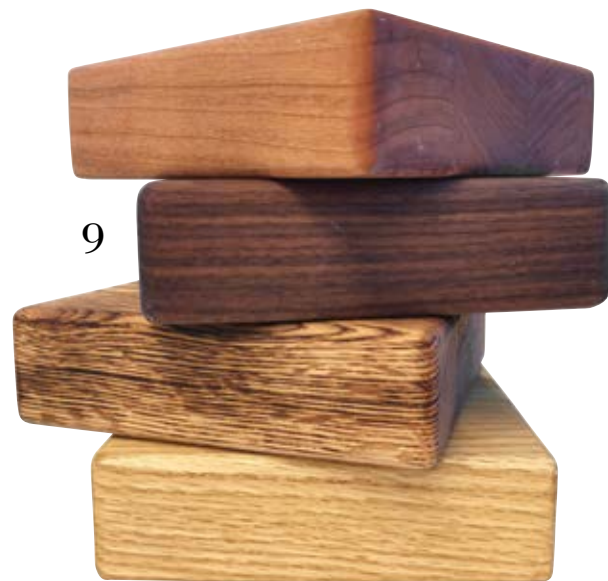
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good taste

the Garden Gimlet

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY
JENELLE MCCULLOCH

Enjoy a fresh take on a traditional gimlet cocktail. This gin-based drink is infused with fresh cucumber and basil.



INGREDIENTS (Makes 1 cocktail)

- 2 oz gin
- 3 cucumber slices
- 1 - 2 basil leaves
- ½ oz lemon juice
- ½ oz simple syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker. Shake and double strain into a coupe glass or over ice in a rocks glass. **OH**

To make a simple syrup: Combine 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water in a saucepan over medium heat. Heat until sugar is dissolved. Cool, then pour into a glass jar and refrigerate until needed.



Garnish with cucumber slices, a basil leaf and some fresh flowers (optional).



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Ponds AND WATER FEATURES

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY **MELANIE REKOLA**

With staycations becoming more popular, creating a beautiful backyard to escape to is a worthy investment. No backyard paradise is quite complete without the soothing sounds of water to make you feel cool, even when temperatures are blazing.

Adding a dreamy backyard water feature can be simple, extravagant or somewhere in between. There are options for every taste and budget.

WATER BOWLS

These large, watertight bowls are an easy addition, fitting any space. They have a bubbler/small filtering system and most are deep enough to add a variety of water plants. Imagine having water bowls instead of planters on a backyard patio – you would never have to worry about watering again!

WATER FOUNTAINS

Another quick way to add a tranquil trickle of water to your backyard oasis is through a prefabricated fountain. Many styles and sizes are available in a ready-to-use kit format. Weight needs to be considered as some of the hefty ones require a concrete footing. *Continued on page 38*



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PONDS

Ponds, streams and waterfalls let you take creativity to the extreme in your landscape design. As these are custom made, you can design anything imaginable, from a cool modern vibe to something Mother Nature designed herself – as long as you have the right budget in place as these can be costly.

Shelves of different depths within a pond interior can be created for certain water plants, as each has its own specific requirements. Shallow areas also act as escape routes in the event a pet or wildlife accidentally falls in.

Ponds need to be at least four feet deep (preferably deeper) if you'd like to overwinter frogs and fish successfully. UV filters

and pumps need to be carefully planned and calculated for the amount of water present and if you decide to include fish, you will need an extensive filtering system.

Pond accessories are fun and exciting! There is nothing quite like the feeling of walking on water where a cool, floating step is present. Other fun features include architecturally designed, artisan metal spout scuppers, spillways and mounted spill-bowls that replace traditional waterfall weirs. You can even include a floating island filled with plants; you'd be surprised how many traditional garden plants do well in these environments and they look quite natural once the plantings fill in and spill over the edges.



Melanie's Pond Plant Picks

The world of water gardening is extensive. Here are a few favourite, hardy, native-to-Ontario perennials to get you started.



Water Lily / *Nymphaea odorata* – Likely the first water plant that comes to mind, lovely lily is a wonderful, free-flowering plant for any pond. Perfect, glistening white flowers with yellow centres are formed throughout the summer months. It prefers still waters though, so always plant this beauty far away from waterfalls.



Pickerelweed / *Pontederia cordata* – A carefree-growth habit and lovely lavender blooms make this a colourful addition to any pond.



Marsh Marigold / *Caltha palustris* – Sunny buttercup blooms arrive in early spring, but only for a brief time. However, it's still a worthy water garden addition for its pretty leaves.



Horsetail Rush / *Equisetum hyemale* – Wonderful stiff upright stems resemble a tiny bamboo forest – perfect for pond margins. It can spread aggressively so it's best planted in a contained area.

POND MAINTENANCE

Ponds do take work and most need to be shut down in fall and opened in spring, just like a swimming pool. Most of the work happens in spring and mucking out a pond is dirty business. Hip waders help! The rest of the year is much easier, as long as you keep up a good maintenance program. An ideal healthy maintenance schedule requires an occasional filter cleaning, replacing 20 per

cent of the water with fresh water weekly and adding beneficial bacteria when needed. This is even more important for smaller features as their balance gets disrupted easily. The larger the pond, the easier it is to maintain and if it's large enough, it will mostly take care of itself. Don't forget to consider the ongoing electricity and pump/filter replacement costs too.

The best part of including a water feature in your oasis is all the birds and wildlife it will attract! What outdoor retreat would be truly complete without them? **OH**

Melanie is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.

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A fluted waterfall wall made of oak creates a dramatic focal point in the front entryway. **OPPOSITE LEFT:** Organic exterior elements are inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style builds of the 1900s. **RIGHT:** Soaring ceiling heights create a bright entrance with natural light that lasts all day.



MUSKOKA INSPIRED

STORY **JOYCE GIONET** | PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

According to *National Geographic Traveler* magazine, Muskoka is one of the world's "must see places." The trend for recreating that laid-back Muskoka vibe in the city shows no sign of letting up. At one time, **Peter Giampuzzi**, owner of **Ornella Homes**, built maybe one home a year in the Muskoka-inspired style. Today this type of build makes up 80 per cent of his business.

FOR HOMEOWNERS Lorenzo and Lee, the neighbourhood was their priority. "Lee and I have always enjoyed Port Credit and wanted to be within walking distance of restaurants and the waterfront," says Lorenzo. "Although the location is one of our greatest enjoyments, the list of interior and exterior pleasures in our new home is vast."

Their building permit arrived at the same time as the pandemic, then things began shutting down in Ontario. Despite recurring lockdowns, strict on-site safety protocols and frustrating supply chain issues, the couple moved into their home in the summer of 2021.

Inspiration for the organic exterior comes from Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style builds of the 1900s. Peter points out the low roof pitch moving to flat at points, angled walls and exaggerated eaves. "We emphasized horizontal lines," he says. The exterior is covered in Owen Sound limestone, cut in varying lengths for a lovely horizontal flow. Each stone was tooled to a smooth, seamless finish. The tongue-and-groove roof cladding is a weatherproof PVC called Sagpiper made in Portugal. It intersects beautifully with the Iron Ore grey PVC soffits. *Continued on page 42*



modern spaces conducive to entertaining, with well-designed storage. Lorenzo and Lee had lived in the same house for over 20 years, so this new build was an opportunity to update and modernize the look of their new forever home, while keeping a few favourite pieces of furniture and lighting.” says Francy. “It’s difficult to pinpoint one thing I like the most about the house, maybe it’s the clean lines and warm tones,” she says. The repetition of finishes, colours and details deliver a flow that pleases the eye. To add texture, natural wood trim was often used in Prairie-style homes. Here, white oak appears on floors, millwork (**Magnum Millwork Inc.**) and ceiling treatments, like on the upper perimeter of skylights. Using the same species of wood provides continuity. Left unstained it’s a nice neutral base that allows furniture, lighting and decorative accents to pop. “Fluted panelling lends texture, warmth and dimensional shadowing to the main hall and stairwell,” says Francy. *Continued on page 44*



LEFT: The mudroom with floor-to-ceiling storage leads to the garage where car lifts keep everything spare and tidy. **BELOW LEFT:** The family’s repurposed dining table adds warmth to the modern aesthetic. **BELOW:** A galley-style butler’s pantry connects the kitchen to the dining room.



According to Peter, the challenge in designing contemporary and modern homes is the default tendency of greyscale colours, which can create a very cold home. All the wood accents give this house the warmth the homeowners wanted in this family home. “Designing a compact and efficient house that still feels open, airy and spacious is not easy,” Peter says. He gives kudos to **Richard Kossak**, owner of **New Age Design**, for his success pulling all the requirements together so beautifully in the architectural plans, and the homeowners in being so diligent and open minded in their design approach. “Lorenzo and Lee were very organized, they knew what they wanted, and then stepped back to let Richard do what he does best.”

Francy Kralik, owner of design firm **House Candy**, worked closely with Peter, tweaking layouts and detailing millwork, fixtures and finishes. “The goal was fresh

ABOVE: A fluted island skirt and matching fan hood complement the main living space. **LEFT:** Carrying the wood tones to the ceiling warms the space.





Floor-to-ceiling octagonal tile and glimmering brass elements create a luxe powder room. **RIGHT:** Sweet fur baby Sammie enjoys basking in the warmth by the windows.

Peter is particularly proud of the “waterfall of oak,” a lovely run of panelling that goes from basement to second floor. In the kitchen, fluting was used on the island and range hood. “We have European roots, so the kitchen is the epicentre of our home,” Lorenzo says. “The common area that encompasses kitchen and great room encourages terrific family interactions.” The pair wanted a traditional kitchen – no lacquered or highly polished finishes; it needed to be warm and inviting for entertaining. The outcome is a lovely blend of natural wood and white. Peter bulked up the range hood, ribbed cabinet doors and millwork and added fluting to the island. The island’s panels are push-front cabinets. The island surface is white quartz. Tiles throughout were sourced from **Ciot**.

Walls of windows were common in Prairie houses. Frank Lloyd Wright designed for minimal separation between interiors and the natural world outside. The windows in this great room are floor-to-ceiling. Each window weighs about 1,200 pounds. They were installed by **Ostaco Windows and Doors**. Lorenzo and Lee put a great deal of thought into their backyard – one of the home’s most impressive features. The great room’s expanse of glass showcases its beautiful symmetry.

Continued on page 46



The dark, dramatic fireplace is classic and stands the test of time.

