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FEATURED: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP):  
THE SUMMERPEAK, THE MAGNOLIA CONTEMPORARY,  
THE MERIDIAN CONTEMPORARY, THE BROOKSIDE



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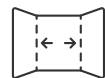
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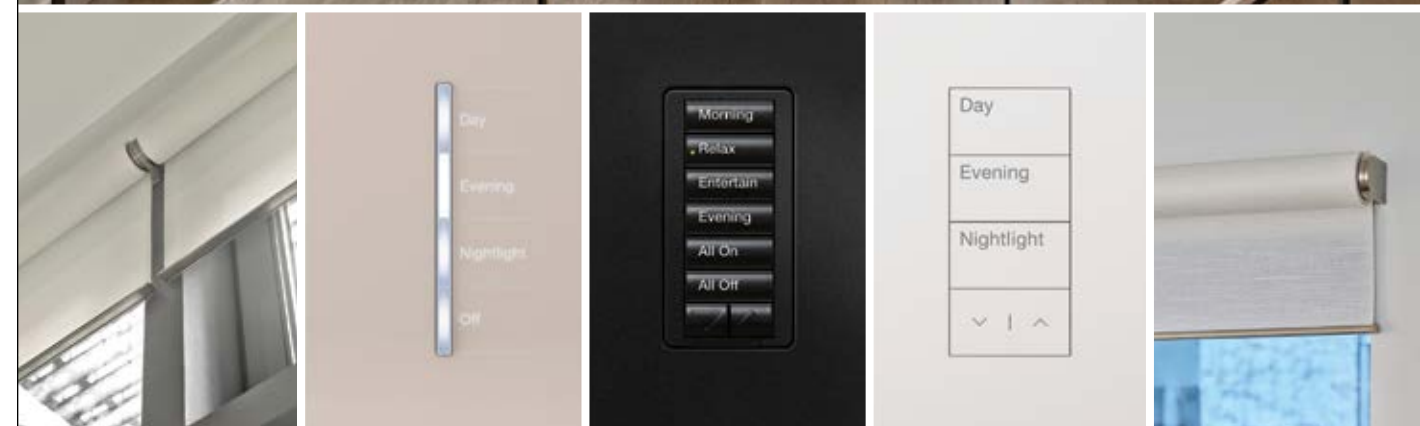
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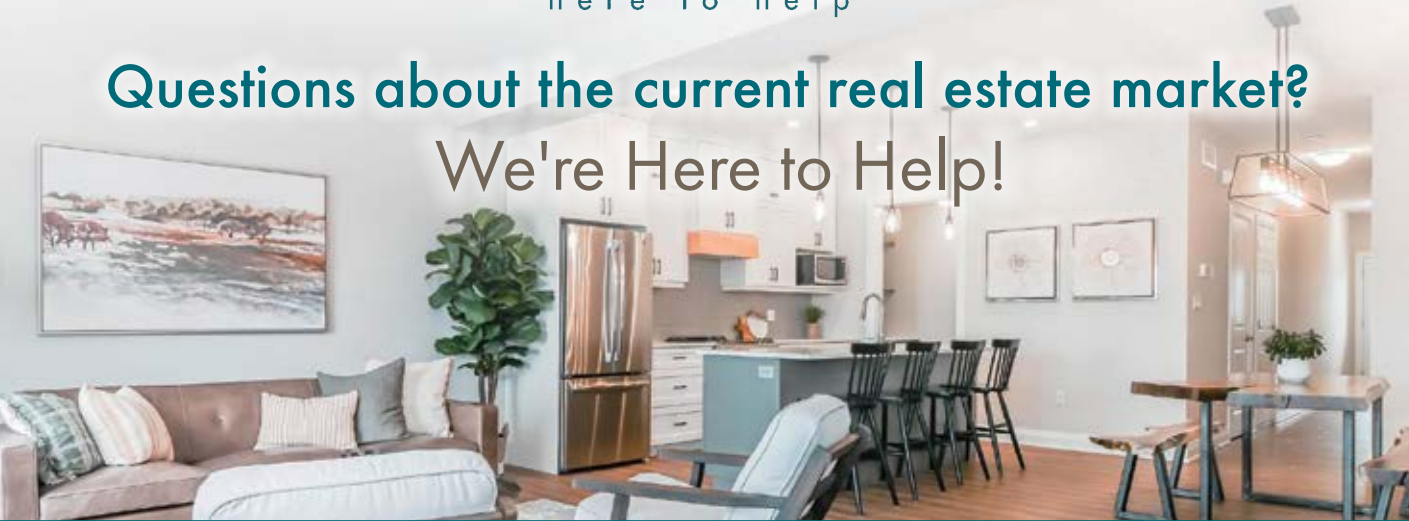
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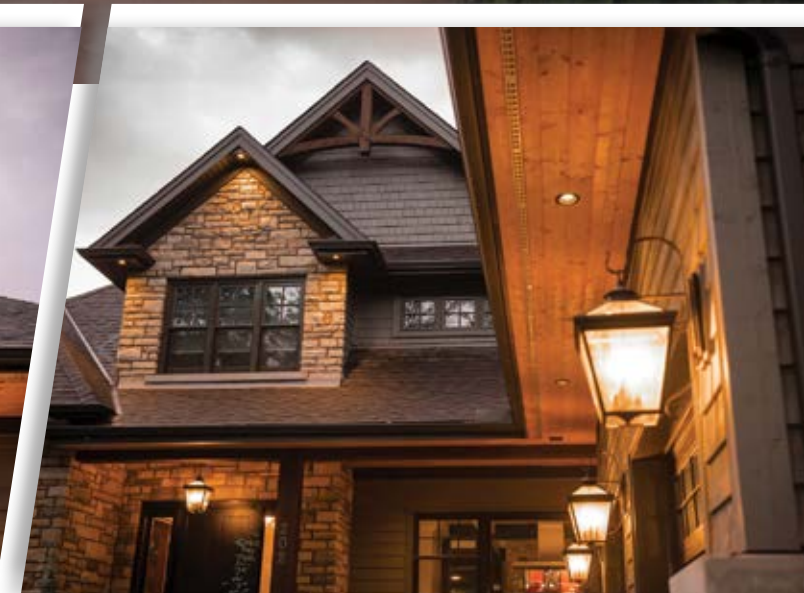


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**A WORD FROM HEATHER:** “I love my job and I love seeing our consignors and customers. Please stop by, say hi and find yourself something fabulous!!!!”

**A WORD FROM CAROL-ANN:** “Welcome back and thank you to our loyal customers and consignors. it’s great to see you. We look forward to a busy spring and are anxiously awaiting new quality consignment items into our Kitchener store. Keep watching our site.”

**A WORD FROM CLAIRE:** “To all our new and returning customers and consignors, your support over these last few months has been wonderful ... thank you! Looking forward to assisting you in the coming months.”

**A WORD FROM LISA:** “I am so pleased and grateful to have our doors open once again. It is really great to welcome everyone in for some well deserved retail therapy. Safety is our first priority, and we have implemented all required provincial legislation to ensure you shop and consign safely.



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OUR HOMES is a registered trademark of OUR HOMES MEDIA GROUP INC. OUR HOMES Wellington County Orangeville Caledon & Waterloo Region is published four times a year.

OUR HOMES is distributed to residents of Wellington County, Orangeville, Caledon & Waterloo Region via direct home delivery. Copies of OUR HOMES are available for free pick up at high traffic locations throughout the region. OUR HOMES is distributed to select business leaders via direct mail.

**Please send all letters and/or feedback** to OUR HOMES Magazine,  
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*I have a confession:*

my Christmas tree lingered in my living room for a ridiculously long time into this new year. I took down all the festive ornaments, but I just couldn't say goodbye to the glow the twinkly lights brought to our living room as we made our way through the long nights of lockdown. When I scolded myself for not being able to let go, my teen sons would shrug and say: "It's 2021 Mom, do whatever works." Zen words from two high schoolers who – as with all of our children – have had to wrestle down deep boredom and find fun within constriction.

It eventually felt right to pack the festive season away for another year – and suddenly a fresh burst of tulips on the table and even a bowl of sunny lemons on the counter spurred the excitement and freshness of a new season ahead.

Since joining the Wellington-Waterloo edition of OUR HOMES, I have genuinely loved introducing myself to – and connecting with – the homeowners and business owners featured in this fresh spring issue and the OUR HOMES staff members who make it all happen. It is their energy that has affected me: their positivity and endurance to figure out how their lives and their businesses will continue, whatever the year ahead may bring.

We are resilient folks, aren't we? All of us. We hope this issue provides you with inspiring ideas to bring spring into your home. Whether it is a major renovation that transforms a long-held vision into reality (page 66), a fresh coat of paint on your walls in one of the season's newest shades (page 78) or a crafty flower frame to bring some cheer to your space (page 118). This year, perhaps more than ever before, do what it takes to make your home a comfortable, safe and sanity-saving space, in any which way that feels right for you. Remember: It's 2021, do whatever works.

*Janet*

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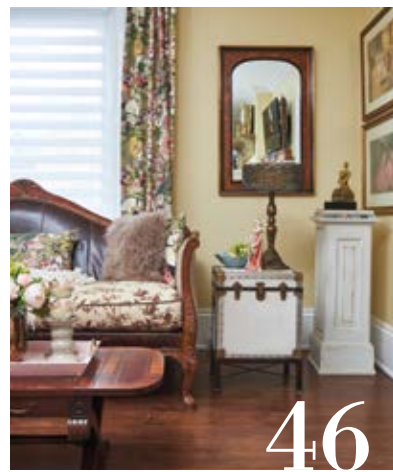


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### ON THE COVER

An Elora business owner restores a century home with colour and her personal style. Story, page 46. Photography by Jason Hartog.



