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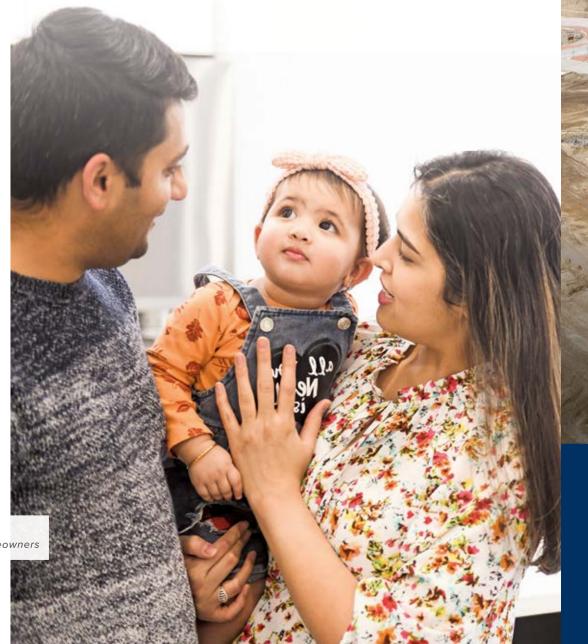
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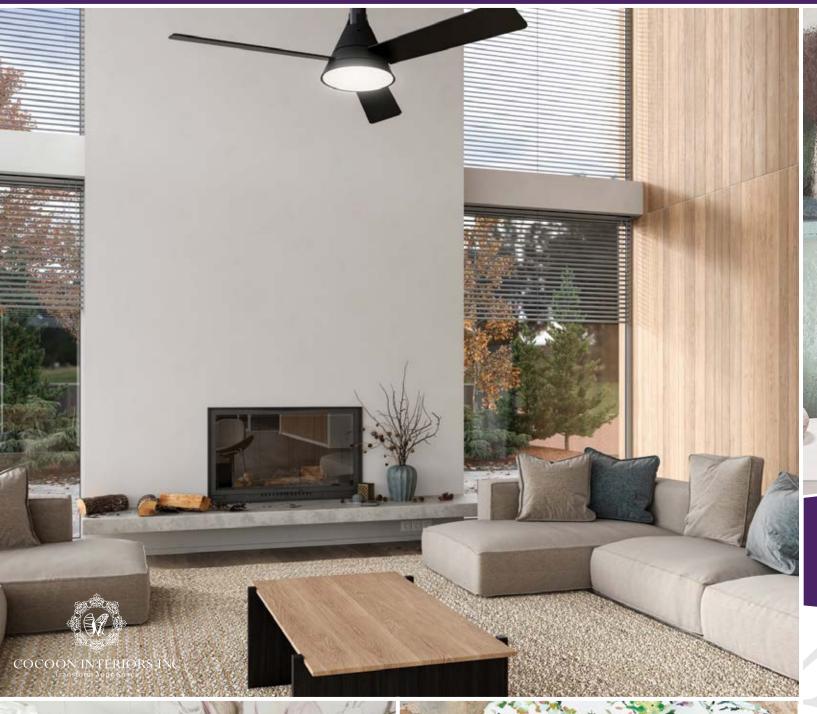
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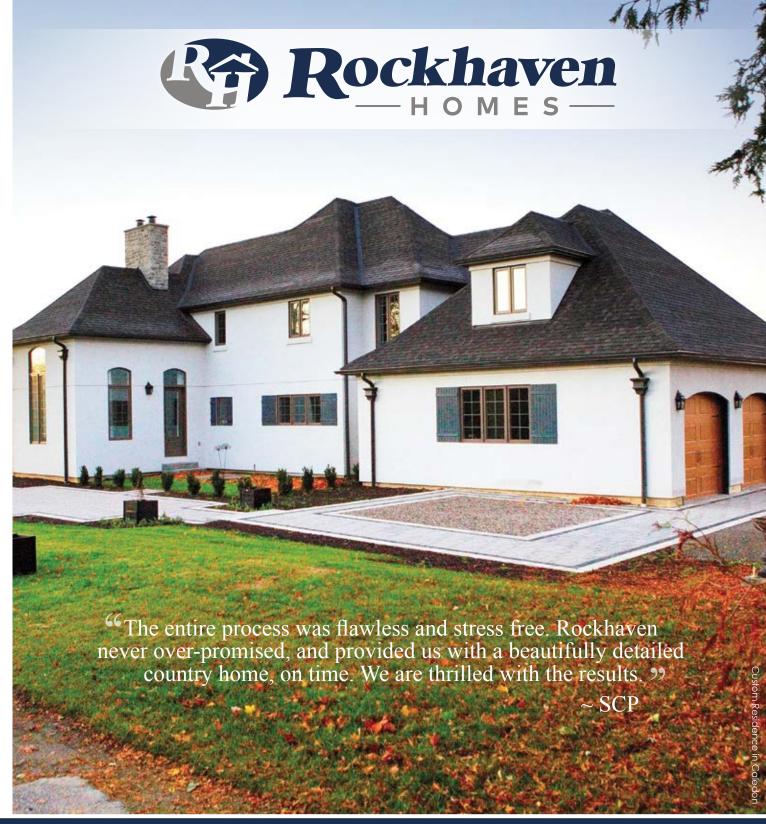
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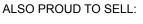
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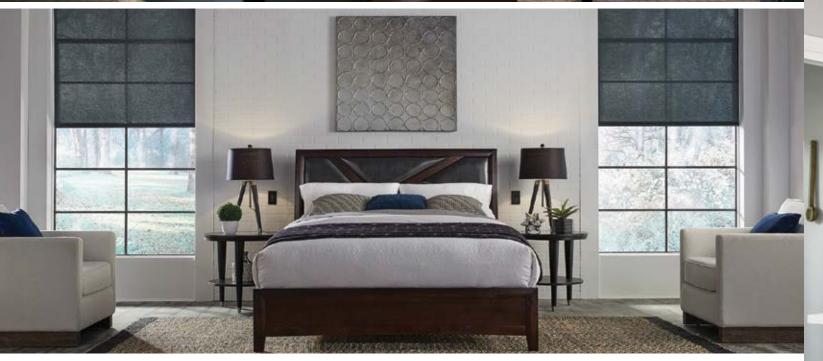