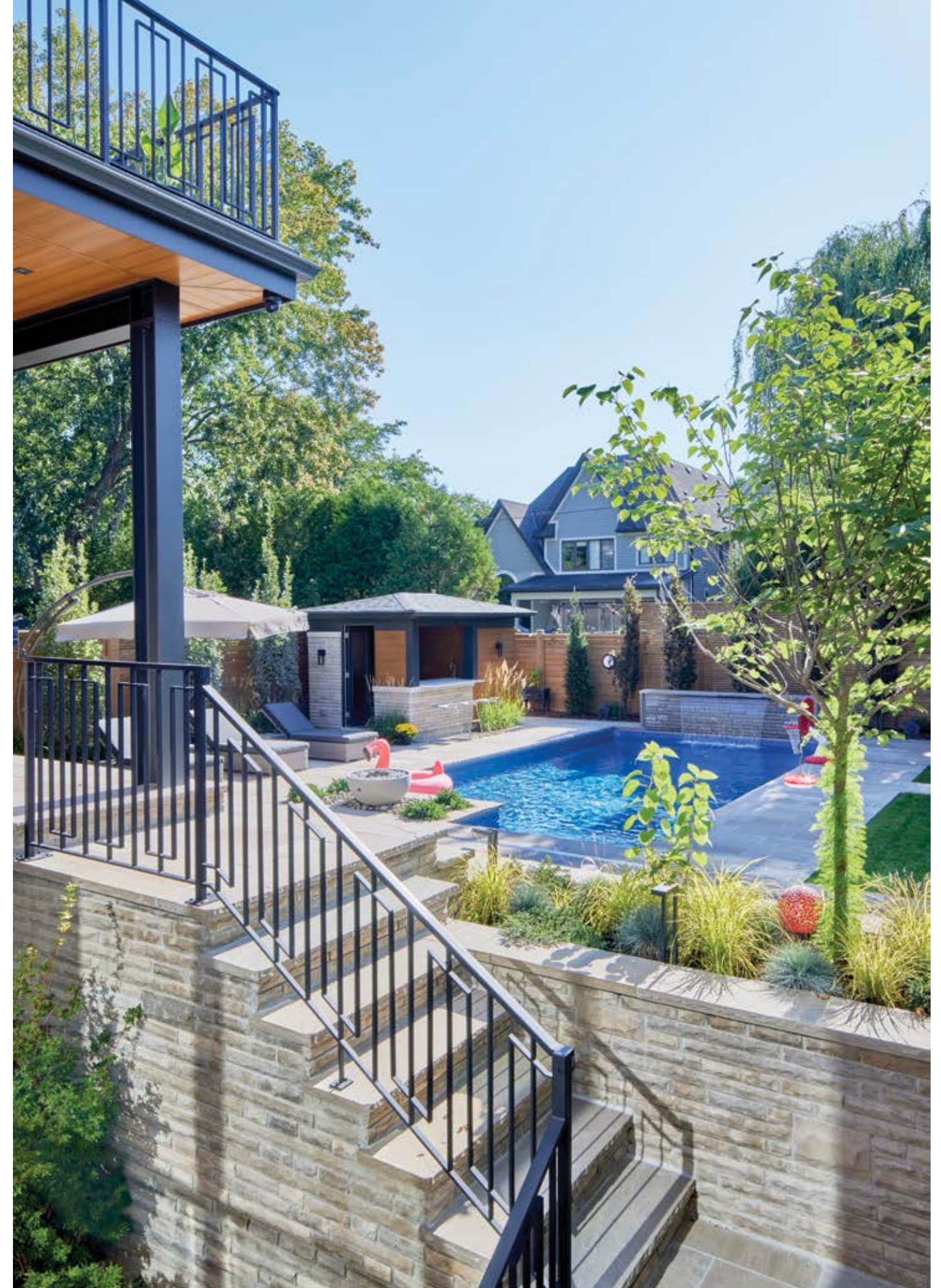


Varying ceiling heights add visual interest and flood the main floor with additional light.



The elevation in the rear of the house is quite steep, however clever design features have softened it – an extended covered porch, raised and flared flower boxes lead the way down to the gorgeous pool, waterfall feature and outdoor bar. **Backyard Getaways** did the installation. It's a space that will grow more beautiful and private with time as plantings mature. *Continued on page 48*

ABOVE: There's no need to leave the city when the backyard is a veritable retreat. **RIGHT:** An outdoor kitchen is conveniently located just outside the main floor under the covered porch. **OPPOSITE:** Lush landscaping makes the backyard serene and private.



“Lee and I are so thankful to Richard, Peter and Francy for guiding us along the way to achieving our dream home.”

Continued on page 50

RIGHT: The primary bedroom has a walkout to a private porch. **BELOW:** A zero-entry shower adds visual appeal and maximizes space. **BELOW RIGHT:** A light beachy hue adds a natural element to the en suite.



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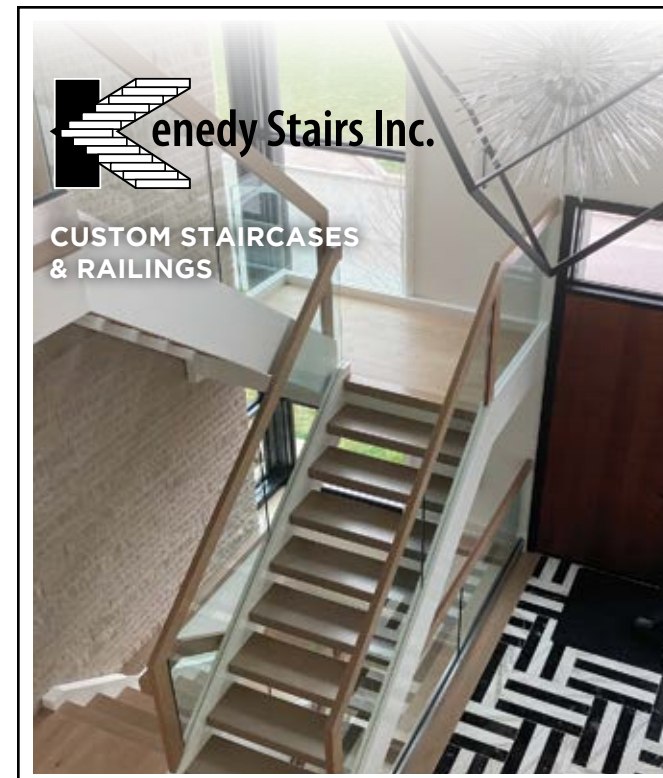
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feature

Lorenzo calls the lower level the home's interior playground. "The bar and entertainment area, wine cellar and cigar room adjacent to the exterior walk-up have already given us great memories in a very short time. The home gym also makes exercising slightly more inviting on those not-so-self-motivated days," he says.

Lorenzo and Lee emphasized quality over quantity in the way they managed the home's interior and exterior spaces. Prior to beginning the build, they meticulously mapped out every room for proper placement of windows and light fixtures, including where each electrical outlet would go. Lorenzo hates to see wires. Even the mechanical room had a detailed plan.

"Lorenzo and Lee had a very good idea of what they wanted, which was a huge help to us and to the trades," Peter says. "I don't think this house would have come out the way it did had the two of them not been so open and available in every aspect of this build." Lorenzo returns the compliment. "Lee and I are so thankful to Richard, Peter and Franci for guiding us along the way to achieving our dream home." **OH**

RIGHT: A cigar room is a great space to lounge and entertain. **BELOW LEFT:** The cellar beautifully organizes and showcases a wine collection. **BELOW CENTRE:** The lower-level entertainment area is a great place to lounge. **BELOW RIGHT:** There are no excuses when the gym is just steps away.



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decorating

current MOOD

It's time to liven up our living spaces after two rather tumultuous years. The major paint companies have selected their colours of the year for 2022, most picking grey-green as the colour to splash on your walls or inspire your new look. We're rolling out the top picks to help with your next decorating adventure.

Benjamin Moore selected **October Mist**, a pleasing silver-green that evokes the green stem of a flower. They say it creates a canvas for other colours to blossom and encourages creativity. Try it with Hint of Violet or Wildflower, both new from Benjamin Moore's Colour Trends Palette.

BeautiTone is sending a message with **Warm Hugs**. This Canadian brand says the vibrant red-pink-orange is the comfort we've been missing. It offers hope and solace in one exquisite hue.

PPG selected **Olive Sprig**, a soft organic shade of green reminiscent of a soothing aloe vera plant or velvety sage leaves. It's a green-grey chosen to represent regrowth and the resiliency of nature as we adapt to new ways of living post-pandemic.

Who can say no to **Guacamole**, Glidden's Colour of the Year? Glidden says everyone's favourite dip will look great on any wall or accent piece. It's a spirited yet soothing hue.

Valspar couldn't pick just one colour. Their Colours of The Year include 12 trend-worthy and forward-thinking natural shades that evoke warmth, calm and comfort. We like **Blanched Thyme, Sunset Curtains** and **Subtle Peach**.

Breezeway is Behr's pick. It's "where the sea meets the sky" – a relaxed and uplifting sea-glass green. Behr says Breezeway naturally harmonizes with shades of white, grey and natural wood tones for effortless style in any room.

Sherwin Williams has unveiled **Evergreen Fog**, calling it a versatile and calming hue – a chameleon colour of gorgeous green-meets-grey, with just a bit of blue. They recommend it for spaces that crave a subtle yet stunning statement shade. **OH**

cooking at home



BERRY COBBLER

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY **JENELLE MCCULLOCH**

This cobbler is reminiscent of a sweet, soft southern-style drop biscuit. You can use whatever summer fruit you have on hand. We used blueberries and blackberries.

INGREDIENTS

(Serves 6)

FILLING

4 cups blueberries and blackberries*

1 Tbsp flour

1 Tbsp granulated sugar

COBBLER TOPPING

2 cups flour

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup brown sugar

2 Tbsp baking powder

3 tsp ground cinnamon

1 stick butter, cold

¼ - ½ cup boiling water

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a baking dish, combine all filling ingredients and set aside.

For the topping, combine flour, sugars, baking powder and cinnamon in a bowl. With a pastry cutter or two knives, cut butter into dry ingredients until the mixture resembles wet sand. Stir in ¼ cup of boiling water and stir until combined (add in more water – 1 Tbsp at a time, if needed, to achieve a drop biscuit texture).

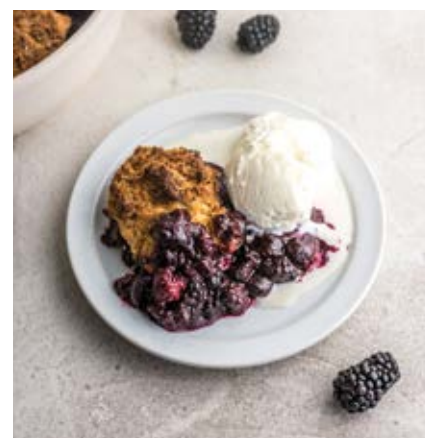
Spoon the topping over the berries. Don't worry about the topping covering the whole dish, it will spread as it bakes!

Bake for 30-45 minutes* until golden brown.

Notes:

*Feel free to substitute any berries or fruit.

*Adjust baking time depending on size of the pan. If using a smaller pan and the topping is thicker add 5-10 minutes to baking time. **OH**



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Wood tones and multiple textures create warmth in the industrial-inspired design.
RIGHT: Fabio Melo of Kaza Contracting handled the construction portion of the condo revamp from start to finish.
BELOW: A floating drawer unit, rug and simple accessories create a defined entryway in limited space.



A+ OLD SCHOOL MADE NEW

STORY **DENISE WILLSON** | PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**

Only steps from the lake and the James Street North artistic hub of Hamilton, a former 1920s public school was given new life as condominiums in 2013. With the help of **Eva Healy** and the design team at **Avenue Design Inc.**, one of these condos recently got a facelift, injecting it with a young, urban, industrial spirit. *Continued on page 58*



A modern waterfall countertop not only appears striking, it is practical for food prep and entertaining. Extra storage is built into typically unused space near the ceiling. **OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT:** Avenue Design's thoughtful design includes all the details, such as a built-in cutting board and knife holder. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Steel shelving contributes to an industrial aesthetic.

"I LOVE THE NEIGHBOURHOOD'S historical buildings and how the facade of this old school was preserved to blend with new, modern elements," says the homeowner – a doctor who moved from New York for a position at McMaster Hospital. The area's walkable streets filled with restaurants and shops remind her of her years thriving off the energy of Manhattan.

"Working with **Eva Healy** and her design team, **Rachel Subic** and **Brianna Didone**, was fantastic," says the homeowner. "They helped me understand what I wanted, what I like and didn't like. They brought my vision to life while adding creative elements that made the 1,600 sq. ft. space fit my lifestyle."