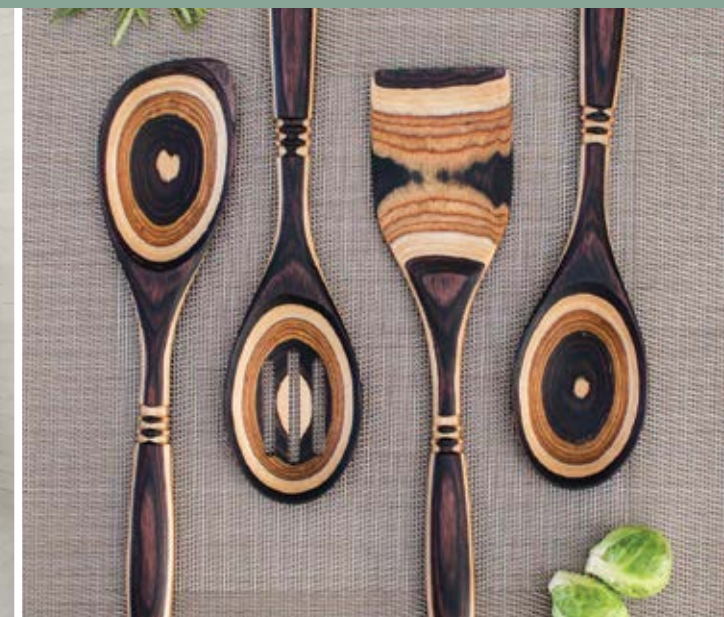
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- Gain mental confidence, no longer hiding your gifts and talents.
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# SURVIVING THE ELEMENTS

The great outdoors: Whether we experience it on a tiny balcony, a cosy deck or a big backyard, we all want to get out to enjoy warmer temperatures. While it's lovely to lounge, linger and live outdoors, you need to know Mother Nature is cruel towards materials. The scorching sun, with temperatures that go up and down, along with the wind, rain and water are all challenging to materials, natural or man-made.

To navigate the dos and don'ts for your outdoor life experience, first, ask yourself, "How much time do I want to devote to maintenance?" A bit of research will make your lounge time more enjoyable.

- ☀ Fire, heat and impact-resistant materials are easy to clean and non-corrosive. The most practical is stainless steel.
- ☀ The easiest solution is to cover your furniture and place in storage when not in use.

## CABINETRY AND FURNITURE — MAINTENANCE 101

- ☀ Most products are made of plastic, wood, aluminum or wicker, and each material has its own set of positives and negatives.
- ☀ Take time to read and follow manufacturers' instructions to clean and maintain any products. It'll make your life easier in the short and long run.
- ☀ Corrosion- and weather-resistant means the finish protects materials. It is not waterproof.
- ☀ UV-stable and light fastness is a stabilizer added to protect from deterioration or fading in the sun.

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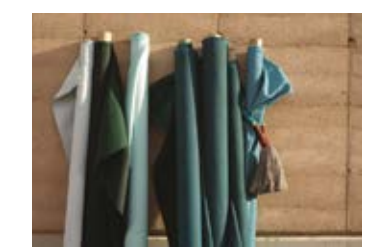
Look for recycled plastic, reclaimed wood or FSC-certified wood. Teak is well known for durability, beauty and strength and is popular on ships.



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## FABRICS

Cushions and fabrics make outdoor lounging comfy. Make sure fabrics are breathable and UV, water, mildew and stain-resistant. Most people are familiar with Sunbrella fabric for its durability and soft feel. Power-washing is not recommended as it can ruin the seams of the cushions.



## SHADES AND CANOPIES

Extend your outdoor stay in a natural way to keep cool, protect yourself from UV rays and reduce the premature ageing of wood and fabric. Add a fan for ultimate breezy coolness.

## FLOORING

What's under your feet needs to be practical, beautiful and long-wearing. First, take an inventory of the area you want to cover. Assess conditions such as drainage, holes made by animals, soil type and exposure to sun and rain. This will determine what materials you'll need to use. Flooring options include:

**Wood:** It's versatile. Redwood and cedar have a natural resistance to rot and the elements. Other woods require sealants.

**Stone:** Natural and durable. Includes granite, slate and marble and still requires care. Dark stones absorb the heat and will scorch your tender tootsies.

**Brick and permeable concrete pavers:** Great hardscape options for eco-friendly patios and walkways.

**Tile:** Porcelain tiles can mimic the look of other materials, including wood and stone, all while being durable and budget-friendly.

**Rubber paving stones and recycled plastic:** Helps divert waste from landfills. Resilient, durable, slip resistant and shock absorbent – a favourite around pools and kids' playgrounds.

**Composite Decking:** Wood fibres encased in plastic and binding agents. Low-maintenance, easy to install with a multitude of great traits. Very popular despite higher cost of materials.

**Carpets:** Makes the outdoors homelike. The synthetics are easy to clean, and are mould, mildew and stain-resistant. Many are made of recycled materials.

**Artificial Grass:** It's not the real thing, but it is easy to install and long-lasting. You do need to vacuum it.

**NOTE:** Make sure your flooring has a matte or non-slip finish. Shiny surfaces are hazardous around water and in the winter.

Finally, your evening outdoor stay is more enjoyable when you light things up! Make sure any fixture you use is wet-rated. Safety first. **OH**



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Continued on page 38



3



4



5



6



style picks



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# Elderflower FIG SOUR

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY **JENELLE MCCULLOCH**

*A FLORAL TAKE ON A TRADITIONAL GIN SOUR COCKTAIL. THIS VERSION COMBINES DELICATE FLORAL NOTES, LEAVES A TOUCH OF TART ON THE TONGUE AND DISPLAYS A COLOURFUL HUE.*

## INGREDIENTS

### FIG SYRUP

1 cup figs, diced  
½ cup white sugar  
½ cup water

### COCKTAIL

1.5 ounces gin  
1.5 ounces elderflower liqueur  
2 ounces lemon juice  
1 ounce fig syrup  
1 ounce egg white, pasteurized  
Garnish: edible flowers (optional)



## HOW-TO

### FIG SYRUP

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and simmer for 10-15 minutes.

Remove from heat and cool for 30 minutes.

Strain with a fine mesh strainer and store in fridge.

### PREPARE COCKTAIL

Chill glassware of choice.

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker and add ice. Shake until chilled then strain.

Garnish with edible flowers. **OH**

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# Sow EASY

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY **MELANIE REKOLA**

2020 was a wild year that brought so many challenges – some were utterly heartbreaking and others were just plain annoying. The lack of availability of items we take for granted was frustrating, including plants. Many garden favourites just weren't attainable. Seed-sowing to the rescue!



Most garden seeds (both flowers and veggies) are readily available online and at your local nursery, often in varieties you might otherwise never find. Plus, growing plants from seed is an inexpensive, fun and rewarding process. Most seeds can be started indoors earlier in the growing season but for this piece I'm focusing on the direct sowing method because it's terrifically simple. Direct seeding/sowing means to plant seed directly in the garden. Sounds easy doesn't it? That's because it is!

Unlike their inside-grow counterparts, seeds that have been grown in place don't experience the stress of transplanting and won't need to adjust to their new surroundings. Often you won't lose any time at all direct-sowing and I learned this (again) firsthand during last year's growing season when a friend gifted me a variety of veggie seeds in June. With no time to start indoors I had no choice but to direct-sow them. To my surprise, many of these sown-in-place seedlings grew better and produced more than the ones I started inside the previous months.

*Continued on page 44*

*Melanie is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.*



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While Pine Meadows is situated in a rural, park-like setting beside Lake Belwood, it's convenient to all the things that make for a rich and fulfilling lifestyle. Nearby amenities include great shopping in Fergus and Elora, cuisine that reflects local tastes and culture, theatre, the arts and all the conveniences of a thriving community.

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TIPS FOR SEEDING SUCCESS

Though direct-sowing is easy, it doesn't mean your new plant babies won't need care. Follow these tips for the best direct-seeding success:

- Make sure to clear your seeding area of any weeds and have the soil loose, damp and ready for planting.
- Most of the specific sowing info per plant variety is found on the seed packet. Please read carefully. The rule of thumb is to plant a seed three times as deep as its circumference, but some require light or a cold stratification to germinate. Also keep in mind that when to sow is equally important, as some seedlings are frost-hardy and some are not.
- Mark your spot. It's really easy to forget where you planted seeds once springtime growth is in full swing.
- Water your seeds gently as needed until you see germination, then again whenever you see the soil surface looking a bit dry. Watch the weather and adjust your watering. Schedule accordingly as seedlings can easily die from drought or drowning at this delicate stage.
- If you have a good germination rate, you may need to thin your seedlings to give them airflow and room to grow. I find it's better to pinch the unwanted seedlings off at the base because pulling them disturbs their delicate, young root systems. If the unwanted seedlings are edible plants you can eat them, too.
- Keep watching and caring for your new brood until they're established plants, and always be on the lookout for pests and predators. Some insects love to snack on and decimate defenseless seedlings.

MELANIE'S PLANT PICKS

Annual flowers, vegetables, and even some perennials are great candidates for direct-sowing. Some plants even seed themselves for subsequent years. Here is my list of favourites, but please don't let it limit you. There are many others that will work.



THE EDIBLES

Beans, salad greens, parsley, basil, dill, borage, cilantro, fennel, beets, carrots, peas and radish.

BLOOMS-FOR-DAYS ANNUALS

Cosmos, zinnia, calendula, sunflowers, nasturtium, nigella, bachelor buttons, california poppies, morning glory and moonflower.



DEPENDABLE PERENNIALS/BIENNIALS

Foxglove, blue flax, black eyed susans, milkweed, butterfly weed, columbine and lupine.



**PRO TIP:** After your seed garden is well established, don't forget to sow succession crops of both flowers and veggies to keep those beautiful blossoms and edibles coming all season long. You can even save some seeds at the end of the season for next year.

Lessons learned? Direct sowing is a little bit risky and patience-building but also incredibly easy and inexpensive. Which method will you choose this gardening season? **OH**

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# Downsizing with **STYLE**

STORY JANET WHITE BARDWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG



After the death of her husband Ken in April 2019, **Paula Marskell** knew the Elora home and property they had shared for almost 10 years was too large to maintain on her own. She needed a smaller, more manageable place that she and her dogs Ben and Belle could call home – one within walking distance to her décor shop **Chanticleer** in the Elora Mews.

After seeing a few homes with her agent **Eric Parkinson** at **Your Hometown Realty Brokerage**, her search ended when she laid eyes on a one-and-a-half storey house in downtown Elora – a documented rare example of a mid-19th century rubblestone Ontario Gothic cottage. “As soon as I walked in, I knew this house was for me,” Paula recalls. “The size is more me, and the neighbourhood is quiet and welcoming. I love that it’s a century home and has a lot of history.”