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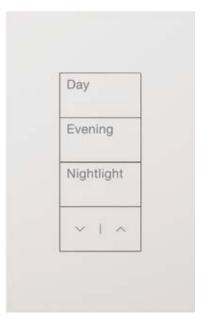


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#### 172 Queen St. W, Mount Forest

Pride in ownership is written all over this stunning Ontario-style cottage. Fenced side yard and updates throughout! New steel roof, new electrical in the garage, updated kitchen and bathroom, a new water shut-off at the front of the house, and a new 8x12 shed in the backyard. This home is a true gem and a

\$598,000



#### 148 Regent St. S, Paisley

Open-concept home on a double lot close to schools and shopping. Beautiful kitchen with tons of counter space and storage. Open dining area with tons of natural light. 3 bedroom, 2 baths. Master with ensuite and walk-in closet. In-floor heating. 3-car insulated garage, water softener, 2 garden sheds and perennial Hower beds with fruit trees.

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#### 83399 Southgate Rd. 8, Southgate

Minutes from Mount Forest this immaculately maintained, classic Ontario 3-bedroom farmhouse is nestled on a 1.23-acre lot, offering plenty of room for a growing family, as well as space to build a multipurpose outbuilding. Propane fireplace. Central air conditioning. Attached garage.

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#### 386 Sligo Rd. E, Mount Forest

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#### 935 20th St. E. Owen Sound

This quaint 3 bed, 1 bath home is perfect for firsttime home buyers or retirees looking to make the space their own! The home has been well maintained with new windows (excluding the basement and bathroom windows), a new roof in 2020 and a new gas fireplace in the family room installed in 2018.