Making the open-concept condo cohesive while anchoring each living area was not an easy task. "Most condos are boxes with no character," says Eva. "But this owner wanted a combination of modern comforts, the character of an old building and the industrial vibe she was used to in New York." Eva created unique hubs while designing the tiling, cabinetry, millwork and hardware to flow from room to room.

The homeowner relocated with very little furniture, giving the design team a blank slate to work with. Eva and Brianna (who did all the decorating) picked the furniture and décor from local and online sources, keeping a young, professional palette in mind. Original photography of New York skylines and sites made the office a familiar spot to work in when homebound. Venetian plaster was used to replicate concrete on the living room wall, complete with imperfections and dings, offering an industrial feel with dimension.

Eva added a pop of colour on the dining room side with a blue wallpaper mural that softens and complements the harder lines of the industrial-look shelving and lighting. "I love the mural walls," says the homeowner enthusiastically. "They were inspired by the artwork of a New York ink artist I adore." They also add a modern splash of colour to the otherwise neutral white walls (**Benjamin Moore** Chantilly Lace) and simple, clean lines of the contemporary cabinetry by **Impressions Kitchens**. *Continued on page 60*



open space and tiles mimicking white brick honour the classic supplies used to build the old schoolhouse. Reclaimed wood was used to line the deep windows, tying the interior to the exterior, and **Loft Doors** provided visually unique doors. Mitred hexagon tiles contribute an eye-catching backdrop to the kitchen and bathrooms.

The comfortable primary bedroom and spa-like en suite are perfect spots to unwind. “I work long hours at the hospital, so it’s important I have a place I can relax after hours,” says the homeowner. Subtle colours and clean lines are just what the doctor ordered. Interesting tile patterns draw the eye. The double sink vanity, mirrors and built-in shelving create a functional and striking space.

Continued on page 62



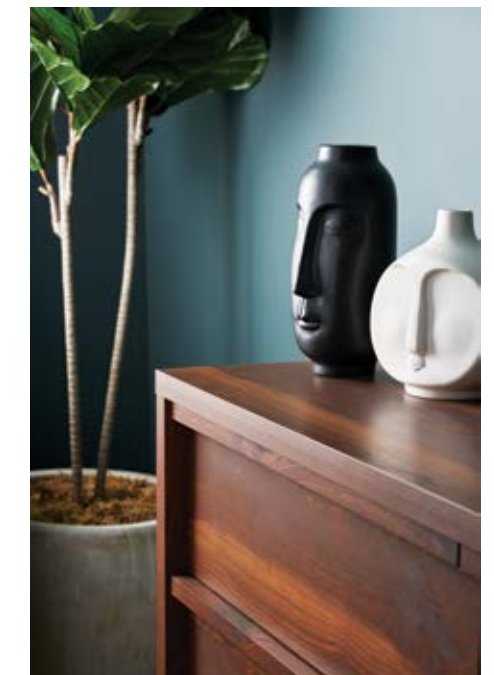
The kitchen was designed by Rachel (who also designed the bathrooms) with ample storage for appliances and supplies. “I love to cook when I’m home,” says the homeowner, who put a well-appointed kitchen at the top of her must-have list. Plumbing couldn’t be moved since the unit is a condo, so they built up, adding cabinetry and shelving within typically unused space closer to the ceiling. “High cabinets are great for storing kitchen stuff not used every day,” says Eva. Another design favourite is the waterfall island and countertops provided by **Stone Galleria**. State-of-the-art appliances purchased from **Caplan’s Appliances** and classic white window coverings complete the look.

The hardwood floors and layout were the only interior elements remaining after **Fabio Melo** and his associates at **Kaza Contracting** gutted the two-bedroom, two-bathroom condo to start anew. As the project manager and general contractor, Fabio was hands-on from demolition to completion. “The designers and homeowner showed me drawings and pictures of what they wanted,” says Fabio, “and we brought to life what they presented on paper. Nothing was typical builder style – everything they had in mind offered a unique perspective.” The main living area’s concrete wall adds texture to the

ABOVE: Furniture placement creates delineated spaces within an open plan. The long, low sofa provides ample seating and echoes the sleek lines of modern design. **RIGHT:** A photograph of New York City by local photographer Daniel Juskowiak reminds the homeowner of her days in Manhattan.



ABOVE: The dining area is particularly striking with a hand-painted watercolour wallpaper mural in shades of deep blue. **LEFT:** A modern chandelier enhances the office cum guest bedroom, and adds a touch of fun. **BELOW:** Saturated grey-green walls are handsome and bold, and work beautifully with rich wood tones.





A floating vanity keeps the bathroom feeling spacious, while a monochromatic colour scheme is both edgy and timeless.

Continued on page 64

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The renovation was just under two weeks from completion when COVID-19 hit Ontario. “The work came to an abrupt halt,” says Fabio, speaking of the impact. The homeowner was also thrust into hectic times at the hospital. “Safety became our top priority,” she says. The project was delayed by months. “After things settle, I’d like to use the condo more to socialize and entertain. The office was designed as a spare bedroom and I’d like to have friends visit.”

This place was a schoolhouse, after all. The building yearns for the gathering of souls and their laughter. **OH**



ABOVE LEFT: Artwork provides a pop of colour and marries the hardware and the vanity with the otherwise black-and-white colour scheme. **CENTRE:** Even the showerhead with streamlined handheld nozzle is beautiful! **RIGHT:** A shower niche in the same colour as the rest of the shower tile is functional and subtle.

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Josette Giacalone,
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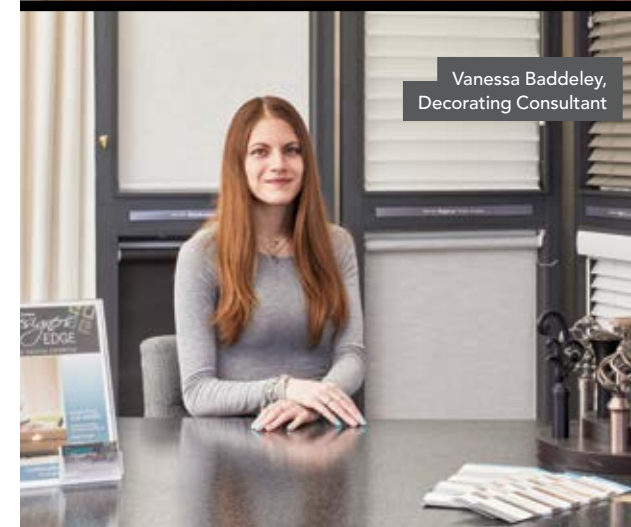
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Vanessa Baddeley,
Decorating Consultant

THE ADVANTAGE

An in-house certified interior decorator with a background in window coverings, colour and design is at the ready. "I recommend various products specific to each individual client's needs," says Josette Giacalone, the on-site interior decorator in Burlington. "There is never one solution that fits all. With customized window coverings, I typically source fabrics from various suppliers and bring options to our meeting. Our workroom fabricates draperies or shades customized for every client."

WHAT'S TRENDING

Simple, clean lines offer a minimalistic look. The pandemic has highlighted the need for multipurpose spaces, like bedrooms that also convert into offices. Dual-purpose roller shades filter light and darken a room when needed. Drapery panels maximize ceiling heights and add texture and style. Home automation and motorized blinds and rods are gaining popularity and are an excellent option for hard-to-reach windows. For colour, earthy neutrals add warmth to grey. Beiges, greens and golds work beautifully and can be accented with light wood or black drapery rods. Layering drapery over blinds or shutters creates a luxurious, finished look to a room. **OH**

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WAIVING CONDITIONS

STORY **GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH** | ILLUSTRATION **SHEILA BRITTON**

IT REMAINS A SELLER'S MARKET ACROSS ONTARIO WHERE HOME PRICES CONTINUE TO RISE AND INVENTORY REMAINS LOW.

RE/MAX Canada expects a 9.2 per cent increase in average residential sale prices across Canada this year. In Ontario, relocating from one region to another continues to drive housing activity. City dwellers are cashing in and moving to more scenic areas, where their purchasing power gets them a house that suits their preferred lifestyle. With mortgage rates expected to creep up, demand for homes far outstrips supply, leaving house hunters facing multiple offers for the home they want.

So, what's a buyer to do? They could do what home sellers find irresistible – waive all conditions and warranties.

Laura and Chris Walker weren't fooling around when they finally found their ideal condo in Collingwood.

"We had been looking on and off but when the pandemic hit we got serious," says Laura. "When this three-bedroom at Lighthouse Point came up we jumped on it." The couple had lost out on other properties and vowed not to let this one slip away. They went in with a clear offer with no conditions or warranties and a two-week closing. "They were not taking offers until the following Monday and we didn't want to wait and lose it," she says. "So we put in a bully offer over asking. They came back once and that was it – bought and sold." The condo was fully renovated and they've had no issues.

Waiving conditions and warranties in residential real estate transactions is the new winning strategy for many homebuyers. But

it's not for the faint of heart or those without the means to cover costs if there's an issue with the property or home.

Typical conditions in a purchase and sale agreement include financing, property inspections, state of title, legal review and appraisal. Buyers can add their own conditions and condo owners generally add a request and review of the status certificate, which ensures the condo corporation and its board are stable.

But the current housing market is anything but typical and buyers are increasingly willing to take risks to win the home they covet.

Dr. Parham Davoudpour, an attending emergency physician in Toronto, is suffering from buyer fatigue after waiving conditions and still losing two bids on homes in the Collingwood area.

"Both homes were sold substantially higher than asking price – over 50 per cent higher than asking," he says. "One of my offers was 45 per cent over asking and I still lost. "I call these high-risk transactions because you're pressured to make a decision that involves a lot of money and you don't have enough time for due diligence. It's literally like working in a hospital emergency department where you are always under pressure and you make decisions on the limited amount of information that you have."

Parham is still looking but his experience has left him less motivated.