It needed restoration, but Paula had a clear vision of what it could be. After the purchase, she connected with contractor **Frank Clark**, owner of **Fergus Mobile Services**. “We walked through the house and made a list of what I wanted to have done – and it was quite a list!” says Paula. *Continued on page 48*



**ABOVE:** Paula's sunny entryway is enhanced with Benjamin Moore's Light Yellow and a pop of colour from artwork by Teri Hranka from Water's Edge Studio. Repurposed shelving pieces covered in Paula's signature black provide homes for her eclectic accessories. **LEFT:** The home's original door was uncovered in the restoration process and provides historical charm to the statement porch. **BELOW:** The previously dark and closed-in porch area was opened up and transformed from gloomy to gorgeous. **OPPOSITE:** Paula brought most of her favourite pieces from the previous place to the new one. When her beloved wood-framed sofa wouldn't fit through the front door, her contractors cut out the front window so it could find its new home in this warm living room.







LEFT: Contractor Frank Clark installed tile and built a hearth around the fireplace to blend with the home's century heritage. BELOW LEFT: In keeping with Paula's mantra of repurposing everything, the home's original windows can now be found as visual-interest installations mounted on her backyard fence. BELOW RIGHT: A whimsical llama painting by Denise Mernagh brings character to Paula's mudroom at the back of the house.

**Brent Mitchell** of **Firth Renovations** was hired as a second contractor. This core duo – along with key players **Dustin Hass**, owner of **Bad Hass Flooring**, **Matthew Giblin**, owner of **Gib's Gardens**, and Paula's right-hand person, **Robin Geidlinger** – proved to be the supportive team of professionals Paula needed to help her transform her new home inside and out. "Frank, Brent and Robin actually moved me to my new home one truckload at a time," she says.

The removal of an enclosed porch was the most striking change on the outside. "I wanted a front porch that was welcoming and open to the street with the original entry door and stone on the front of the house to be visible," says Paula. Frank brought her vision to life with

a classic statement porch featuring sturdy wood pillars and stone foundation. Plantation-style wicker furniture provides a comfy vantage point to the street. Paula says neighbours walking by often stop to admire all the work that has been done.

Gib's Gardens transformed a previously sparse backyard into a summer soirée spot featuring a central patio, smaller conversation areas and a hot tub pad tucked into a private alcove. Gardens packed with plants and flowers from **Arthur Greenhouses** and **Belgian Nursery** are primed to bloom this spring. New eavestroughs from **Ball Exteriors Ltd.** were installed, and the original windows were replaced with energy-efficient versions from **Golden Windows Ltd.**

Continued on page 51



Original century-stone walls add gorgeous texture to the dining room. One of Paula's many shutter shelves – repurposed shutters mounted horizontally – provides an eye-catching perch for treasures found on her thrifting excursions.



Curtains throughout the house – including the colourful floral print window coverings in the kitchen – were made by Paula using fabrics she discovered on her many in-person and online shopping expeditions.



Inside, the original pine floors throughout the house were restored by Bad Hass Flooring and stained with Minwax English Chestnut to provide a warm foundation. Plaster walls and ceilings were repaired and given a fresh coat of paint. All the original interior doors were brightened with Benjamin Moore's Ultra White.

On the main level, a wall between the kitchen and dining room was removed to open the space. A hearth and tile were installed around the fireplace in the living area to add a central focus in the room. Chandeliers from **Honeychurch Lane** add warmth and character.

The kitchen was gutted and floor-to-ceiling cabinets from **Jim Streicher Custom Built Kitchens & Bath Cabinets** were installed to maximize storage. Stainless steel appliances provide a modern sheen that beautifully juxtaposes the intricate batik-influenced tile backsplash from **U-Save Flooring**.

Timber, building and plumbing supplies came from **Dixon Home Hardware** while **Speers Electric** completed all electrical work. *Continued on page 54*



**ABOVE:** White cabinetry covering every inch of wall space ensures maximum storage in a compact kitchen. The natural wood-topped kitchen island is moveable and features a collapsible leaf for eating or food prep. **FAR LEFT:** A classic farmhouse sink with modern fixtures, stainless range hood and appliances strike a charming balance between old and new. **LEFT:** Statement knobs add personality to the kitchen's simple Shaker-style cabinetry and complement the intricate batik-influenced backsplash.



***“I DON’T FOLLOW  
COLOUR TRENDS.  
I HAVE COLOURS  
THAT I LOVE  
AND I USE THEM  
IN EACH HOME  
I HAVE LIVED IN.”***



Paula’s pretty bathroom is bursting with character. Benjamin Moore’s Pink Pearl on the walls is accented with black antique pieces and a clawfoot tub. The whimsical bird paintings and sculptures by Nadine McEwen of All Dolled Up By Nadine flock throughout the home. **OPPOSITE:** The main bedroom is a calm and serene spot for Paula to relax with her dogs at the end of a long day. Too large to fit up the stairs, her comfy – and sizable – bedframe was transported through an upstairs window.



feature

Upstairs, charming, slanted ceilings are accentuated with warm, fresh wall colours, including Benjamin Moore's Sundance, Pink Pearl and Pale Avocado. "I don't follow colour trends," says Paula. "I have colours that I love and I use them in each home I have lived in."

The main bathroom was demolished and rebuilt, and a glass shower was installed where a large closet used to be. The walls were covered in Benjamin Moore Pink Pearl and voila – it felt like home. *Continued on page 56*



ABOVE: More black-painted, repurposed pieces cover the walls, providing endless visual interest on the way to Paula's office – the place she tends to spend most of her time. TOP LEFT: Lucky guests get to stay in this crisp green bedroom, with its charming slanted ceiling, pops of black and cheerful linens. Calming artwork by Teri Hranka finishes the space. LEFT: Fresh flowers and a Kelly-green clock add to this guest room's whimsical charisma.

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With the bones of Paula’s new abode in place, finishing touches complete the space. A passionate thrifter, she describes her style as “colourful, warm and whimsical.” It is said that perfection is in the details, and Paula is a pro at the details – a lot of them. “My friends say that there is not one inch of wall space that is not covered, and that is probably true,” she says. The eclectic style that many admire in her décor shop is mirrored in her home environment – and reflects a life-long love of design that offers enduring inspiration and comfort in good times and bad.


“It was an exceptionally long project but a loving one,” Paula says. “To have a loyal supportive group of people around me has meant the world to me and I just love coming home to this warm and cosy space.” **OH**



**LEFT:** “I have had a red bathroom in all my homes,” says Paula of her angled bathroom wall covered with tile and Benjamin Moore’s Exotic Red. A natural stone wall, wood beams and eclectic artwork by Nadine McEwen make using this bathroom more of an experience than a necessity. Paula foregoes standard vanities and opts rather to use stunning antique sideboards modernized with new sink and fixtures. **BELOW:** The spectacular stained-glass window in Paula’s office is the only original window that was kept in the house – and how could she not keep this piece of history that entices the sun to dance through it.



“I JUST LOVE COMING HOME TO THIS WARM AND COSY SPACE.”



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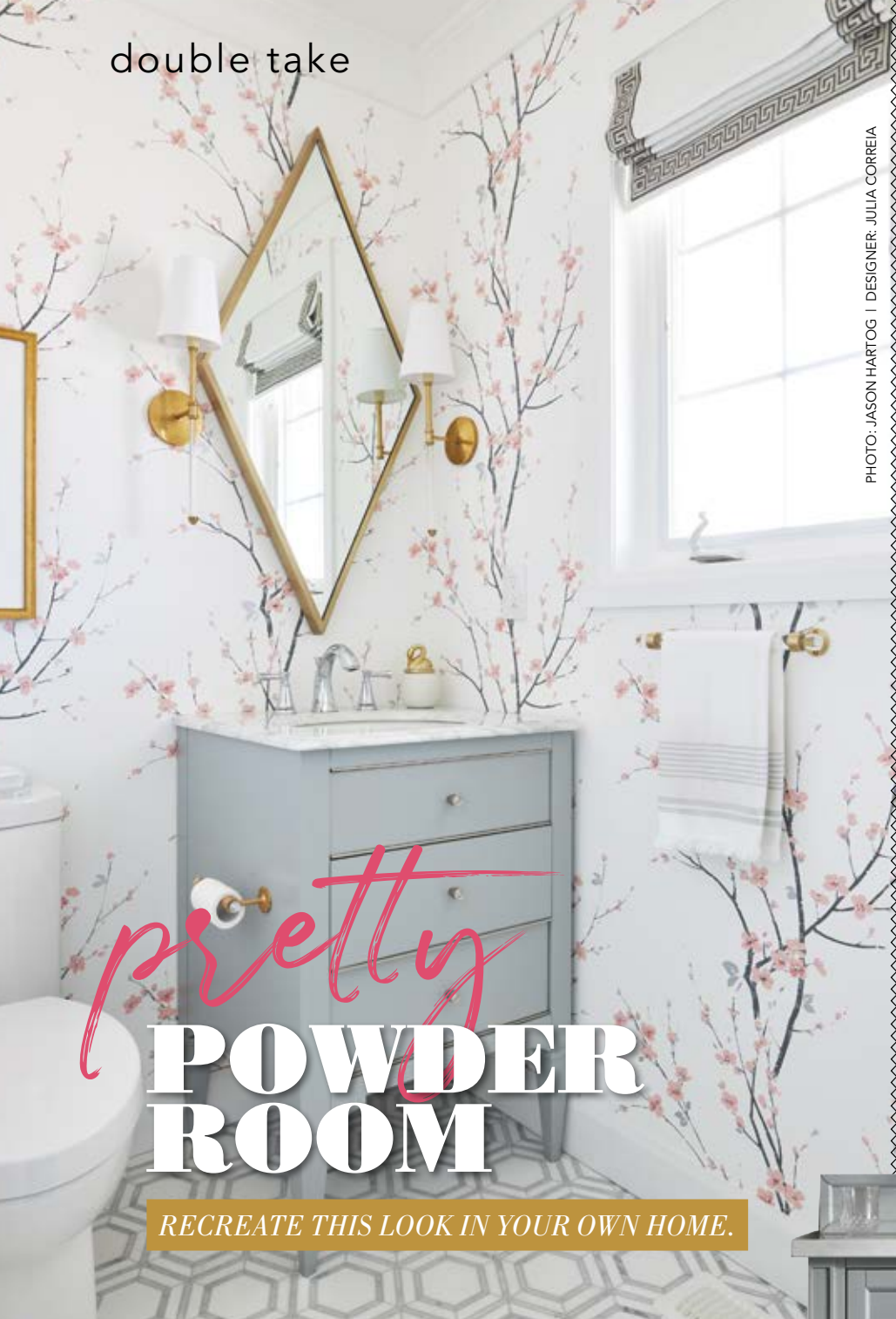
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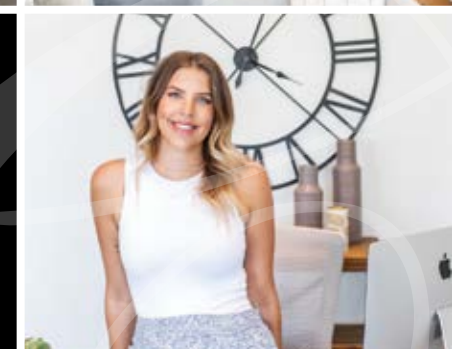
1. **RENWIL:** Coburg Mirror 2. **Z-LITE:** Mila Wall Sconce in Rubbed Brass 3. **POKOLOKO:** Leo Terry Hand Towel 4. **CREATIONS BY ALNO, INC.:** Acrylic Contemporary Towel Bar in Polished Brass 5. **YORK WALLCOVERINGS:** Branches Unpasted Wallpaper 6. **CROWN SURFACE SOLUTIONS:** Chinoiserie Cherry Blossom Wallpaper 7. **SALTILLO TILE:** Combined Hexagon Thassos Carrara 8. **CASA ROMATILE:** Geoshapes - Ice (7x8 Hexagon with Frame) 9. **CREATIONS BY ALNO, INC.:** Acrylic Contemporary Single Post Tissue Holder in Polished Brass 10. **JAMES MARTIN:** Brittany 36" Single Bathroom Vanity in Urban Gray. **OH**