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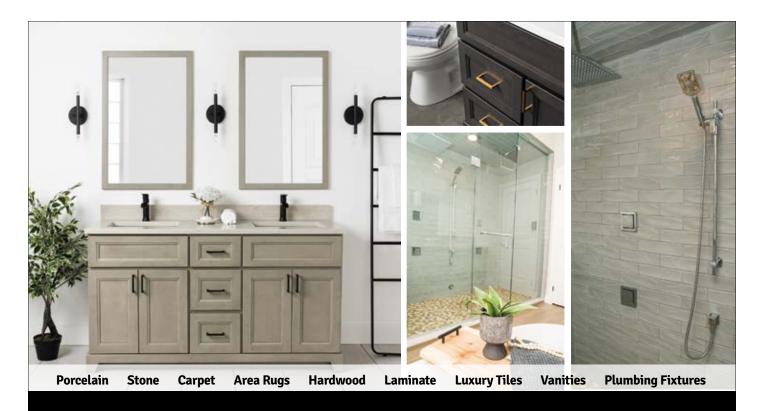
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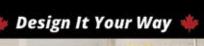


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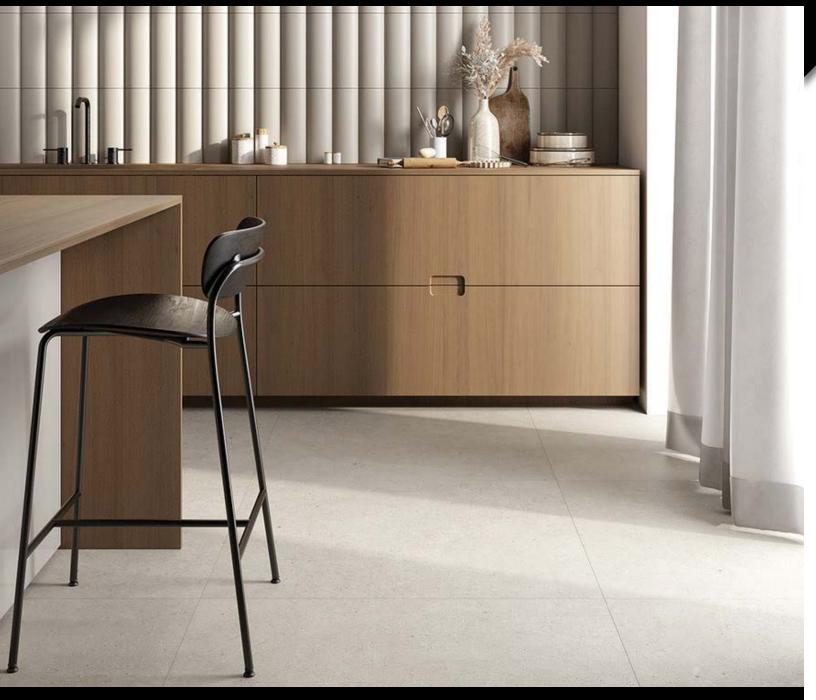
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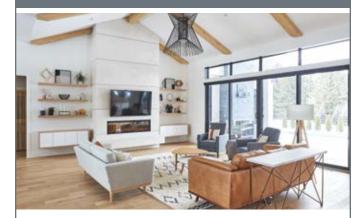
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#### editor's note



#### Summer at last!

In this Waterloo-Wellington edition of OUR HOMES, we are lucky to offer you a peek into many gorgeous homes across the region to showcase the result of a reno or new build and share with you a bit about the process of getting there. Many of the homes we feature are created by talented and creative local builders who work so hard to bring homeowners' amazing dreams to life.

In this issue, however, we also have a rare occurrence: we feature the personal homes of two local builders, allowing a glimpse into the spaces the builders chose to create for themselves.

James Savoie, owner of Frontiers Design Build Inc. with partners Doug Taylor and Adam Taylor, welcomes us into the Arkell Village home he created with his wife Katherine (page 112). The couple transformed a rundown century home into a fresh, modern highperformance home packed with style.

On page 76, we tour the beyond-charming bunkie Tara Schuett and Bill Van De Ven, owners of Xanadu Homes, created to live in while they build the main home on their property in West Montrose. Packed with high-end details and creative structural choices, this compact space sets the stylish tone for the larger build to come.

It is extra exciting to include homes like these because it's like getting the inside scoop or a cheat sheet. These builders have their ears to the ground for the highest quality materials and trends, and we can learn from their structural choices, materials they use and even colours they include in their own homes. They also experiment with new ideas in their own homes so they can bring them to their clients with confidence. Lucky us!