David Oikle, president of The Ontario

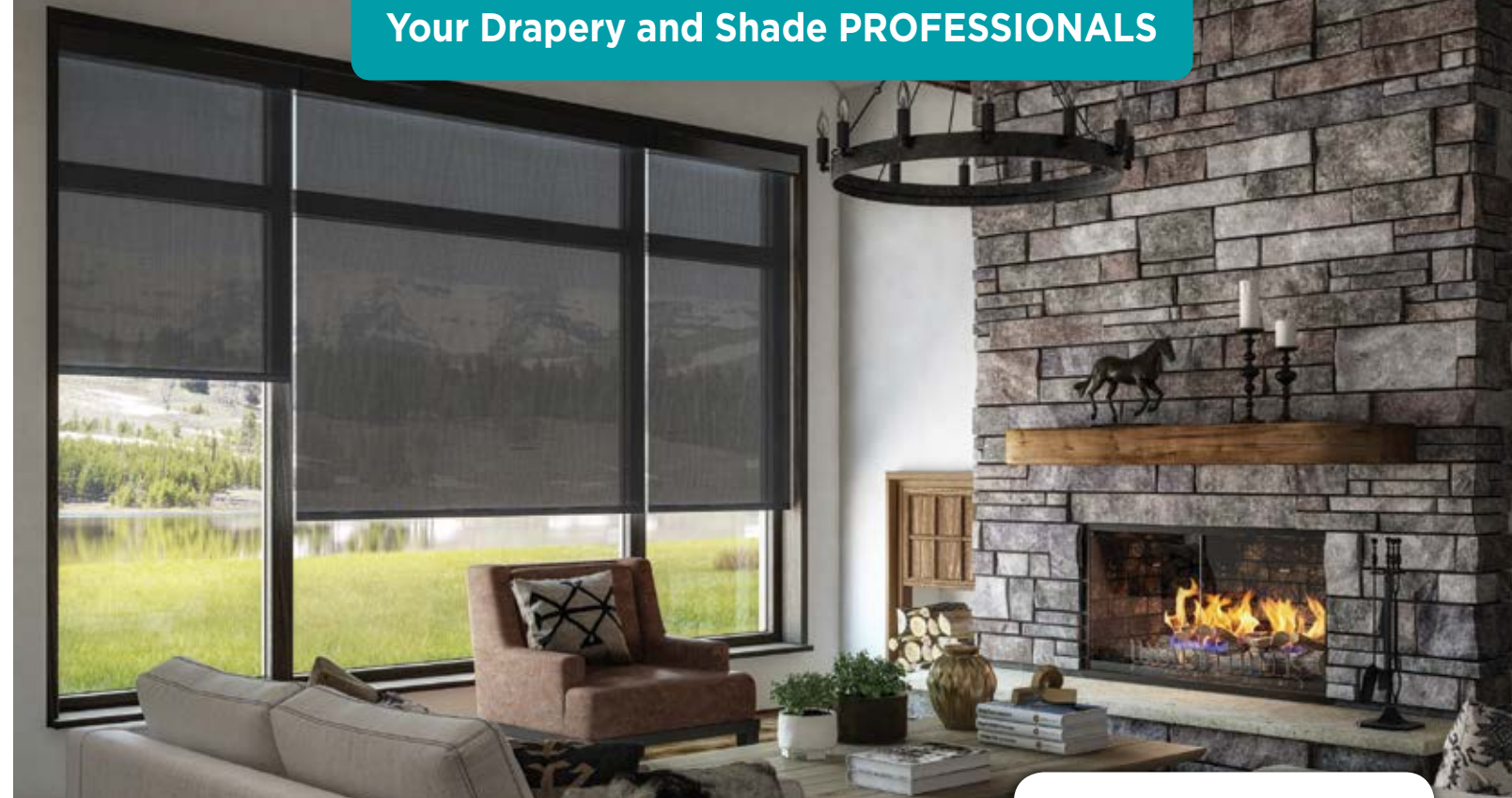
Real Estate Association, blames supply and demand for the current state of housing in the province. "We're in this pickle that buyers are competing in such a way because we don't have enough homes to buy," David explains. "OREA's been spending a ton of time advocating for increasing supply at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. There isn't enough product to buy and we need to address that."

Janine (she didn't want us to use her full name) and her husband looked at eight homes in The Blue Mountains last year. "We lost out on two because our bids just weren't high enough," she says. They waived conditions in both bids, but it didn't help. "It was just a crap shoot," she says. "For one of them, there were about 13 offers. The vendors came back to us, told us they wanted to look at the top three bids 'so give us your very best offer.' We did and we lost out by \$1,000." They finally found and won a home they moved into last May, again waiving conditions and warranties. In hindsight, Janine says she wishes she had more time to investigate the planned developments on wetlands around them. "We love the neighbourhood, we love the house but the main issue now is the development that is supposed to go in beside us. I knew about the potential development, but I honestly thought our government would protect the environment, safety of citizens and our homes. I was wrong."

David says the key to a happy purchase is education, risk management and knowing your limits. He says a local realtor can help buyers mitigate risks. **OH**



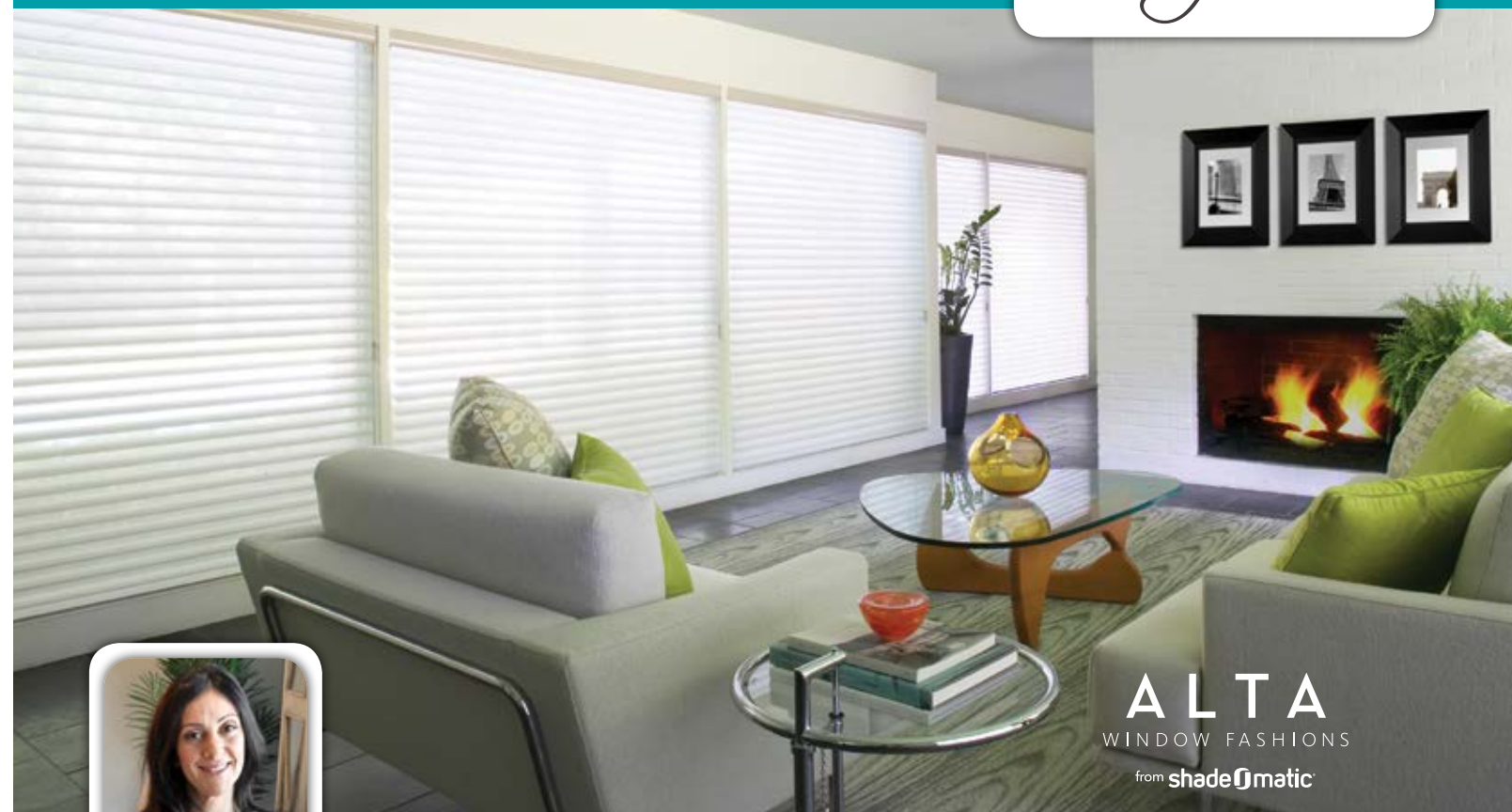
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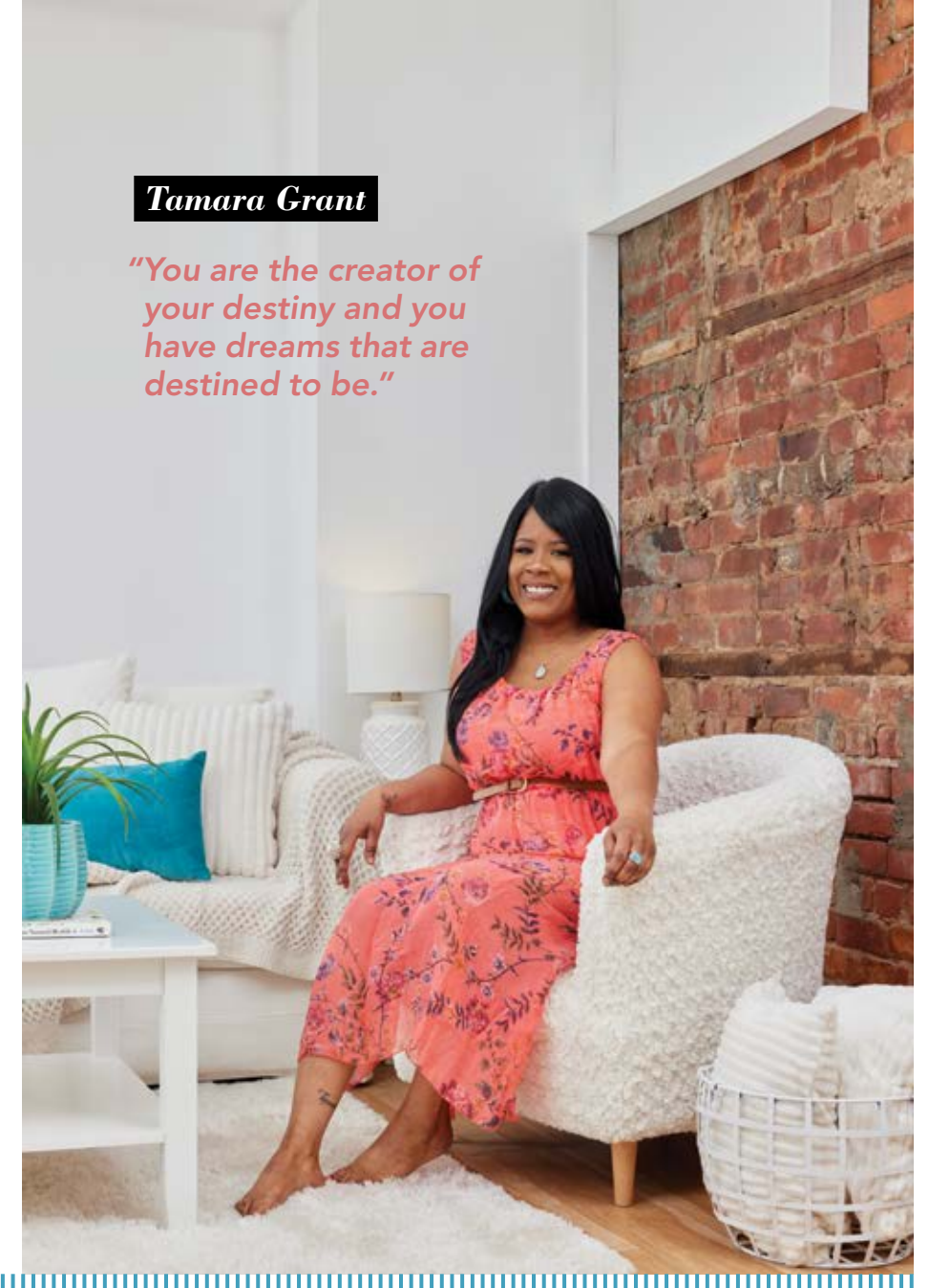
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INSPIRATION

I started with no clients, confident of my abilities. You will harvest what you plant, so plant intentional good habits, values, decisions and consistency. I want every little girl who's told she's bossy to be told instead that she has leadership skills.

Tamara Grant

"You are the creator of your destiny and you have dreams that are destined to be."



READER TIP

Every home is an opportunity to impress a buyer, as you never get a second chance to make a first impression. For top service, it's wise not to have champagne taste on a beer budget.

Continued on page 76

TINA ROBINSON

Sales Representative, Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd., Brokerage

Owner of Mindful Intentions

Tina is university educated and corporately trained in sales, marketing and negotiations, and is an accomplished author. She is also a diligent real estate professional who has been serving Mississauga and area since 2010. She also owns Mindful Intentions, a well-established holistic healing practice.