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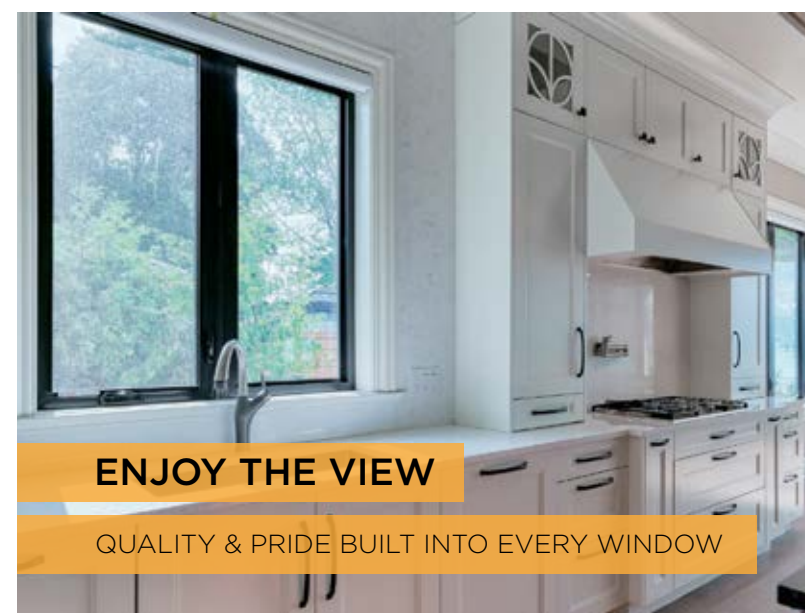
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# the SPRING Migration

STORY **MARK WIERCINSKI**



## THE EARLY BIRD

Migration is the uncontrollable urge to travel. It is a way to take advantage of seasonal habitats and food sources while reducing competition. Birds with the ability to fly and cover huge distances gain the biggest advantage, securing food and shelter before the late-comers. This is also where the strong have the best chance to succeed. Those journeys are long, dangerous, full of risks and can be deadly at times. Migration is driven by instinct and accomplished by star navigation, magnetic fields, landscape recognition and good old-fashioned follow-the-leader. We can help. Put out food, offer shelter and give the migrators a place to restore energy and find a safe place to rest.



It is impossible not to appreciate a garden full of life and colour. Songs and activity just bring warmth and appreciation to our souls. (And who doesn't need more of that these days?) There are so many things to learn from birds, including watching them find nests, lay eggs, hatch young and fledge. Parents tend and teach, and a cycle of life is witnessed.

The birds that migrate and stop are so diverse. Warblers pass through with small, colourful blasts. Large, ominous hawks arrive and many stay and set up shop. Little brown birds that skulk around but have big voices include song sparrows and house wrens. Rare or common, those birds make it fun. They bring sound, colour and life right into our backyards – or, if you like to explore, our forests and wetlands – and virtually anywhere we go. Birds are there to greet us. It's all good and refreshing and gives us an attachment to the outdoors again. **OH**

*Mark is a biologist with the Department of National Defence.*

Spring brings more sun with longer days. Snow melts, ice breaks and waterways flow. But without a doubt, my favourite sign of spring is the return of birds.

The spring migration is a chance to witness one of the greatest natural phenomena right in our backyards. The parade of colour and diversity is amazing and a reminder of nature's wonder. Birdsong is a natural wake-up call, and after their spring arrival I can disable my alarm for the coming months. That dawn chorus is tonic for my spirit. How many of you can't wait for the first robin, redwing or sparrow to sing? Or maybe to simply see more birds at your feeders?

## IT BEGINS IN MARCH

If you are keen and observant, you can see the start of migration sometime in March. It is subtle, and slow to start, but it is there. Horned larks and bluebirds are often the first migrants to return. They set off my radar and I start looking for new birds each week.

By the time April swings around, another two or three species return each week. The hardy seed-eaters are often the first to get a head start on the trip north. It makes sense, as the seeds and fruits left on plants and shrubs are the first abundance of food. There will be a bigger wave of arrivals as the snow disappears

and the weather warms. More species mean more colour and more song. Ducks and geese of all sorts find open water and make me shiver at their ability to swim in the presence of frost and ice at the water's edge.

In May new birds arrive on a daily basis – sparrows and finches, then orioles and buntings. There are colours everywhere. The feeders become crowded and the seed gets gobbled up. You can put out different foods and add water to the menu and those birds will reward you with all kinds of activity and behaviour.



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PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG

# Setting the STAGE



Linda Trafford, Brittany Langlois, Jenny Hilborn and Brooke Sonnenburg

### THE PLACE

Founded by designer Jenny Hilborn, **Centre Staged Designs** launched in 2013 with a few home staging accessories stored in her home's basement. Within a few years her business blossomed into a full design studio with a 4,000 sq. ft. warehouse packed with gorgeous home furnishings and accessories ready to help clients stage a move-in-ready home for the real estate market, or design a home of their dreams. "I started my interior design career 12 years ago in the UK," says Jenny. "My passion for design is at the forefront of our staging projects. Our two divisions, home staging and interior design, have grown exponentially."

### WHAT'S NEW

2020 was a busy year for the team at Centre Staged. Lockdown time was used to establish accounts with suppliers, providing clients with access to items at less than retail cost. In addition to expanding the team to four, Centre Staged launched an in-studio décor shop showcasing unique, locally sourced home décor. Design technology was also a focus – Jenny invested in 3D rendering software to provide homeowners with stunning project plan visuals and launched an e-design service to deliver interactive room schemes to clients unable to meet in person.



### SERVICES

Centre Staged provides services ranging from real estate staging and full-scale interior/exterior design to model home furnishings and e-design.



### TRENDING

Jenny says the modern farmhouse trend is holding strong again in 2021, featuring contrasts of light woods and dark accents complemented by soft natural textures. "This is a trend that's had a huge impact not just on home interiors but exteriors also, which we haven't seen in a while," Jenny says, adding that accessorizing with pampas grass and other dried florals is also a popular look right now.



### THE FINAL WORD

"Trends are great for inspiration, but they do come and go," says Jenny. "A space should speak to what you love, regardless of what the trends are doing. We encourage our clients to follow their gut." **OH**

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STORY **MERRILYN PATTERSON**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

*THOMAS AND ALANNA'S LONG-TERM GOAL WAS TO BUILD A FAMILY HOME ON A BUCOLIC PIECE OF PROPERTY THEY HAD PURCHASED. AT THE TIME, THERE WERE 14 STABLES IN AN EQUESTRIAN BARN, AND A 100-YEAR-OLD FARMHOUSE. BOTH LAWYERS WITH A YOUNG FAMILY, THEY ENVISIONED A LIFE WITH A COUNTRY FEEL, YET JUST A FIVE-MINUTE DRIVE FROM GEORGETOWN.*

*Continued on page 69*

# COUNTRY COLONIAL

# Haven

The expansive wall of custom windows take full advantage of the fabulous pastoral views.





In 2018, they were ready to transform their patch of heaven into their family homestead. The 10-acre property is picture-perfect, with rolling hills and a river running through it. Logistically, there was a tremendous amount of site work to be done before breaking ground.

That's where **Rockhaven Homes** came in. Thomas had many real estate dealings with homeowners in the area and often heard the Rockhaven name mentioned. The couple had also driven around town as they considered plans for their new home and were particularly drawn to Rockhaven's designs.

They met with **Albert** and **Jesse Grin**, principals of Rockhaven Homes, and agreed on the spot that their values, work ethic and commitment to the job at hand were a fit. The barn, including stables and farmhouse buildings, were demolished and a massive amount of rubble taken away. This followed

a two-year process working with the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, securing approvals for the exact location of the house. "Rockhaven had extensive experience dealing with the CVCA and were invaluable in moving the complicated process forward," says Thomas.

Alanna remembered "large, boxy" houses from her east coast childhood. Thomas had a large home in mind too, but had a tendency towards a more modern aesthetic. The compromise was to build a brick colonial-style home, large and rectangular in shape with a traditional floor plan and large designated rooms and hallways. Interior furnishings and finishes would have a more modern to transitional feel.

**Rob Vanderwoerd** of **Elevate Home Design** was the architectural designer. Working together on previous projects, Rockhaven interpreted the plans "with no hiccups," says Jesse.

*Continued on page 71*

**ABOVE:** Clean lines and fresh neutral tones allowed the homeowners to find a comfortable balance between traditional and modern styles. **RIGHT:** From the first meeting, Thomas and Alanna knew they would work well with Rockhaven's Jesse Grin. **OPPOSITE:** Low-profile island stools allow the gorgeous marble countertop to take centre stage.





**“I TOOK GREAT PLEASURE IN MAKING THIS ROOM MY OWN.” – Alanna**

Modern lines and gold-toned accents in this main-floor home office create a calm and friendly spot for a productive day at work. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** The gold-toned fixtures continue in the main-floor powder room and pop beautifully against the rich dark-blue vanity and fresh, white countertop with recessed sink. **TOP RIGHT:** Thomas and Alanna chose a herringbone-patterned tile for their stylish mudroom and laundry area. In addition to being functional and beautiful, the tile's texture and pattern are more forgiving against whatever dirt the day may bring. **BOTTOM:** A glass side-entry door sheds a welcoming natural light on the comings and goings of this busy family.