Please enjoy our summer issue and have a lovely summer season!

Janet White Bardwell, Managing Editor janet.whitebardwell@ourhomes.ca

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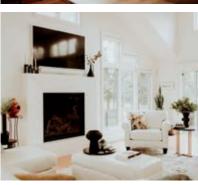
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#### ON THE COVER

The owners of Xanadu Homes have created a chic bunkie that packs a ton of style into a small a space. Story, page 76. Photography by Jason Hartog.





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#### seeking shade



## Seeking

Designer Tamarisk McNalty Stephens shares her ideas

THE ARRIVAL OF SUMMER IN ONTARIO BRINGS A COLLECTIVE DESIRE TO EXTEND OUR LIVING QUARTERS OUTDOORS. AFTER MONTHS OF COLD, SNOWY AND GREY WEATHER, WE DON'T WANT TO START COMPLAINING ABOUT THE HEAT! HERE ARE SOME SOLUTIONS — AT VARIOUS PRICE POINTS AND LEVELS OF PERMANENCY — THAT OFFER A REPRIEVE FROM THE HOT SUMMER SUN SO YOU CAN BE MORE COMFORTABLE ENJOYING LIFE OUTDOORS.

#### Hats

A good old-fashioned, wide-brimmed hat will provide instant shade from the sun. Choose an option that is lightweight and breathable (such as cotton or straw). A four-inch brim generally provides the protection you need on your face, ears and neck.

#### Umbrellas

An umbrella is an economical solution that can provide shelter from the glaring summer sun – and it can be moved to where you need it around your property. Umbrellas can tilt as the sun shifts during the day and raised or lowered depending upon the strength/heat of the sun. You need a sturdy base and remember to take it down during high winds! Choose high-quality fabrics that are colourfast and provide UV protection.

#### Shade Sails

Shade sails offer protection from the sun (and light rain/drizzle) and are more affordable than a more permanent roofed structure. However,



you need to ensure appropriate supports as shade sails are aptly named and can catch the wind. Available in a wide array of colours and different shapes, they are a great way to provide UV protection for children's play spaces in open areas.

#### Retractable Awnings

Retractable awnings can be secured to your home or building. The benefits are that you



retract an awning when you want the sun (perhaps spring and fall or early morning/ evening in the summer) and extend it during the hottest times of the day when protection from the sun is most desirable

#### Pergolas

Pergolas are identifiable structures with columns that support cross beams and open rafters (no solid roof). Pergolas diffuse the harshness of direct sunlight but do not protect from rain. They allow the breeze to circulate freely. They can be freestanding or attached to your home and can be designed to be contemporary or traditional, depending upon your design aesthetic. Pergolas can also offer a structure to support climbing vines and blooms, providing visual interest and additional shade. Consult a landscape professional when considering which plants will thrive in your zone (as well as the soil, exposure to wind and sun, drainage, maintenance, the possibility of invasiveness, etc.). There are also retractable canopies and canvas shades that can be incorporated into pergola designs.



#### Gazebos

Gazebos are roofed structures often constructed in a hexagonal or octagonal shape and open on all sides (although sometimes screened in) and traditionally have a railing between the posts. They often act as ornamental structures to complement gardens, courtyards, parks, etc. They can enhance the aesthetic value of your property.

#### Covered Porch

Attached to a dwelling or building, a covered porch is a permanent structure that offers protection from the sun and rain. As a porch generally has a wood or concrete floor, it is easy to clean and provides a sturdy base for outdoor furniture. A covered porch is also a natural extension of your home in the warmer months while being accessible to the amenities, such as the kitchen and bathroom, when entertaining. Although a larger investment than some other options, you will probably recuperate the cost as a covered porch is a desirable feature for prospective homebuyers as it adds a particular charm and can increase curb appeal. OH