FULL SUPPORT

After having survived two near-death experiences in 2008, Tina gained a renewed sense of self. She decided to redirect and dedicate her life to serving others. She ensures her real estate clients feel supported from start to finish when buying and selling property. She also provides guidance and healing to those in need of mental and emotional support.



Tina Robinson
BSChE, ASA



“Serving the community through passion and compassion.”



AUTHOR

My book, *Grandpa's Magical Forest*, is a fully-illustrated inspirational children's book that will captivate the youngest of hearts. It's an entertaining story within a story about a boy who takes an adventure in a magical forest and learns lessons that are encouraging of curiosity, kindness and believing in dreams. Written by Tina Robinson and illustrated by Jose Gason.

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NEW HOME PRIORITIES

A good design and the right team of trades are two critical ingredients of building any new home. Having an overall plan for your build and laying the groundwork early are the keys to the success of the project.

MUST-HAVES

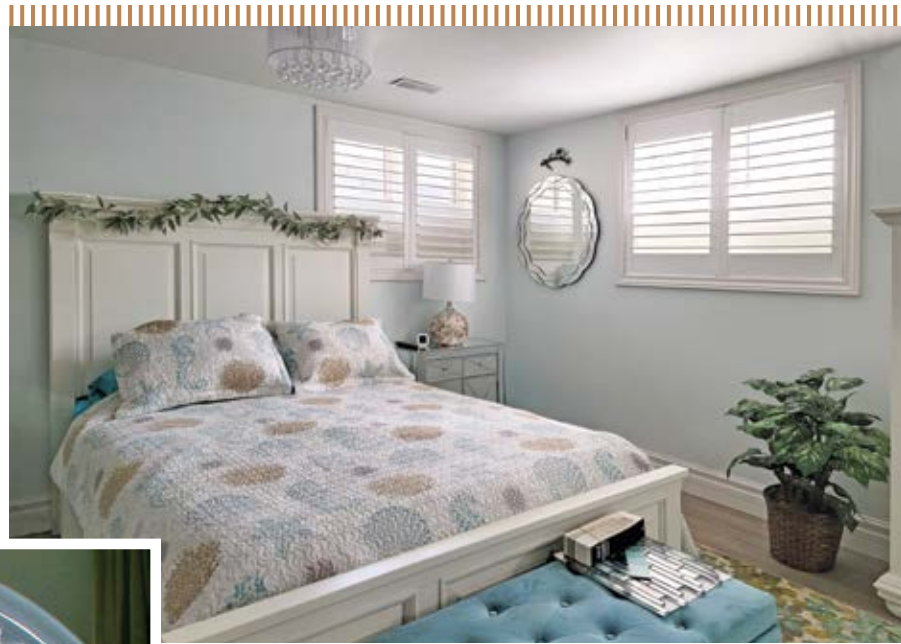
1. A good lighting plan, including windows, fixtures and potlight placement throughout the house. A bright, warm house is always a winner.
2. Integrated millwork. Having a smooth transition in an open-concept home means being smart in how you blend rooms and spaces together.



Continued on page 78

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TRENDING

There's been a shift from white and grey kitchens to more colourful options. Homeowners are looking to add shades of blue and green to provide a sense of renewal and calm. People want to spend time in spaces that nurture and make us feel good.



MUST-HAVES

Statement hoods are a must-have for the kitchen. They interrupt the angular lines of cabinets with shape and sculpture. In the bathroom, curbless or walk-in showers are a game changer along with beautifully-coloured and patterned tiles.



Robin Garvey Cestra



"We want to ensure that the renovation experience is a positive one for our clients and that every project is thoroughly planned to avoid unexpected surprises and delays."

BUNGALOW GROUP

Since 1994, Bungalow Group has been committed to building the best homes in Windsor, Essex County and beyond. Led by president Nicole Ciarrocchi, this award-winning design and build firm has constructed everything from custom homes to commercial builds. Over the years, they've earned a reputation for integrity, diversity and meticulous attention to detail.

PEOPLE FIRST

Nicole takes pride in her beautiful homes. But her favourite part of the business is the relationships she develops with clients. Together with sales representative Joe Fallea, they provide unparalleled support through the sale and build of each home. From accommodating special requests to assisting with the purchasing process, Nicole and her team are here every step of the way.

"Great homes start with a vision and the drive and determination to bring that vision to life."



Joe Fallea and Nicole Ciarrocchi



THE BUNGALOW DIFFERENCE

In 25 years, Bungalow Group has built over 700 housing units, including two-storey homes, ranches and even condos. Working with the best trades and suppliers in the business, they construct high-quality homes backed by a Tarion guarantee. Plus, each project is unique in layout and personality. Nicole and her assistant Lisa Reichardt really enjoy the design process and select individual finishes for each home. No two are ever alike!

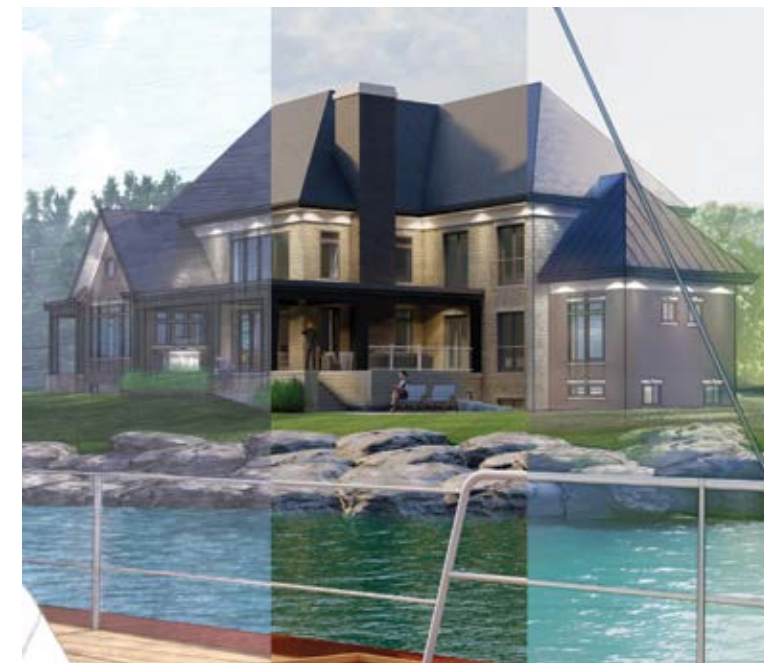
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WHAT MAKES US STAND OUT

Designing a new home or a small renovation is a personal endeavour. We believe being honest and upfront with our clients is key to a lasting relationship. The design process is fluid and challenges will arise. With a broad range of experience, we help determine the best course of action when dealing with challenges to ensure the success of your project.

CURRENT DESIGN TRENDS

Design trends are constantly evolving. Make the most of the space you have with flexible solutions, including living in an open plan with multi-generational families.

Continued on page 82

people

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STORY LAURA HAY
PHOTOGRAPHY JILLIAN JACKSON

Cottage Style BY DESIGN

A cottage isn't just a property style. For many, it's a lifestyle and a frame of mind. Think about how one feels in a traditional cottage setting: relaxed, rested and at peace in the surroundings. It's not surprising that many people strive to achieve this feeling within their everyday home.



Whether your retreat is an urban dwelling or in a lakeside setting, you can echo the cottage style by design. Here are some tips for decorating enthusiasts and weekend warriors who want to live the laid-back lifestyle, every day.

Let's renovate your cottage... ahem, I mean house.

If you're building new or renovating a space, here's your opportunity to incorporate timeless, cabin-inspired elements into the very bones of the home. Materials are an effective way to convey this distinctive style and the reason why people are drawn to this look. The goal is to achieve a connection to nature. The vehicle? Nature itself.

When designing cottages, use a nature-inspired colour palette with organic and natural textiles such as linen, cotton and wool. Use a mixture of wood finishes that celebrate everything nature has to offer.

Floors in cottage-style homes are often informal and even imperfect. Consider oiled hardwood floors over urethane finishes when buying new or use reclaimed hardwood for heavier distressing and character. If renovating, consider painting an existing hardwood floor. As always, hardwood floors look best with area rugs to define spaces. For a relaxed aesthetic, a vintage second-life, fun braided style or flat-weave rug work best. However, even very traditional rugs repurposed in casual settings look new and on trend again.

Continued on page 86

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design ideas



Painted beadboard or shiplap wood panelling are a common cottage look for walls and ceilings. Whitewashed wood can also be incorporated to create a cosy, cabin-inspired look and feel.

Focus on natural materials like hardwood and stone and architectural features such as exposed wood beams, fireplaces and expansive windows for natural views and light.

Decorate your way to a lakeside home.

If you're styling your space to achieve a cottage aesthetic, many of the same principles apply in terms of nature-inspired colour palettes and materials, just on a different scale. A coat of paint can go a long way to creating this ambience.

Whites, off-whites and soft creams are typical of the beloved cottage colour palette. The move towards green tones is exciting. One of the hottest hues for 2022 is a fresh, misty green perfect for creating a space that connects you to nature and achieves a relaxed vibe. Soften this colour palette with natural wood furniture and accessories evocative of the earth (think terracotta).

Of course, wood furniture is a must. As with the floors, dents and dings are not just accepted but welcomed, contributing to a

more casual, welcoming, relaxed aesthetic that invites you to kick your feet up and breathe deeply.

In the kitchen, open shelving is a favourite addition. Modern cottage style is humble and relaxed, an aesthetic that is well-complemented by open shelving with a few thoughtfully chosen items on display, such as handmade pottery and live plants.

To offset these organic influences, incorporate some fun, light-hearted elements into the space. Unique details, such as a pair of antique skis or a vintage oil painting mounted above the fireplace provide a great touch – and even more so

when they're authentic artefacts. These amusements can also come in the form of a vibrant throw blanket, classic old baskets or an unusual found object. Use these to highlight the focal point of the space, such as a great view, the fireplace or entertaining area.

Whether you're decorating, renovating or building your home from the ground up, a cottage-chic style can be achieved. Engage a designer to help navigate and select the key elements to help you bring this look home. You can enjoy life by the lake, regardless of your physical geography. **OH**



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STORY **DENISE WILLSON**
PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**



CHANGING *with the* TIMES

The Kuczmas updated their kitchen to accommodate their love of cooking and entertaining, creating a space with relaxed elegance. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Fiorella, Adam, Cohen and Pierce have flourished in their home in the Hannon community.



About eight years ago, when **DeSantis Homes** built Fiorella and Adam Kuczma's new home, this budding family wanted roots. They knew the house would need to grow and change with their family's needs. And it's been the perfect work in progress ever since.

For the Kuczmas, relocating from a small condo in Toronto to Hannon was a brave but pivotal move. "Hamilton offered us the city life we were used to in Toronto," says Fiorella. "But we loved the openness of Hannon to start a family," adds Adam. At the time, in 2013, Hannon was mostly dirt roads and farmland. Adam's parents lived in St. Catharines, and Fiorella's parents lived in Mississauga, so the area was centrally located to guarantee the kids-to-be a ton of family bonding time. *Continued on page 90*



The family has since grown to include the couple's sons, Cohen, 6, and Pierce, 4, and their dogs, Bayleigh and Marvel. And Hannon has developed into a thriving residential retreat. "We were worried about building in the middle of nowhere," says Adam. While there wasn't much in Hannon initially, now they have schools across the street, close highway access, parks, shops and restaurants within minutes. "We never want to move!" says Fiorella.

The two-storey brick home, completed in 2014, was customized to meet the couple's needs at this early stage of their lives together. "The builder let us revamp the floor plan, increase room sizes, change single doors to double doors, add closet space for more storage and pick unique details that made the home ours," says Fiorella. At 2,750 square feet, this was not your typical cookie-cutter home. Yet, these changes were just the starting point.