The expansive kitchen/great room opens to a wall of custom windows from **Dashwood Industries** to take full advantage of the fabulous pastoral views. All trim, mouldings and interior doors came from **Northfield Trim and Door**.

Thomas is the primary cook and Alanna gave him free reign in choosing the cooking elements. The sleek, white-on-white kitchen is grounded by the dark island, topped with a magnificent piece of Ciot Sky Blue from **Graniteworx**, and placed so Thomas can see the vista outside. The couple chose Arctic White quartz for the other counters. Thomas says the custom stainless-steel range hood from **Vent-A-Hood** is the pièce de résistance in this efficient, working kitchen.

The build started in October of 2018. The space boasts a large gas fireplace installed by **Bast Home Comfort** with a traditional-style mantel from **Omega Mantels**. The sumptuous sectional furniture and navy/charcoal/blush area rug purchased from **Emerald Isle Home Furnishings** make for cosy evenings with the family. The soft grey ties in with the serene neutral colours of the grand space. The walls are Silver Satin and the trim is painted Distant Gray, both by **Benjamin Moore**. *Continued on page 73*





**“ROCKHAVEN IS LIKE A WELL-OILED MACHINE. THEY’RE SPEEDY. WHAT THEY TELL YOU IS WHAT YOU CAN DEPEND ON.”**

**– Thomas**



**LEFT:** A large walk-in closet off the entryway helps make this young family’s mess more manageable. **RIGHT:** Diverse design styles blend beautifully as a modern art piece and a hall console table transition seamlessly into the dining area with its traditional black pedestal table and white Shaker chairs. **BELOW:** Indoor play has a bright and central spot in Thomas and Alanna’s colonial creation, where a watchful eye can be kept on their children, Reilly and Rose. **OPPOSITE:** A modern lounge chair and large hide add warmth and visual interest to the large traditional colonial entryway.



Alanna’s pride and joy is the main-floor mudroom. It has cabinets for storing seasonal clothing and footwear and organized cubbies for each child’s gear. It’s welcoming and organized, but with an understated elegance like the rest of the house. She chose a herringbone patterned porcelain tile with the look of brick for the floor.

Both Thomas and Alanna use the main floor office. “I took great pleasure in making this room my own,” says Alanna. “There’s a space for all the things I need for work, but also for the things that I love to surround myself with.” The modern marble-topped desk is her most recent purchase from Emerald Isle Home Furnishings and the animal hide is the perfect accent in this country/chic setting.

A large, sun-drenched playroom completes the main floor. With its wall of windows and cathedral ceiling, it’s the perfect place to play for now, but is destined one day to become a library/sitting room. *Continued on page 74*





In keeping with the colonial style, there's a large foyer and sweeping grand staircase, crafted by **Stairworks**, leading to four bedrooms.

The master bedroom, furnished with traditional furniture, mimics the grey/white theme downstairs. In the master en suite, a chevron-patterned tile floor from **Ceramic Decor**, a vessel tub and chandelier provide an elegant backdrop for the sweeping country views.

*Continued on page 76*



**ABOVE:** Waking up in this cosy, traditional master bedroom is made even better with large windows for Thomas and Alanna to watch the seasons go by on their 10-acre property.

**BELOW:** The recessed shelving in the couple's oversize glass shower provides a beautiful and practical solution for keeping bathing essentials in order.

**RIGHT:** Unique flooring choices make this en suite shine. It breaks free from the traditional/modern feel of the rest of the house – opting instead for the ambience of a romantic spa retreat.



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Eight-year-old Reilly and five-year-old Rose have their own rooms, joined with a “Jill-and-Jill” bathroom with a clever sliding door, allowing for privacy in later years. Alanna chose a fun penny tile from Ceramic Decor for the floor.


The entire build took only nine months, just as Albert and Jesse predicted. “Rockhaven is like a well-oiled machine,” says Thomas. “They’re speedy. What they tell you is what you can depend on.” **OH**




**TOP LEFT:** The girls’ bedrooms are joined by a charming and sophisticated bath that is neutral enough to grow with them as their styles mature. **TOP RIGHT:** Canopy netting frames Reilly’s traditional bed, giving it a magical princess quality. A fuzzy rug and aqua bed linens complete this fresh and cosy spot. **LEFT:** The tall Shaker-style bed frame in Rose’s room will stand the test of time as she grows. A modern take on traditional ruffled curtains adds a pretty detail that softens the extra-large window.



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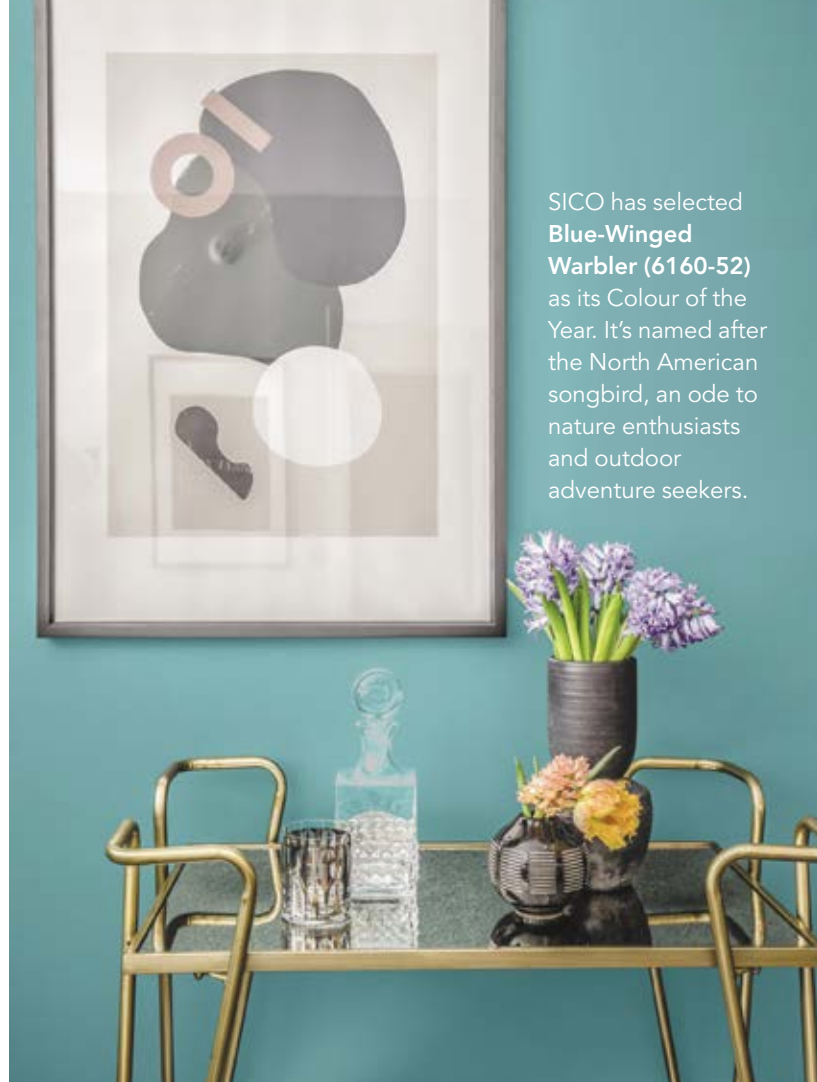


decorating

# COLOUR TRENDS

STORY **GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH**

It's a blue year for interior design. Major paint brands have picked their top paint colours, and blues are trending for your walls and home accessories.



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ARE OPTIMISTIC  
AND PLAY TO OUR  
OVERWHELMING  
NEED FOR COMFORT  
AT HOME.

## THE BLUES



Beauti-Tone Paint has selected **Dancing in the Rain (C20-5-0644-0)**, a pastel blue. "It's a blue we can relax in while feeling as though we are in a calm and tranquil environment," says Kristen Gear, Beauti-Tone's lead colour designer.



**Aqua Fiesta (PPG1147-4)**, a vibrant blue-green, is Glidden's first-ever accent colour of the year. It's a bright refreshing aquamarine that will make a splash in small doses, perhaps on millwork or an accent wall. *Continued on page 80*

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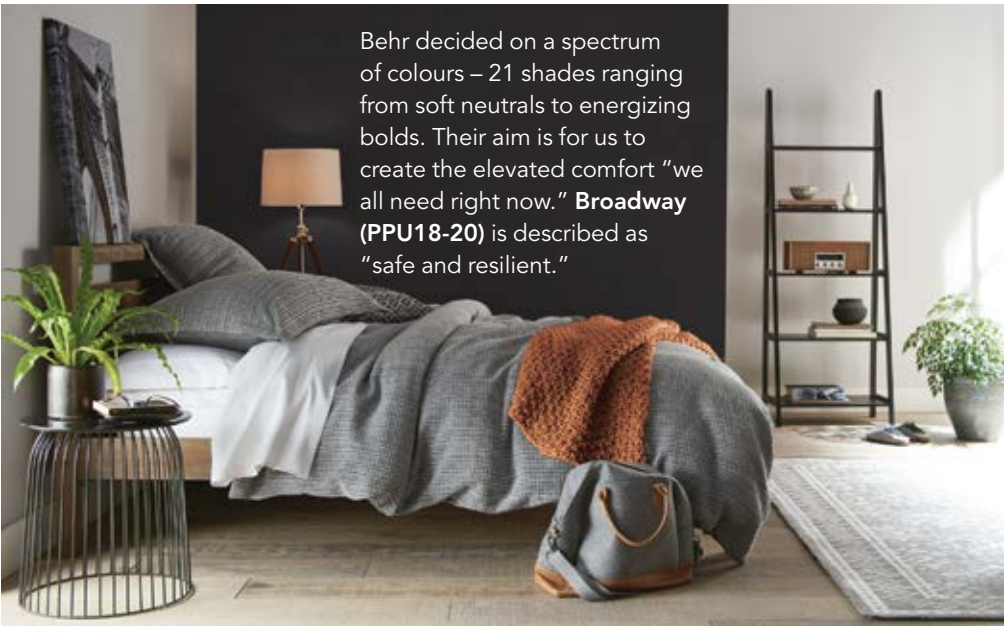
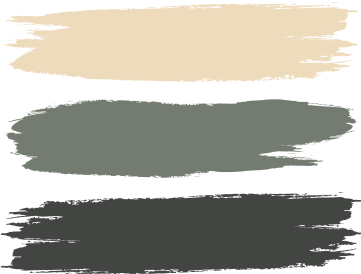


decorating

Benjamin Moore says its colour, **Aegean Teal (2136-40)**, will help create natural harmony in your home. The company calls the colour “intriguing, balanced and deeply soothing.” Imagine this colour on your kitchen cabinets.