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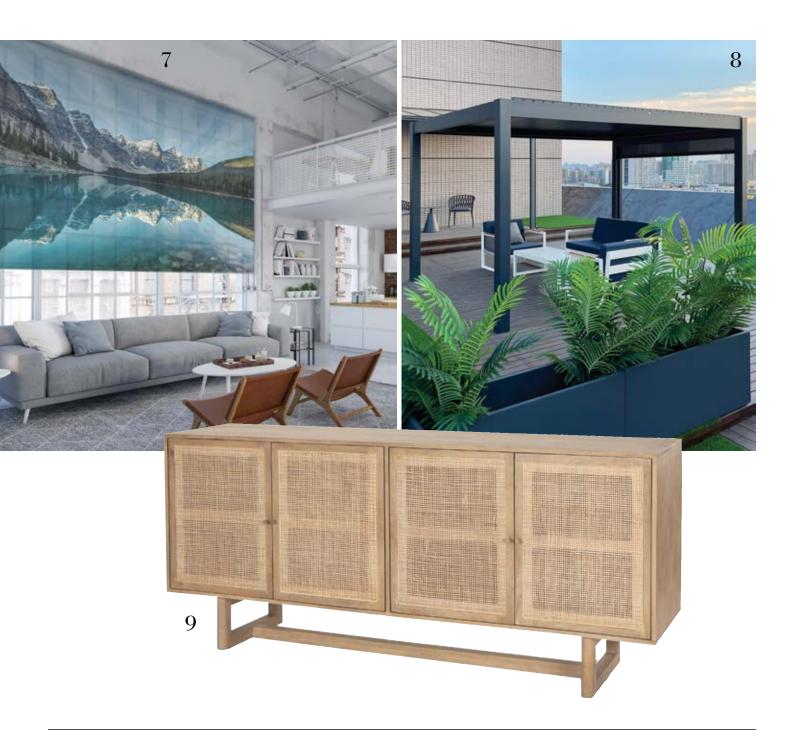






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#### style picks





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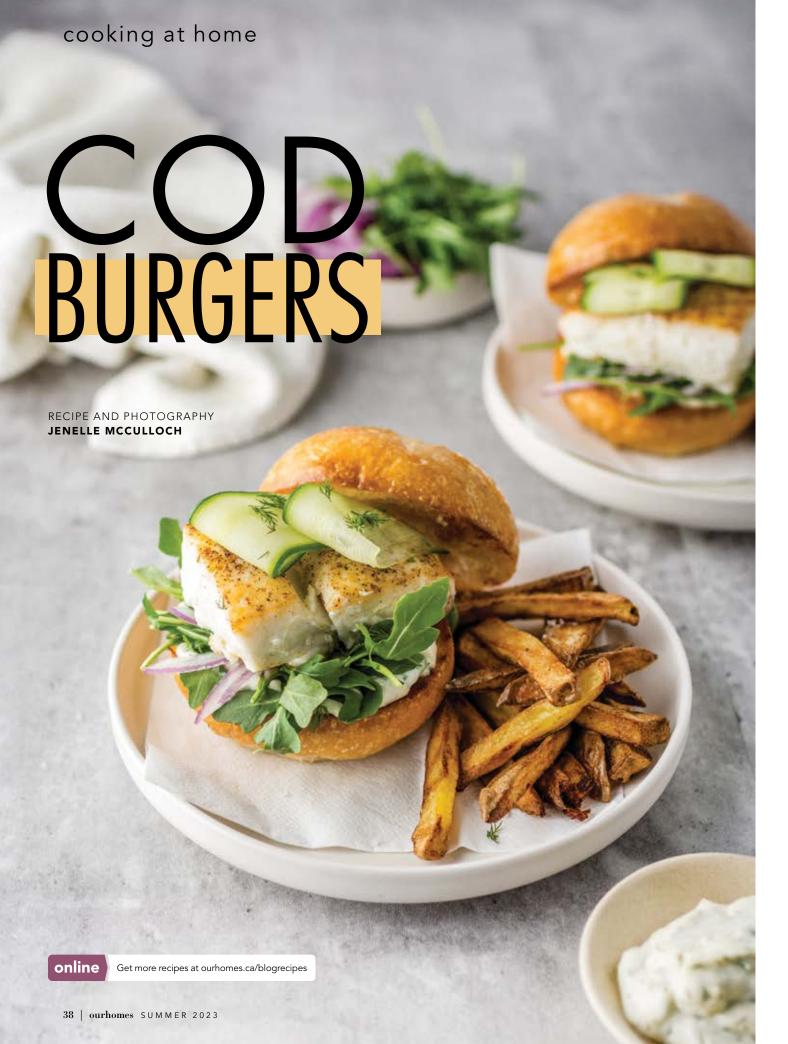
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1 tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