This family made sure the house grew with them versus moving when the family dynamics bloomed.

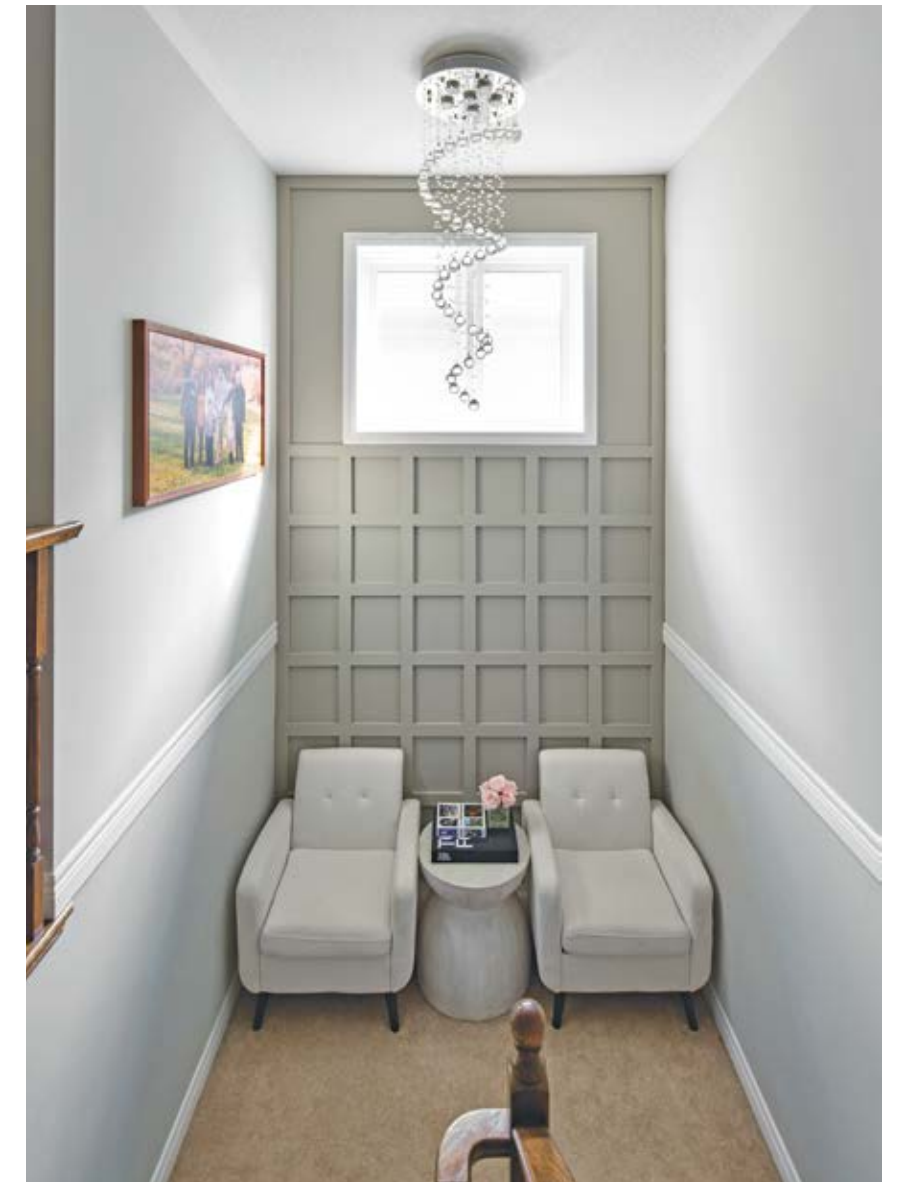
Continued on page 92



ABOVE: Every bit the handyman, Adam built the live-edge dining room table and bench himself, with materials purchased from The Wood Shed. **LEFT:** The lower level includes a billiards room, gym, and family entertainment areas. **OPPOSITE:** Adam outfitted the living room, adjacent to the kitchen, with ample storage space. Doors and windows opening onto the backyard provide lots of light while earthy touches keep the area cosy.



No space is wasted. With smart design, the Kuczmas have created an all-inclusive space for entertaining and family enjoyment. **RIGHT:** Adam constructed a feature wall on the landing, where they have devised an intimate seating area. **BELOW LEFT:** With the addition of a hot tub, the backyard provides year-round indulgence.



“We love to cook and host friends and family,” says Fiorella. “A chef’s kitchen was a must,” says Adam. The Kuczmas recently revamped the kitchen with the help of **Foson Fine Cabinetry & Renovations**, creating an island statement piece they absolutely love. A Britannica Gold countertop by **Cambria** draws the eye to the large island where the kids do their homework and friends and family gather on special occasions, holidays and weekends. The navy blue island – right on trend – boasts storage space on both sides. “I don’t like clutter,” says Fiorella, “so storage is important to me.” The couple also love the **Sarana Tile** mosaic tile backsplash added to the kitchen. “It’s a mix of glass and metal, creating lots of tone and texture,” says Fiorella.



Benjamin Moore Cloud White cabinets brighten the space with a traditional yet clean vibe and the gold and brass hardware adds a touch of modern simplicity. The funky lights are conversation pieces and textured laminate flooring by **Kosco Flooring** guarantees scuff marks and scratches disappear.

The kitchen opens to the living room, creating an open space that bounces natural sunlight from the many windows. Adam designed and built the cabinetry flanking the gas fireplace and removed decorative pillars that blocked the flow from one room to the next. An avid DIYer, Adam does a lot of the work himself. He and his father also finished the basement level. “We added a billiards room, gym, bathroom, play areas for

the kids and an entertainment hub for family movie nights,” says Adam. The same laminate flooring was used on the lower level.

Adam works from his office off the front entrance. For the last two years, Fiorella has also worked a lot from home. “When the entire country was on lockdown,” says Fiorella, “we at least enjoyed our house.” Fiorella is obsessed with decorating for the holidays and seasons. “I love making the place festive so the boys can have fun when their friends are over.” She also loves her walk-in closet designed by **Closets By Design**. With pull-out hampers, shoe racks and tons of his-and-her space, the couple stay organized.

While the changes have made this house a home for the Kuczma family, it’s not

perfect. “We wish the lot was a bit bigger,” says Adam, “and we’d prefer to back onto greenery. But we’ve made the most of the land we have.” The couple recommends factoring in your future use of outdoor space before purchasing your home. While small yards are low maintenance, designing the outdoor oasis of your dreams can be tricky when square footage is tight. Adam also underestimated how much he’d use the garage. “I didn’t realize I’d need more electrical outlets and room to use equipment,” says Adam. Spending more upfront can be less expensive in the long run since alterations are generally more costly after a home is built. “Think long term and how your family will mature with time,” says Fiorella. *Continued on page 94*



The property evolved to include an in-ground pool from **Dream Pools Ltd.**, a hot tub from **Jacuzzi Hot Tubs Hamilton**, an outdoor kitchen with a built-in barbecue and a calming waterfall feature. Outdoor lighting creates warmth on nice summer evenings. The backyard oasis maximizes the space so the family's social nature and love of entertaining can flourish.

"Even though we built this house from scratch," says Adam, "we are constantly customizing to make good use of the space as our lives change." The house certainly reflects this growing family. It's a beloved work in progress. **OH**



TOP LEFT: In the well-appointed en suite, a rainfall showerhead complete with temperature control is a daily comfort. **TOP RIGHT AND ABOVE:** Murals add distinctive and unique character to each of the boys' rooms. **RIGHT:** Fiorella has her own space in the primary bedroom.

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BLACK-AND-WHITE

AND BEAUTIFUL ALL OVER

STORY
JENNIFER
BACKSTEIN

A black-and-white interior is probably the most versatile decorating option. This clean and classic palette is one of my favourites, both as a homeowner and as a trendspotter by trade. A black-and-white motif is a chameleon of sorts, easily adaptable to a variety of periods and styles, from vintage to contemporary and all styles in between. Black plus white is more than just a colour scheme; it's a bold decorating category all its own. Here are some ideas on implementing a black-and-white interior successfully.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL

Black and white are the ultimate neutrals and they offer a good dose of drama when the look is done correctly. This palette allows you to effortlessly transition from one look to the next, room to room, all while maintaining a cohesive aesthetic throughout. On the other hand, this look can fall flat if poorly executed.

Similar to the principles of layering texture and pattern, add variety to your whites by layering in some off-whites, too. Technically, this trick applies to black, too (picture a charcoal shade set alongside jet black) although a white colour palette is much more common. However, when doing this, be sure to stay within the same colour temperature. By this, I mean if your predominant white leans to the warm side of the spectrum (yellowish) stick with warm tones for your other whites, too. Breaking this rule can make some "cool" whites in your space appear blue.

When it comes to black, you might think you only have one choice. However, black also comes in many different shades, ranging from midnight blue-black and charcoal to warm licorice. Apply the same principles when it comes to temperature.

Dimension is also achieved through texture and finish. Different finishes absorb and reflect light to different degrees. For example, a high-gloss varnish or paint, glass and polished chrome have high reflective qualities, bringing light and shine to a room. On the other hand, matte paints, sheen-less fabrics (think velvet!) and natural materials such as wood and stone tend to pull light in, creating a cocooning effect. Layer these within your bi-colour room to create interest and depth.

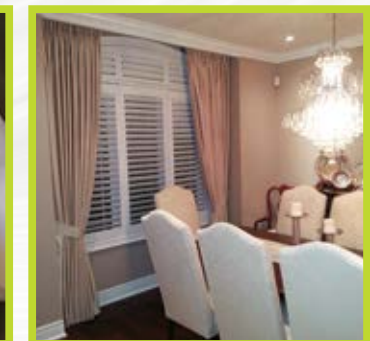
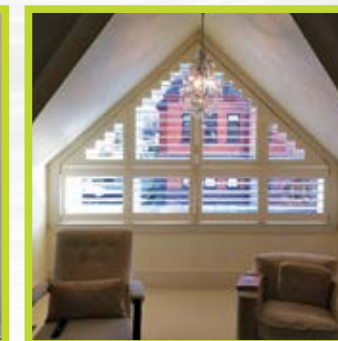
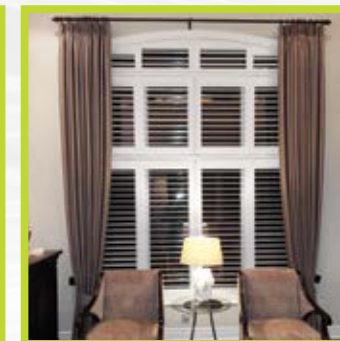
Continued on page 98



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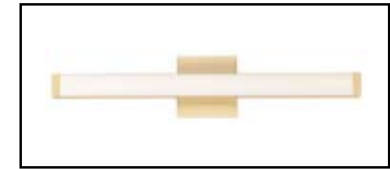
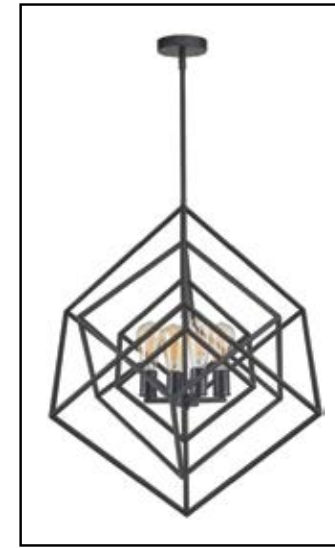
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HOW TO "DO" BLACK & WHITE

As you would with any other colour scheme, choose your principal colour and in this case, you have two options. If white will be your main colour (as it is in most black-and-white interiors), you'll be using black as your secondary colour and vice versa.