MOVING AWAY FROM GREY



Behr decided on a spectrum of colours – 21 shades ranging from soft neutrals to energizing bolds. Their aim is for us to create the elevated comfort “we all need right now.” **Broadway (PPU18-20)** is described as “safe and resilient.”

Valspar’s colour experts unveiled 12 “fresh and familiar colours” that are on-trend now and are “easy to love forever.” One of our top picks from this collection is **Soft Candlelight (3005-6C)**.



Farrow & Ball has selected 12 shades for its 2021 colour trends, mostly earthy neutrals and natural colours. The company says its selections reflect “a broader trend toward warm, organic colours and away from cool greys and blues.” We like **Green Smoke No.47**. on

BACK TO NATURE

While blues dominate, our natural surroundings also inspire colour.



**Urbane Bronze (SW 7048)**, the top pick from Sherwin Williams, is a warm hue the company says will help you create “the ultimate retreat for reflection and renewal,” and “a sense of calm from the ground up.” It’s perfect for window trims or accent walls.



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**Melissa Heaman & Jen MacEwan**

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## HOT PRODUCTS

Our hot products are antique and vintage mirrors and one-of-a-kind art. The resurgence of antiques paired with new décor is a design trend that's here for the long haul. Also in high demand are locally made, eco-friendly soy wax candles from Little Beausoleil Candle Co. and the Wick portable LED lamp by Graypants.

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- Our very own Linen + Lore Signature Linen bedding.



*"The resurgence of antiques paired with new décor is a design trend that's here for the long haul."*



*Continued on page 84*





**Rowan McLean**

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*Continued on page 86*



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*"They may be behind the scenes, but they are the unsung heroes of Xanadu."*



**Bill Van De Ven and Tara Schuett**

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PHOTO: KELLY HOKKOFF / LANDSCAPING: FAIRVIEW LANDSCAPE

# HOME IMPROVEMENT FORECAST 2021

## WHAT HOMEOWNERS CAN EXPECT

STORY **CONNIE JESKE CRANE**

*IF YOU TRIED TO COMPLETE SOME HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (OR EVEN BASIC MAINTENANCE) OVER THE PAST YEAR AND HIT A FEW SNAGS, YOU'RE NOT ALONE.*

Homeowner Karen Homer has certainly been there. Homer, who's been completing a string of projects on her Guelph century home over the past year, recalls encountering everything from booked-up contractors to lumber shortages to COVID-related product and shipping delays. With a custom door for example, she says, "This door should usually take nine weeks to come, which is long enough, but it took 16 weeks."

Add to that an extra layer of COVID protocols and PPE. At one point, during some mould remediation work in her basement, Karen found herself dealing not only with "guys in COVID suits but others in mould-hazard suits. So it's been fun!"

For industry players and homeowners alike, 2020 was uniquely and unforgettably challenging. If you plan to begin a new project this year, here's a look at what's in the forecast for the home improvement industry plus advice on navigating challenges.

*Continued on page 92*

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What can homeowners expect this year? We talked to Michael Garrity, CEO of Financeit, a Toronto-based company that provides mobile-friendly financing apps for things like home renos.

Michael begins by making sense of what happened last year. “If there was a theme for 2020, it would be ‘Dealing with change without a playbook,’ right? We had no idea this was going to come, once it hit us we had no idea how big it was going to be, what the implications were going to be, what the government reaction was going to be, what people’s perceptions of safety would look like. It was all trial by fire.”

Adding to the complexity, says Michael, after an industry lockdown in Q2, the home improvement sector saw a wild 60 per cent year-over-year rise in the third quarter – hand-in-hand with unprecedented delays and shortages.

For 2021, with a second lockdown in January, he says, “We are going to continue to wrestle with effects and implications of the health pandemic for the entirety of the year.” Yet Michael also sees more reasons to be encouraged.

“What’s different this year from last year is we have information; we know what to expect. We’re done with [establishing] policies and procedures and protocols. We know how to operate in a lockdown... in a grey zone, and a yellow zone and red zone. We’re ready as an industry.”

BETTER TECH TOOLS

In 2021 we’re all also armed with geeky new skills, having mastered virtual meeting platforms and other tech tools thanks to COVID. Michael says on the industry side, “We’ve moved to virtual consults, taken advantage of new tools that are available so we can minimize interruptions with customers.” In this wider-scale adoption of tech, he says his own company’s online applications, which allow customers to finance home improvement projects online, also saw real growth in 2020. “Electronic payments and online financing tools like ours exploded because of again just health concerns and the inconvenience of cash.”



PHOTO: KELLY HORKOFF  
LANDSCAPING: SHADES OF SUMMER LANDSCAPING AND MAINTENANCE



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SUPPLY ISSUES

Supply issues are improving. Overall, Michael says, “I think that supply chain issues are going to be less frequent because of knowledge. We know and we can plan for alternative places to source material from.”

SPECIFIC TRENDS

Michael says the past year also brought a “reinforcement of the value of the home.” In 2021, with people still not travelling, we should see more of the same – spending on backyards, pools, spas, outdoor kitchens, new driveways, basketball courts and anything that maximizes enjoyment of our homes.

ADVICE

For 2021, with home improvement projects, Michael advises planning ahead as much as possible. “Secure the contractor that you want to work with as early in the season as you can because there will be an increased amount of demand.”

And for larger spends, particularly if you might sell down the line, Karen says a savvy realtor with good local knowledge can really help you prioritize spending. “I had a realtor walk through the house with me and make lists of bare minimum things that needed to be addressed,” she says.

Finally, the right mindset – being patient and flexible – and the need for good safety protocols will stay with us this year. “We’re going to experience elements of the health pandemic for all of 2021,” says Michael. “It’s safe to do projects, as long as you take care.” **OH**



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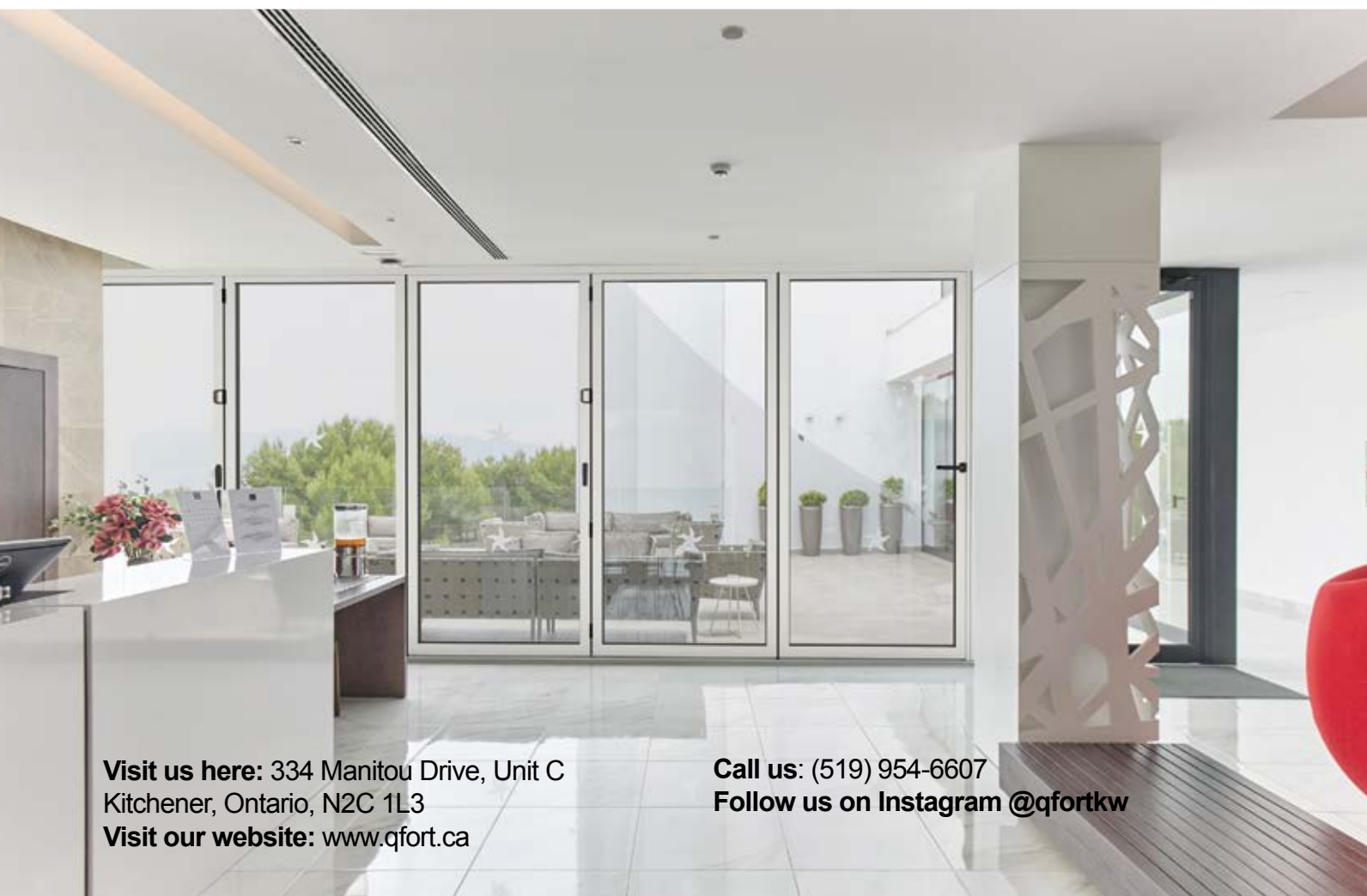
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# passion PROJECT

STORY **MERRILYN PATTERSON**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**



The formal dining room reflects a comfortable family feeling made more personal with Christine and Rob's travel photographs on the wall. A clean-lined platform chandelier creates an indirect glow to enhance meals in the dining room. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** A simple sideboard adjacent to the dining table offers extra space for serving dishes during meals or a perfect alcove for Christine to display her latest design favourites. Gold-themed flatware and charger plates add a bit of bling. **BOTTOM LEFT:** An oversize framed print in the same wood tone as the front door balances this elegant entryway.