1 clove garlic

Fresh dill

1 cucumber, sliced

#### HERBED DRESSING

4 Tbsp mayonnaise

2 Tbsp yogurt

Fresh dill

1 clove garlic, smashed

#### INSTRUCTIONS

#### **QUICK PICKLES**

In a small saucepan over mediumhigh heat, add vinegar, sugar, salt and garlic.

Cook until liquid begins to simmer and sugar dissolves.

Add dill and sliced cucumbers to a heat-proof bowl.

Pour simmering liquid over the cucumbers and stir to evenly coat.

Allow to cool at room temperature or chill before serving.

#### **HERBED** DRESSING

In a small bowl combine mayonnaise, yogurt, dill and garlic. Mix together.

#### COD & ASSEMBLY

Set aside quick pickles and herbed dressing until ready to assemble cod burgers.

Season cod fillets with salt and fresh pepper.

In a pan over medium-high heat, sear cod fillets until cooked through.

Remove from pan once cooked and place the hamburger buns in the pan to toast.

To assemble, layer the herbed dressing, fresh arugula, fresh red onion, seared cod and top with pickles. OH



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## in Style STORY FRANKIE CASTRO PHOTOGRAPHY

**VALERIE WILCOX** 

You probably spend more time in your laundry room than you'd like. What if you actually wanted to spend time there? A space that's well-equipped and aesthetically pleasing can make laundry feel less like a chore. Finding that balance can be challenging, especially when considering a household's diverse needs. These are the top five laundry room essentials.

#### Location, Location, Location!

Laundry rooms were historically unsightly, utilitarian rooms, usually tucked away deep in the basement where the machines could whirr, hum and buzz all day or night. This placement had its practical purpose, shielding living areas from noise and potential water leaks. But thanks to advances in machine technology and aesthetic design, many modern homes are now putting the laundry room in more convenient locations, near upper-level bedrooms, or adjacent to the kitchen or entryway mudrooms.



#### Storage Space

Smart storage is essential to an effective, efficient laundry room design. Customizing under-counter cabinets and uppers are a great option to maximize every inch of space. And while having everything behind closed doors leaves the space neat and tidy, it lacks visual interest. Consider incorporating a combination of open and closed shelving, which allows you to have a few frequently used items on hand and some decorative pieces on display. Ultimately, your storage system should match your needs and personality. If you're naturally messy, closed storage may be better suited to you. If you are neat and highly visual, you may benefit more from open shelving.

**FUNCTIONAL ESSENTIALS: Bonus** elements within the cabinetry design include an ironing board, a shelf for storing baskets and everyday cleaning products, and rods mounted high enough to hang shirts and longer items like dresses. Don't forget to factor electrical outlets and adequate lighting into your design plan.

Continued on page 42







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#### design ideas

#### Counter Space

As a designer, I love a long spacious countertop like the butcher block countertop we used in this design pictured below. As a doer of laundry, I can also attest that ample counter space is great for folding, ironing and organizing, too.

**SPACE-SAVERS:** If your laundry room is tight, there are many alternatives to a traditional countertop that can do the trick. Fold-down counters or tables on casters can create more space and can be moved in and out of the way when not in use. A retracting shelf or rack is another great addition to compact spaces. Installed beside the washer and dryer, or tucked between a stacked washer/dryer unit, this pull-out surface is a convenient and unobtrusive place to rest your laundry basket as you load and unload your machines.





#### Large Laundry Tub

While still available on the market, the oversize utility sink has gone by the wayside, making way for more modern options in various materials that match durability with style. For example, look for under-counter mounted sinks in stainless steel or acrylic porcelain or other hardwearing materials that are made to last. Regardless of the specifics, make sure the sink is large and deep enough to handwash your delicates, soak your dirty shoes or give Fido a good scrub.