As a designer, I often use the 60-30-10 rule for colour distribution. The principal colour occupies the majority for 60 per cent of the visual area of your space. This typically includes your walls and floors (in terms of a black-and-white palette, think light versus dark hardwood). The secondary colour accounts for 30 per cent of the space, such as a feature wall, rug and sofa. The final 10 per cent is reserved for your accent colour – and remember, even a black-and-white room can benefit from some bold pops of trending green, magenta or blue.

When choosing your accent colour, execute it in your accessories. This can include art, accent pillows, throws and



even small furniture items, like an ottoman or painted side table. One of the benefits of the black-and-white aesthetic is the ability to transition between trends on a dime. Since accessories are easy and economical to replace and trends come and go, this is a great way to express yourself and push your style limits.

There's a good reason the black-and-white look keeps resurfacing in our homes, in every room. These polar ends of the colour spectrum deliver drama and excitement, with a timeless appeal. I guess it's true, opposites really do attract! **OH**



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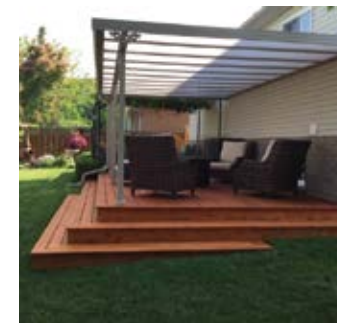


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projects



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ERIN ROCHON

easy INDOOR TOPIARY

Bring the outdoors in with greenery and natural elements. This DIY topiary is easy to make and will add an organic feel to your space.

MATERIALS

- Sand texture
- Plastic container
- Plant pot
- White and brown acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- Dowel
- Glue gun
- Moss
- Syrofoam ball
- Small knife
- Foam block
- Jute twine

STEP 1

First, pour some sand texture into a container – this will add a rustic feel to the plant pot. Next, pour a small amount of paint into the sand texture and mix to a peanut butter consistency. Paint the whole pot and let it dry for approximately 45 minutes. Once dry, apply another coat of paint.

STEP 2

Use a small paintbrush and paint the dowel brown. Set aside and let dry.



STEP 3

With a glue gun, glue moss to the styrofoam ball. Continue this step until the ball is completely covered in moss.



STEP 4

Make a hole in the bottom of the moss ball. Add glue to the end of the dowel and poke it into the moss ball.



STEP 5

Use a knife to cut the edges of the foam block to fit in the pot. Then take the bottom of the dowel and place it into the foam in the centre of the pot.



STEP 6

Add some moss to cover the foam block and tie some jute twine around the pot.



Find a spot in your home or create a second spring topiary to place near a mirror or artwork on a mantel and bring that spring feeling into your home! **OH**

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Vanessa and Russ in front of their Miralis wall

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PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG

THE PLACE

Set in the historic post office in Dundas, Russ Woodward and Vanessa Bell have established a fabulous new showroom for their family-owned renovation and design firm, **Crodon Kitchen and Bath Centre**. While they specialize in kitchens and bathrooms, no renovation is too big or too small for their talented team of designers and contractors.

THE STYLE

Russ and Vanessa put as much thought into designing their boutique-style showroom as they do all their projects. "I wanted it to be a bit of an experience," says Vanessa. "You can see there are colours and textures. We wanted it to feel a little bit different and unique – comfortable and homey." Each item has been chosen to aid clients' understanding of their options. "We always say to people, 'we don't care what you pick as long as you know why you picked it,'" explains Russ. "Regular tempered glass or Starphire glass. Corian versus quartz versus granite. It's all about educating the client."

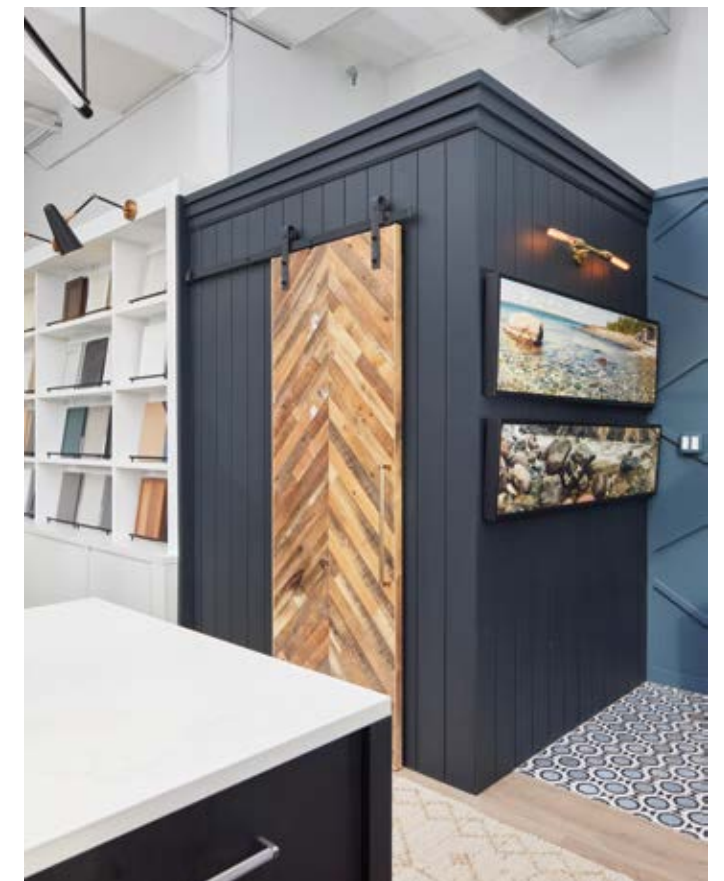


THE DIFFERENCE

It's not only their showroom that sets Crodon apart, it's their people. "We couldn't do what we do without our team/village!" says Vanessa. They are a full-service operation, providing both design and contracting services. They collaborate with designers and contractors as well, lending their knowledge and contacts. In addition, Crodon utilizes a comprehensive software program that links customers and trade partners with plans and progress, saving hours on each job.

RECLAIMED

Crodon loves to use reclaimed where possible, so reclaimed beams from The Timeless Material Co. are on show, and to add to the finished feel of the displays, local artwork is featured – photography by Paul Elia and Paul Simon, pottery by Christine de Takacsy and woodwork by Lea Wood Co. [OH](#)



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organizing

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CUSTOM-DESIGNED IDEAS FOR YOUR HOME STORAGE NEEDS

STORY VANESSA ROGERSON | PHOTOGRAPHY VANESSA ROGERSON DESIGNS

Every homeowner has space for a bench or a creative nook to store items. All homes have additional potential for storage. An organized design by a professional can help uncover areas in your home to organize and store your stuff. Here are five key storage solutions to help homeowners with their design dilemmas.



1 Kitchens

Adding drawers in your kitchen is a functional and eye-pleasing storage solution. Drawers are easy to access and can hold dishes, pots and pans plus small appliances. Don't ignore the corners. A set of base-corner drawers adds a touch of luxury and function. Pullouts installed inside existing base cabinets function as drawers and are also an affordable option when working with existing cabinetry.

Continued on page 108



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2 Mudroom Storage

Most homes lack adequate storage for families. Adding a bench and a few coat hooks in a space off the front foyer or at the back door is a great way to utilize the space. If there's open space above or below, add a shelf and a few wicker baskets to hide footwear and scarves until needed. Toss some pillows and a throw on the bench to create a cosy nook while welcoming guests to your home.

3 Discreet Office Built-Ins

Now that more people are working and studying from home, additional workspace is a necessity. The kitchen counter is meant for prep and cooking, not laptops and paperwork. Adding a discreet built-in with a foldable desk in the kitchen or living room makes a great workstation. Simply open when needed and pull up a chair.

4 Living Room Storage Units

Add an oversize storage unit in the living room that can be used as a media centre or sideboard. You can easily stow away electronics, toys and books. Something sleek and low in height creates an open, airy feel and you can mount your television on the wall above.



5 Coffee Tables

Coffee tables can be used for more than resting your mug in the morning. Source a table with multiple layers and shelving below where you can display books, magazines and decorative items. Leave room on top for a vase of flowers and beverages as needed.

Designed storage solutions do not have to be complicated or over-the-top. It's all about working with what you already have, while adding new elements to carefully execute an organized space. **OH**

Vanessa is a designer based in Simcoe County.



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STORY **GINA MAKKAR** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDERS CHAN**

JT and **Rena Bhabra** of **TRUBuild Custom Homes & Renovations** have been making home dreams happen for more than 25 years. Their own home was one of their latest projects, an update to an outdated two-storey 1970s red brick home in Lorne Park. Continued on page 112



XXXXXXXXXX

RIGHT: The front porch is a warm, welcoming mix of glass, steel and sapele (African mahogany) wood. A unique custom cut CNC decorative panel adds wow factor and some privacy.



advantage of the size of the lot, which is almost 380 feet deep.”

As a company, TRUBuild takes projects for clients from start to finish, from design, contracts, executing trades to ensuring quality control checks. To help ensure an outstanding experience, they employ an in-house team to manage everything from site management to design.

Their reno included significant additions to provide much-needed space for their growing family and has six bedrooms and five en suites. The additional space includes a sprawling primary bedroom above the garage and sweeping floor-to-ceiling windows from **Mag Windows and Doors Inc.** to add light. JT and his team managed every stage of the process, from design to execution to ensuring the right trades were secured. JT also worked with **Johnny Sihra Design** to help finish the more specialized elements.

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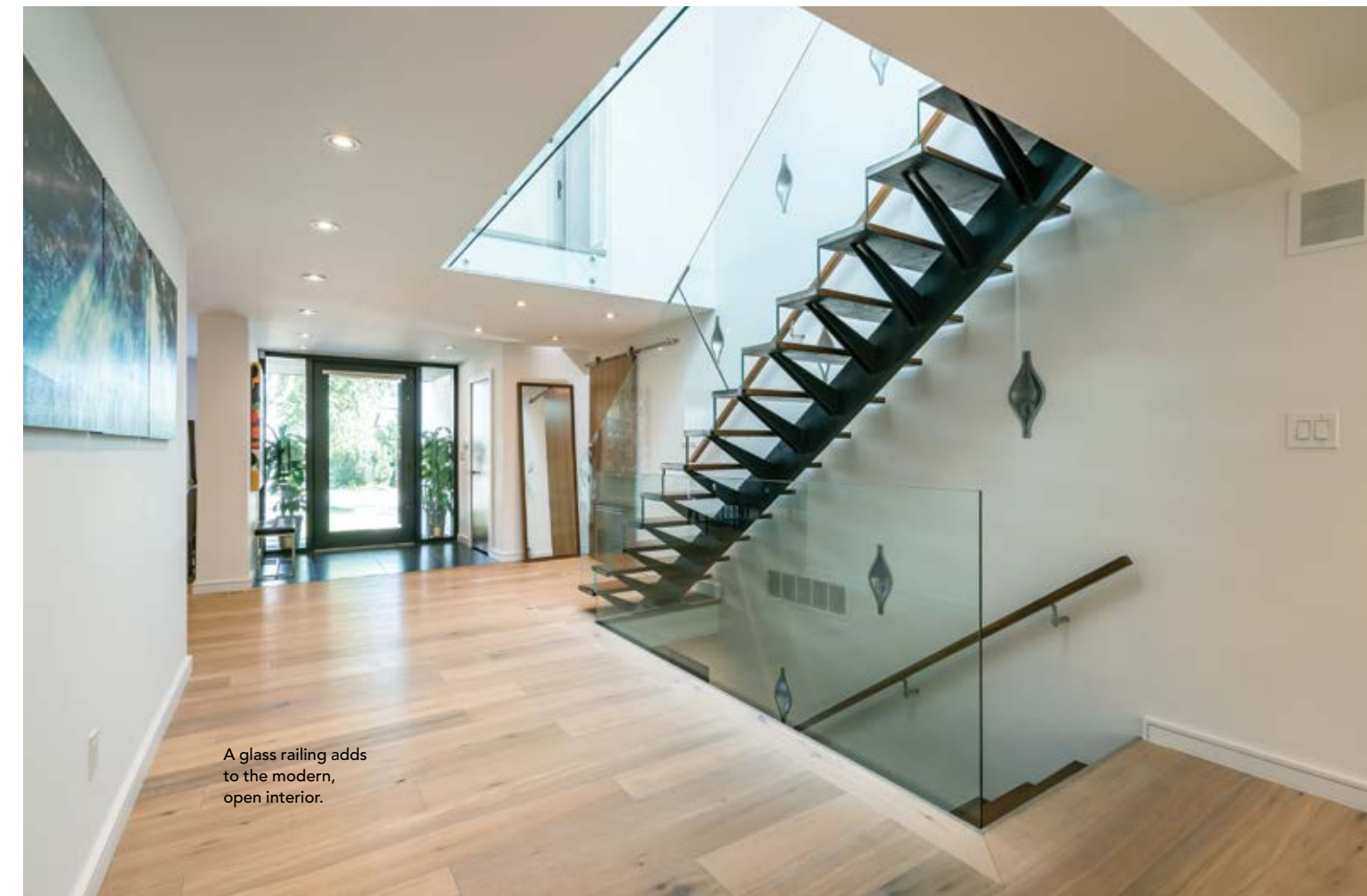
The neighbourhood is changing. Older homes in Lorne Park are being renovated or torn down to make way for new ones. Young families are moving in. The landscape is transitioning in new and beautiful ways. The Bhabras love the area they live in but wanted a