Homeowners Christine and Rob relax in their finished vision come to life: a functional and beautiful family home on the edge of Listowel. The family pup Maisel gives the spacious and durable abode two paws up.

*Christine Annis has been interested*

in home design and architecture for as long as she can remember. She has a rewarding career in nursing, but wanted stimulation from something that nurtured her creativity and passion for design. She studied online and earned a diploma in design from The Interior Design Institute.

Eight years ago Christine and her husband Rob decided to build their forever home in Listowel. Both wanted to be close to work and have space for a blended family that includes six children – three still at home. Hoping to be closer to town but with a country view, they found the ideal one-acre lot with lots of room for the kids and their dog Maisel to play on the flood plains at the edge of Listowel. This was Christine's opportunity to use her new design skills to bring to life the couple's vision of a functional but beautiful family home.

Inspired by the grand prize Oakville home in a Princess Margaret Lottery, Rob and Christine commissioned local builders **Richard and Roy Rozendal of Rozendal Construction Ltd.** to be their general contractor. "I wanted a graceful home that looks like it belonged here, but not too country – a pine exterior with a painted finish and a large, welcoming, covered front porch," says Christine. *Continued on page 101*



**RIGHT:** The large pantry off the kitchen provides a smart bonus space for outdoor meal prep and food storage. A durable rug in a kitchen or pantry can add warmth and frame a large area. **BELOW:** The kitchen island seating and nearby banquette embraces gathering in the heart of the home. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Christine chose stylish subway tile to create a natural yet glamorous backsplash that showcases the main attraction – a gorgeous Gaggenau induction stovetop and range hood. **BOTTOM:** A classic pedestal table in warm wood, earthy accessories and colourful pillows make the banquette area comfy and inviting.



**David Myer** of **David Myer Design Consulting** drew up the architectural plans. Christine designed the central island in the kitchen to look more like a table. The family loves to entertain with Rob being the primary cook. His wish list included a Gaggenau induction stovetop and Christine says now that they have one, they'd never go back to a conventional style. **Heirlooms Custom Cabinetry & Furniture** built the cabinets and their appliances came from **AMG Studios**. Casement windows throughout were supplied and installed by **Bavarian Window Works**. **Gabel Electric Plumbing HVAC** completed all electrical services. A large pantry at the back leads to a walkout to the expansive deck

– handy for outdoor entertaining in the summer. Christine's "must have" banquette seating invites morning conversation over coffee. Christine chose a neutral and calm colour scheme in the great room, using grey and white as the primary colours. Most of the furniture was purchased at **Conway Furniture**. Pops of colour and texture are added seasonally with a change of toss cushions, throws and fresh flowers. Christine found many of her favourite accessories at **Watson's Home Hardware** in Listowel. Christine wanted contemporary floating built-in shelves in the living room to complement the horizontal lines in the concrete fireplace surround. The walls behind the shelves are painted to blend with the television. *Continued on page 102*





The room's ceiling boasts painted beams, which add depth and texture to the room while the adjacent dining room has a more intricate and formal milled design in a coffered ceiling. Christine admits the ceiling details were a splurge. Rozendal Construction completed all the millwork. Christine's love of nature and whimsy is

exhibited in her artful tablescape in the dining room. The room's artwork is a collection of reconfigured photographs taken on the couple's honeymoon in Bali. A small but functional home office is tucked off the main entry. It doubles as a guest room with a pullout sofa for family visits. *Continued on page 105*

**BELOW:** Christine's designer eye is evident throughout the home, with clever groupings and fresh accessory combinations. An eclectic mix of throw pillows creates an inviting space to cosy up by the fire and watch a movie. **RIGHT:** A clear and open view from the kitchen to the living room produces the warm and functional feeling Christine and Rob were looking for. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Choosing a bold background shade for built-ins makes display items pop – and a large flatscreen TV less prominent.







**“ONCE THE KIDS HAVE ALL GONE, WE HAVE EVERYTHING WE NEED ON THE MAIN FLOOR.”**

The main-floor laundry with cubbies, open shelves and cabinets for storage, laundry and pet supplies is cleverly located near the master suite. “Once the kids have all gone,” Christine imagines, “we have everything we need on the main floor.” The master is a calm and serene place for the couple to retreat after busy days at work. The vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom, freestanding tub and Swarovski faucets in the en suite were all upgrades that Christine decided were splurge-worthy additions. *Continued on page 108*

**TOP:** A Mid-century modern-influenced table sets the stage for this natural hallway display filled with more of Christine’s signature style finds. **RIGHT:** Glass canisters filled with laundry and pet supplies offer a stylish way to view necessities. A cleverly placed hanging rod provides a convenient spot to air-dry items. **OPPOSITE:** Mid-century modern chairs and accessories give this home office a fresh, modern vibe, with a shag rug providing a cosy appeal. Tall drape panels with crisp black grommets and simple rod reflect the room’s get-down-to-business ambience.





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**ABOVE:** A recessed television and fireplace in the master bedroom save space while enhancing the mood as an at-home getaway. The grey tufted bed frame with nailhead detailing and white-on-white bed linens are a timeless choice.

**LEFT:** The grey-and-white theme continues in the couple's en suite, creating an elegant, luxurious result. Square gold knobs on the vanity add a warm touch. A simple, white-trimmed mirror mimics the large window and maximizes the light in the room.



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Christine has some ideas for updating the second floor and has already begun by installing a soft, textural pink wallpaper as a focal wall in her daughter Abigail's room.

Designing and building her own home gave Christine the confidence she needed to start her own business, **Christine's Designs**. She started by renovating a local restaurant, Diana Sweets, and helping Watson's Home Hardware with its showroom. Living in a small rural town has benefitted her growing business, and today she works part-time as a nurse so she can devote more time to her own business and her passion for design. **OH**

**TOP:** In daughter Abigail's room, a rose-gold statement wall, bold-coloured headboard and romantic chandelier create a soft and sophisticated backdrop that can be easily updated in the coming years by changing up linens and throw pillows. Clever built-ins on either side of the window create an intuitive spot for window bench seating. **RIGHT:** In the main bath upstairs, touches of Old Hollywood style shine through. Simple countertops and raised-lip sinks create a neutral backdrop for luxe light fixtures and a duo of classic mirrors.





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# MATERIAL WORLD

STORY **EUGENIA TRIANDOS  
AND KORINA KHAMIS**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **DREW HADLEY**



Fashion runways have always been at the cutting edge of design, inspiring everything from simple daily clothing choices to complete lifestyles – and yes, they even have a say in what our home environments look like, too. As designers, we're personally drawn to the latest collections from notable fashion houses, with anticipation of what might walk down that runway and change the trajectory of interior design as we know it.

Perhaps the most literal connection between fashion and home décor is the use of textiles. Look around you – they are everywhere, from window coverings and wall treatments to your furniture upholstery and accessories. Here are some of our favourite fabrics and where to use them.



## WOOL

Just like your favourite sweater, wool is great to snuggle while lounging. Wool throws and pillows add decorative texture, but they also serve a warm and cosy purpose on colder nights. This fabric also boasts many natural benefits. It's a renewable resource, biodegradable, durable and despite visions of shrunken sweaters emerging from washing machines and dryers, modern innovations mean many wool products are no longer "hand-wash" or "dry-clean only."

## SILK

Silk is a highly durable and beautiful material, making it the perfect choice for fashionable and functional flooring. A rug that is 100 per cent silk or a wool/silk blend has a natural sheen to it, and because it usually has a higher knot count when compared to other rug materials, it allows for intricate patterns in its designs. While our favourite silk rugs have a single, solid colour, this natural material has organic variances in colour, making a solid rug feel beautiful and luxurious.

*Continued on page 116*

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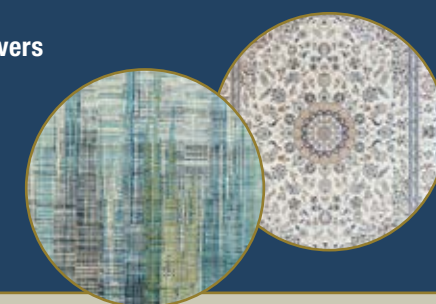
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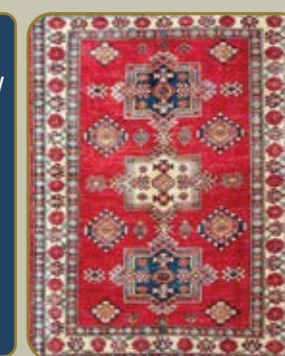


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# design ideas



## VELVET

Velvet is classically rich and luxuriously over-the-top, instantly adding glamour to everything it touches. In the right doses, it can elevate the look of any room. This fabric is consistent; its low pile gives it a smooth appearance, which shimmers under different light. This quality makes it a beautiful choice for furniture upholstery and pieces featuring beautiful curves. Despite its dramatic look and feel, velvet is low-maintenance and very forgiving, making it an elegant and practical choice for sofas, chairs and cushions.

## LINEN

Linen is widely known for its versatility, both on and off the runway. This organic material varies in weight from light and airy to heavier options, and is known for its characteristic woven texture and casual vibe. Linen can be easily dressed up with a bold pattern or colour, thanks to its ability to absorb dye. All of these qualities, combined with the fact that linen always seems to fall nicely, make it a favourite choice for window coverings.



## COTTON

There's nothing quite like the look, feel and even the smell of crisp cotton bedding. There's a reason we all use cotton in a variety of applications on a daily basis. This particular material pleases the masses – it's smooth and soft, not scratchy like some linen bedding or hot like silk. The structure of cotton fabric has air channels that make it cool and breathable, and this is one fabric that actually gets better with use. The more you wash it, the softer it gets.



When it comes to finishing touches in your home, textiles are everything. They add softness, texture and depth to your design and create a cosy nest to settle into at the end of the day. Do your research and consider your choices from an aesthetic and practical standpoint. Remember, there's a perfect fabric for every application. **OH**



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PROJECT AND PHOTOGRAPHY TARA CHATTELL

# Egg Carton FLOWER PICTURE FRAME

These adorable flowers are so easy to make and no one will guess they're made from egg cartons! Use them to embellish a picture frame, mirror, memo board or anything else in your home that could use a makeover with some pretty flowers.

## Tools & Materials

- Scissors
- Paintbrush
- Hot-glue gun
- Egg cartons (1 egg carton makes 3 flowers)
- Acrylic craft paint in colour of choice
- Acrylic craft paint in metallic gold
- Picture frame

## How-To

### PREPARE EGG CARTON

Tear off the side and top of your egg carton, and using your scissors, cut out 12 individual cups.



Tear off the tall corners and around the top edge of each individual cup until the height is somewhat even all the way around. Don't worry about getting it perfectly straight – the imperfection adds to the rustic beauty of these flowers.

Divide your cups into groups of four. Each flower uses four cups.

### ASSEMBLE FLOWER

Take three of the cups and cut slits into each corner, down to the bottom where the cups are bent. Take the fourth cup and cut slits in each corner, a little further past the bend towards the centre.

Tear around the edges and remove sharp corners to create a more rounded shape for each petal. Curl each petal out with your fingers.



To make the outside portion of the flower, glue together the first three pieces, offsetting the petals of each layer.



For the middle of the flower, take the fourth piece, overlap each petal and glue together. Curl out the top edges.



Attach the middle piece to the outside pieces. Now you have a full flower.



Make a stamen for your flower by cutting out a small rectangle from the top of the egg carton. Cut two slits into the rectangle and curl it into itself. Place a dot of glue on the bottom and attach it inside the middle of your flower.

Repeat the above steps until you have enough flowers to cover your frame.

### PAINT FLOWERS

Mix your paint with a couple drops of water. This makes it easier to apply.

Coat your flowers with paint, making sure to cover all the petals, front and back.

Once the paint dries, take a very small amount of gold paint and lightly brush the edges of all petals.

### EMBELLISH FRAME

Paint your frame the same colour used for your flowers. You can brush a little bit of gold paint over the edges of the frame as well.



Using your glue gun, attach finished flowers around the edge of your frame.

Voila! Now your frame is ready for a picture. **OH**

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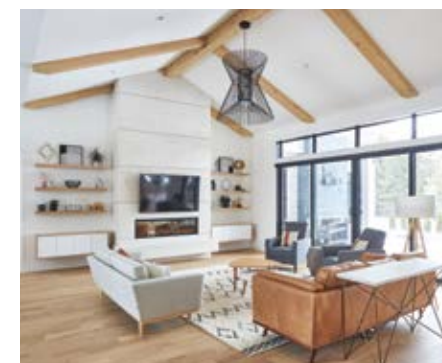
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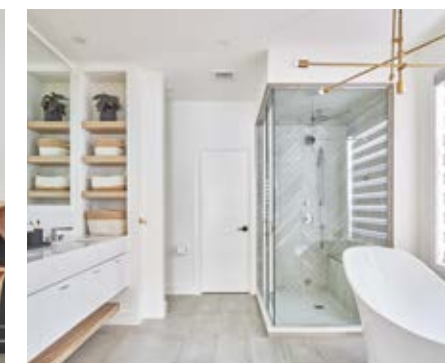


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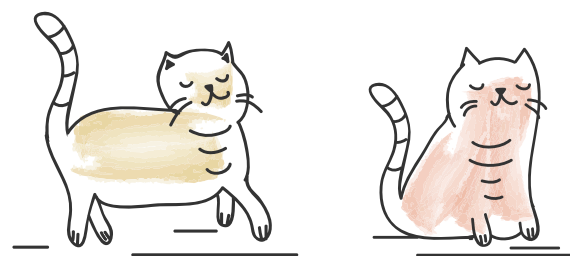
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outdoor living



# CATIOS

THE COOL-CAT WAY TO GIVE YOUR FELINES THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

STORY **CONNIE JESKE CRANE**



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HELLAS CUSTOM CATIOS



PHOTO: COURTESY OF JILL GRAHAM

**Meow.** Not that long ago, it was the norm to throw open the door and let your cats prowl the 'hood when they wanted out. More and more though, we've come to associate negatives with letting our kitties participate directly in the food chain. Not only are outdoor cats' lives drastically shorter thanks to dangers and predators, they also kill distressing amounts of wildlife, birds in particular. (For more details, see sidebar.)

In Ancaster, Jill Graham and husband Les Csepey reflect Canadians' changing outlook. Graham, an owner of three cats who grew up with outdoor felines and currently rescues cats says, "Absolutely, I would never let my cats outside. I don't believe in it."

According to Humane Canada's Cats in Canada 2017 Report, leagues of cat owners like Graham and her husband have produced a "particularly exciting statistic." Specifically, the 2017 public survey found 72 per cent of cat owners now prevent their cats from roaming free – an astounding 13 per cent leap from 2016 when only 59 per cent reported doing so.

## BEHIND THE CATIO TREND

All great of course, but as any cat owner knows, simply herding cats indoors is a compromise. "These are such interesting little creatures," says Don Bacha, of Hellas Custom Catios in Edmonton, noting a cat's innate curiosity and activity level. So here's where catios come in. Don says outdoor pet enclosures can be a great solution, helping cat lovers embrace responsible pet ownership yet also give their felines back some of the outdoor experience – safely.

The concept isn't entirely new. "It's been big in Australia and Great Britain for 20, 25 years," says Don. Yet in North America, he says, we've only been hearing about catios for 10 years or so, with much more interest lately. In fact, Don and his wife and business partner Yvette recently scaled up their business due to demand. No longer only serving Alberta, they now ship their catio kits across Canada and the U.S.

## A RANGE OF CATIO OPTIONS

Considering a catio? There are a range of options available today to fit varied budgets. At the low end, Don says, you could simply purchase a wire crate from a local pet store and place it outside so your cat can enjoy some fresh air and stimulation.

For DIYers, there are plenty of catio building plans and resources available online. (Local

SPCAs can help guide you.) Increasingly, there are also ready-made catio kits available from various suppliers, with Hellas being one of the notable Canadian-made options. Don says his company's solutions range "anywhere from \$1,500 to the sky's the limit" depending on size and customized options such as catwalks. His standard catio product measures four feet by four feet, and has a galvanized two by two-inch wire mesh, which Don says is both low maintenance and strong. "We're comfortable saying large dogs or even a small bear are not going to get in."

If your budget allows, Don recommends fitting your catio with an independent access (i.e. pet door) to let cats come and go from the house as they please. "If you have to take your cat out to [the catio], it's not as fun."

Finally, there are uber-high-end solutions that are, let's face it, as nice for the humans as for the cats. In 2020, Jill and her husband completed a screened-in catio/addition on the back of their Lake Erie cottage. "We take our cats with us when we go down and wanted a safe spot for them to really enjoy the feel of the outdoors and being at the lake." Their simple catio project ultimately morphed into a \$20,000 project, complete with a screened-in porch, storm-proof slider windows, and two access doors into the cottage giving the cats a scrambling circuit. The space lets everyone enjoy the lake breezes and nature, but as Jill insists good-naturedly, "The initial intent was I wanted something for the cats."

## BENEFITS

To be sure, safety and peace of mind are top benefits. Yet many catio owners also get a huge kick out of watching their animals safely playing or lazing in the sun.

Don says he's had many clients thrilled to see their indoor cats get a taste of outdoor fun. As a cat owner himself, Don says his cats' year-round adventures in their (admittedly fancy) catio are hugely entertaining. "In the colder days they'll go out and check their little territory and run back in and lick their paws. In the summer they're like little children – they'll come in to eat and then run right back out!" **OH**

## FREE-RANGE CATS: NOT-SO-FUN FACTS

- ❗ In Canada, cats are the number one killer of birds: They kill anywhere from 100 million to 350 million birds annually.
- ❗ Coyote attacks on outdoor cats are not uncommon. In California, one study found that 20 per cent of an urban coyote's diet consists of cat.
- ❗ Toxins like antifreeze and rat poison taste good to cats, meaning outdoor cats face more poisoning risks.
- ❗ Roaming cats are also frequently hit by cars. In Toronto, more than 1,300 dead cats were collected from city streets in 2017.
- ❗ The Ontario SPCA says the average life expectancy for a free-roaming cat is two to five years; for indoor cats, it's more than 12.

[Sources: Environment Canada, U.S. National Park Service, Nature Canada, Ontario SPCA]

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RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
JENELLE MCCULLOCH

# MELON PROSCIUTTO SALAD

This is the perfect fresh and bright salad for spring. Sweet, juicy melon and salty, slightly smoky prosciutto are a classic pairing.

## INGREDIENTS

### SALAD

1 cup melon,  
balled (your  
choice:  
cantaloupe,  
watermelon and/  
or honeydew)

1 cup bocconcini  
cheese

8-10 pieces of  
thinly sliced  
prosciutto

Mint, to garnish

Basil, to garnish

### DRESSING

¼ cup olive oil

2 Tbsp wine  
vinegar, your  
choice

1 tsp honey

A few leaves of  
basil, thinly sliced

Salt and pepper,  
to taste

## HOW-TO

In a large bowl,  
mix together  
dressing  
ingredients.

Add melon and  
cheese and  
toss to coat in  
the dressing.

Place the melon  
mixture on a  
platter and  
arrange with slices  
of prosciutto.

Tear mint and  
basil to garnish  
on top. **OH**



Xanadu




finishing touch

# BLACK & GOLD

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*Find your style...*

	KITCHEN FAUCETS	BATHROOM FAUCETS
\$	 <b>RUBI:</b> Loft Endricks R - Single Lever in Gold  <b>VIGO:</b> Gramercy Single-Handle Pull-Down Sprayer in Matte Black	 <b>VIGO:</b> Olus Wall Mount in Matte Brushed Gold  <b>VIGO:</b> Satro Single Hole in Matte Black
\$ \$	 <b>KRAUS:</b> Oletto Pull-Down Single-Handle in Brushed Brass  <b>DELTA:</b> Junction Single-Handle Pull-Down in Matte Black	 <b>PFISTER:</b> Tenet Single Control in Brushed Gold  <b>MOEN:</b> Colinet Two-Handle High Arc in Matte Black
\$ \$ \$	 <b>MOEN:</b> Weymouth Brushed Gold One-Handle Pre-Rinse Pulldown  <b>FRANKE:</b> Active Plus Pull Out Spray in Onyx Granite	 <b>BRIZO:</b> Invari Widespread with Arc Spout in Polished Gold  <b>RUBINET:</b> 1BRTLKBK Single Control in Matte Black
\$ \$ \$ \$	 <b>GRAFF:</b> Manhattan Single-Hole in Brushed Gold  <b>KOHLER:</b> Purist Single-Handle Semi-Professional in Matte Black	 <b>AQUABRASS:</b> MB2 Widespread in Brushed Gold  <b>KOHLER:</b> Composed Single-Handle with Lever Handle in Matte Black

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