home that more closely matched their lifestyle. The initial plan to add to the 2,800 sq. ft. home by building over the garage quickly evolved into an expansive footprint of over 5,000 sq. ft. “The demographics of the area call for something a little larger,” says JT. “We took



XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

TOP: Unique eucalyptus-finished cabinetry adds warmth to the open kitchen. **ABOVE:** The home’s original exterior lacked curb appeal. **RIGHT:** Updates modernize the exterior and add curb appeal while respecting the area’s original landscape.



A glass railing adds to the modern, open interior.

The goal of the exterior renovation was to achieve a modern look with clean lines and a blend of stucco, stonework and warm wood accents to add curb appeal. To tie the addition above the garage to the existing structure, a two-storey facade finished in shimmering white quartz tile blends the old with the new. A commercial glass door with a mahogany handle is a showstopper. The porch mixes glass, steel and

sapele, an African mahogany, for a warm welcome.

Additional space was added to the rear of the home to accommodate an open-concept family room, kitchen and dining area with soaring 10-foot ceiling heights. White oak wide-plank engineered flooring from **First Class Flooring** adds to the modern feel. Porcelain and marble tiles throughout, from **Cesario & Co.**, add luxury.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

RIGHT: The custom island was the first of its kind and took an army to install. **BELOW RIGHT:** There is an abundance of storage in the butler's pantry. **OPPOSITE:** One of the must-haves was the bank of windows and doors to take full advantage of outside views.



A two-sided, floor-to-ceiling indoor-outdoor fireplace with a Corten steel facade is a dramatic focal point that offers a warm space for year-round entertaining. Three skylights help maximize light. Solid walnut doors throughout were sourced from **Brenlo Custom Wood Mouldings & Doors**. The modern staircase is a blend of Corten steel, mono stringers and warm walnut treads with glass railings. The original plan included a hockey-stick shaped stairwell with a landing, but redesigning it created space for a fifth bedroom and en suite.

Continued on page 117



A two-sided fireplace is a bonus in all seasons. **BELOW:** The dining room is open to the living room allowing for easy entertaining.



XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

ABOVE: The unique eucalyptus wood finish carries into the great room for continuity. **BELOW LEFT:** A graphic wallpaper adds a little drama to the powder room. **BELOW RIGHT:** The laundry room is fitted with ample storage for the family of five.

In the kitchen, a unique eucalyptus finish on the cabinetry pairs nicely with a Caesarstone quartz countertop and full-height backsplash. Sub Zero, Miele and Wolf appliances from Tasco Appliances complete the space. A massive 14-foot island made with sapele wood is the first of its kind. "It is one piece and it hadn't been tried out before," says JT. A steel cage was engineered to reinforce the base. "It took eight or nine people to bring it into the house and place it, so that was a challenge."

Continued on page 118





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ABOVE: A long, sleek floating vanity in the en suite adds to the modern vibe. **LEFT:** Wood on the wall and ceiling provides a frame for the bed and side tables in the primary bedroom. **BELOW:** A dark wood floating vanity pops in an otherwise all-white bathroom.



Upstairs, the new primary bedroom includes a wood feature wall to help anchor the modern elements and add warmth. In the bathrooms, floating vanities throughout maintain the clean, minimalistic feel. Darker tones help soften the crisp, cool lines. Custom storage solutions by **Closets by Design** keep the mess in check. *Continued on page 120*



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The backyard went from boring basic to a cosy nature-inspired retreat. **BELOW:** The lounge area allows the family to extend their living space outdoors.



before:

Outside, a 40 by 20-ft. cedar deck with custom CNC railings spans the back of the home. The outdoor entertaining area includes a pool by **Turtle Bay Pools and Leisure**, a hot tub and cabana. It is one of the family's favourite spaces for relaxing and entertaining.

Merging the old with the new was a challenge. Adding more space led to new electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems, a change that helped increase the home's efficiency. A significant amount of engineering was required to remove a double brick wall that spanned the length of the home, now supported by steel beams and posts. With a tight budget after removing and rebuilding the roof and adding the additions, the team had little room for error. They succeeded in converting the dated brick home into a modern masterpiece on time and on budget.

For the Bhabras, the home has optimized the way they live and intermingled their more modern stylings with the transitioning style of Lorne Park to create a lasting beauty that can be enjoyed for years to come. **OH**

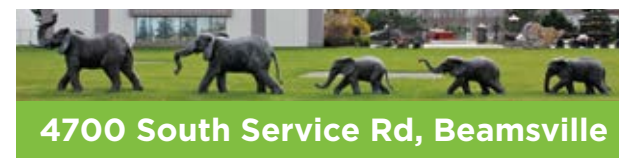


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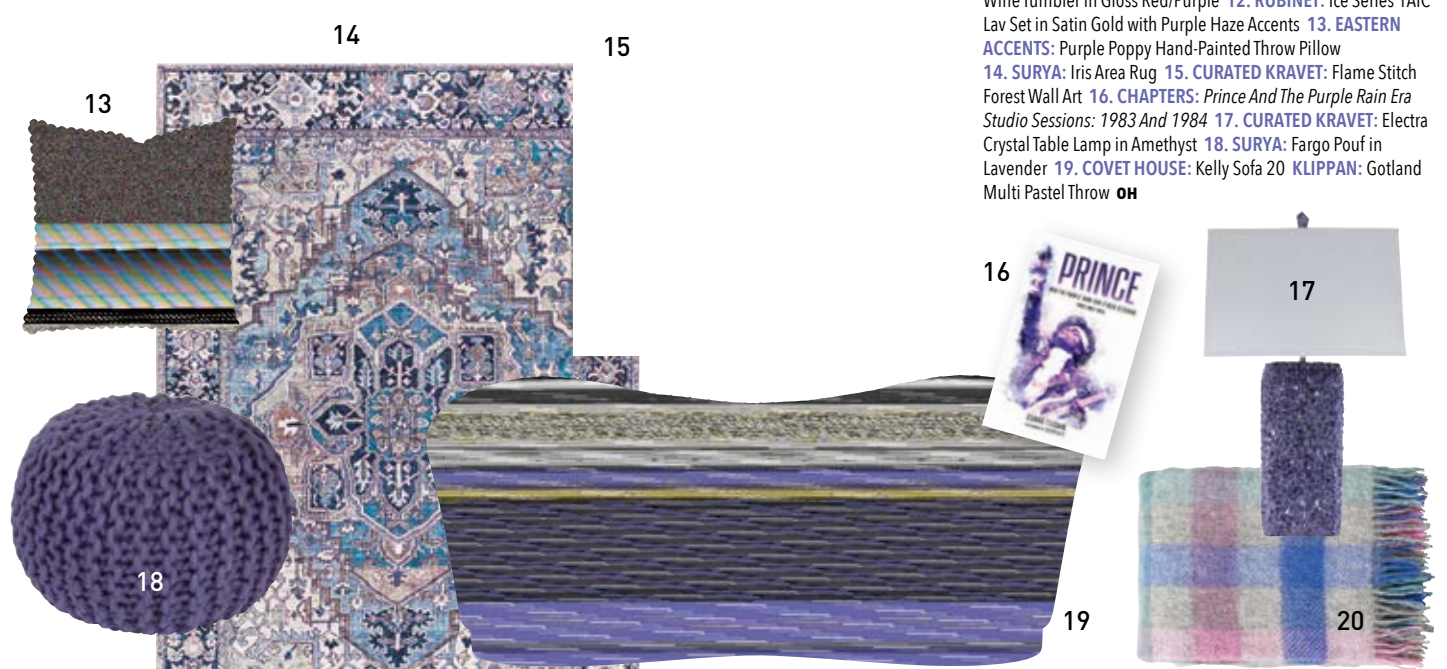


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cooking at home

LEMON ASPARAGUS RISOTTO

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY
JENELLE MCCULLOCH



INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- 1 bunch asparagus

- 6 cups vegetable or chicken stock

- 2 Tbsp olive oil

- 1 shallot, finely diced

- 2 cloves garlic, finely diced

- 1 tsp fresh thyme

- 1 ½ cups Arborio rice

- ½ cup dry white wine

- 1 cup grated parmesan, plus more for serving

- Zest of one lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

Clean asparagus and steam or sauté until tender. Set aside.

In a large pot, bring stock to a simmer. Once heated, remove from heat and keep nearby.

In a large saucepan or pot, add olive oil and cook shallot until translucent. Add garlic and thyme and sauté for 1 minute before adding Arborio rice. Season with salt and pepper and toast the rice for 1-2 minutes.

Add white wine and cook until absorbed, stirring occasionally.

Add 1 cup of stock at a time, stirring continuously until each addition of broth is absorbed. Continue until rice is al dente.

Add parmesan cheese and asparagus to the risotto. Garnish with lemon zest, serve and enjoy! **OH**

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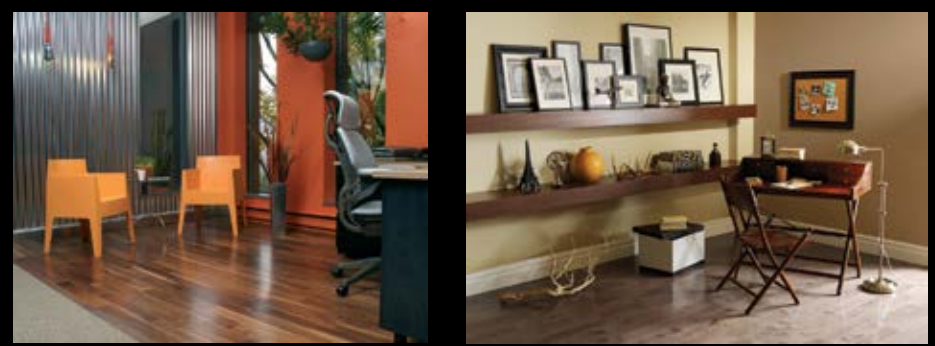
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