#### Some Style!

A laundry room is a great place to try out the latest design trends you've been coveting. Since this is typically a smaller room that isn't open to the living areas, it's a great place to be bold and introduce some colour. Try a patterned wallpaper or tile, or test out a trending hardware style, such as matte black or one of the brightly texturized, coloured hardware options.

Ultimately, it's important to take stock of what you're trying to achieve in your laundry room and ensure that you have a solution to simplify each task. And don't forget to have a little fun with it. Separating the whites from the darks is boring enough without a dull beige wall staring at you! он

Award-winning kitchen and bath designer Frankie Castro is the Creative Director and founder of Square Footage Custom Kitchens & Bath Inc.



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#### **ROSE SIMPLE SYRUP**

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup water

4 to 6 dried roses

Mix together granulated sugar, water and dried roses.

Bring to boil and simmer for five minutes.

Remove from heat, strain and let cool.

#### **COCKTAIL**

½ - 1 oz. rose simple syrup

1 oz. elderflower liquor

4 oz. dry rosé wine 2 oz. sparkling water

Fill a wine glass with ice.

Mix together rose simple syrup (adjust sweetness to taste), elderflower liquor and rosé wine.

Top with sparkling water and stir. on









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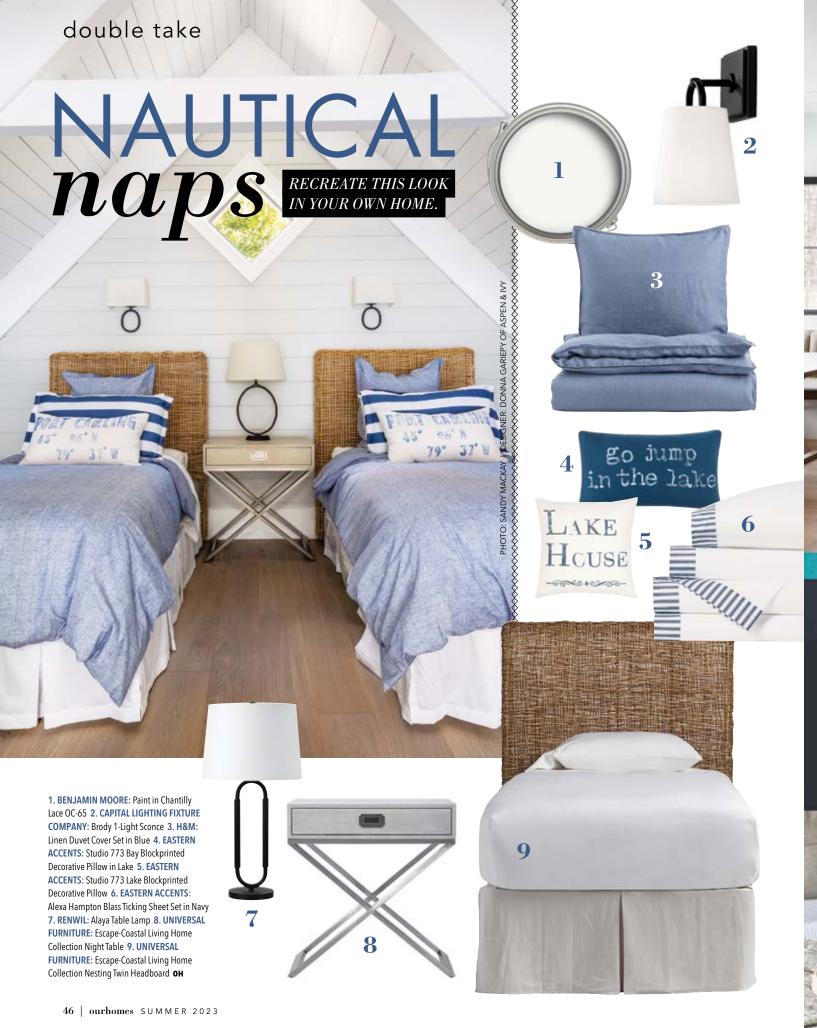
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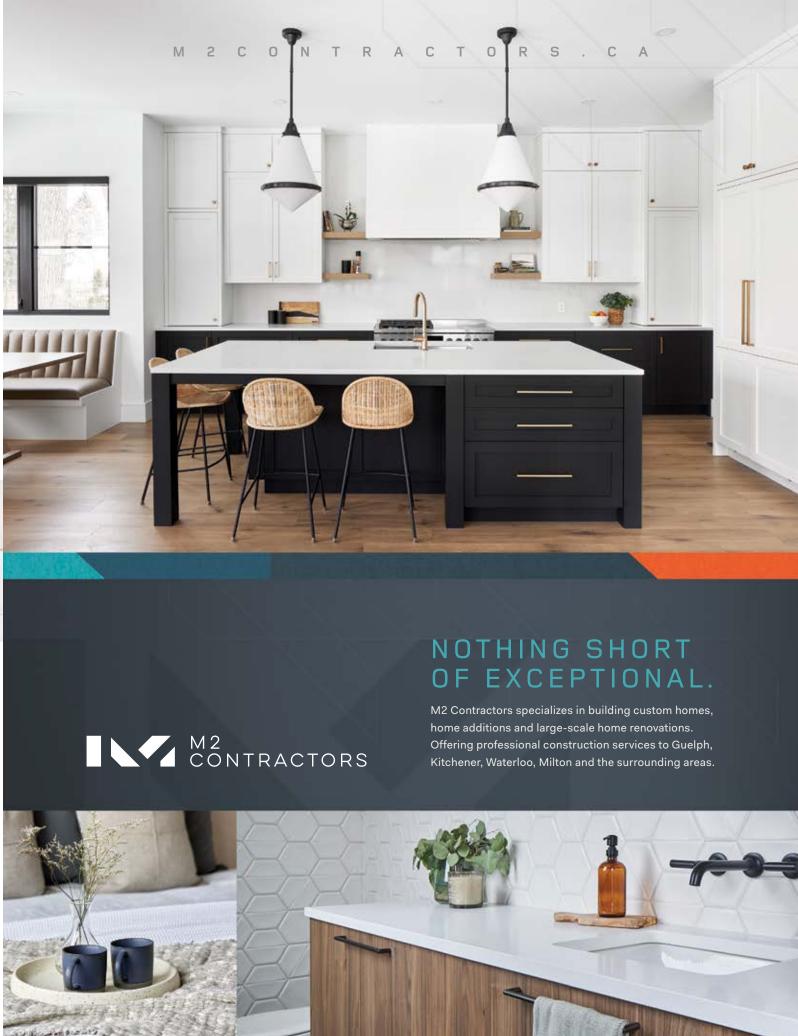
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STORY JANET WHITE BARDWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG

WHEN TASKED IN EARLY 2021 WITH THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING A 3,000 SQ. FT. FOUR-BEDROOM CUSTOM HOME FOR A YOUNG FAMILY ON A RAW PIECE OF LAND IN EAST GARAFRAXA, MATT JESSUP AND MATT JENKINS, OWNERS OF M2 CONTRACTORS, KNEW THEY WERE FACING SOME OBSTACLES. Continued on page 50







Firstly, the pandemic meant supply chain issues were at their worst, which put every aspect of the project at risk. Secondly, the build was on an undeveloped piece of land that did not even have a registered driveway, so a multitude of additional permits would be required for everything from a road entrance to all the formalities required to bring utilities in.

To help successfully make the project happen, M2 enlisted a group of talented and knowledgeable professionals. **Groen Design & Drafting Services** was brought onboard to create the residential drawings. **Thirteen Design Studio** (formerly known as Studio Kin) was secured to provide full-service design and decorating. And **Paragon Kitchens** was enlisted to supply and install all the custom cabinetry, vanities and built-ins.

The build began in
September 2021. Material
shortages and long lead times
forced the team to get creative
with selections and find
alternatives that still worked
with the overall design vision
and timeline, but they made it
work. "We were hit hard with
all the material delays, windows,
siding, engineered lumber
etc., but despite the delays we
were still able to get the house
completed in a timely manner,"
says Matt Jessup. Continued on page 53

**LEFT:** Wood, stone and muted tones create the warm and inviting style that flows throughout the home. Luminous tile adds just enough glow to add a sparkle to the overall aesthetic. Understated accessories continue the casual, comfortable style.

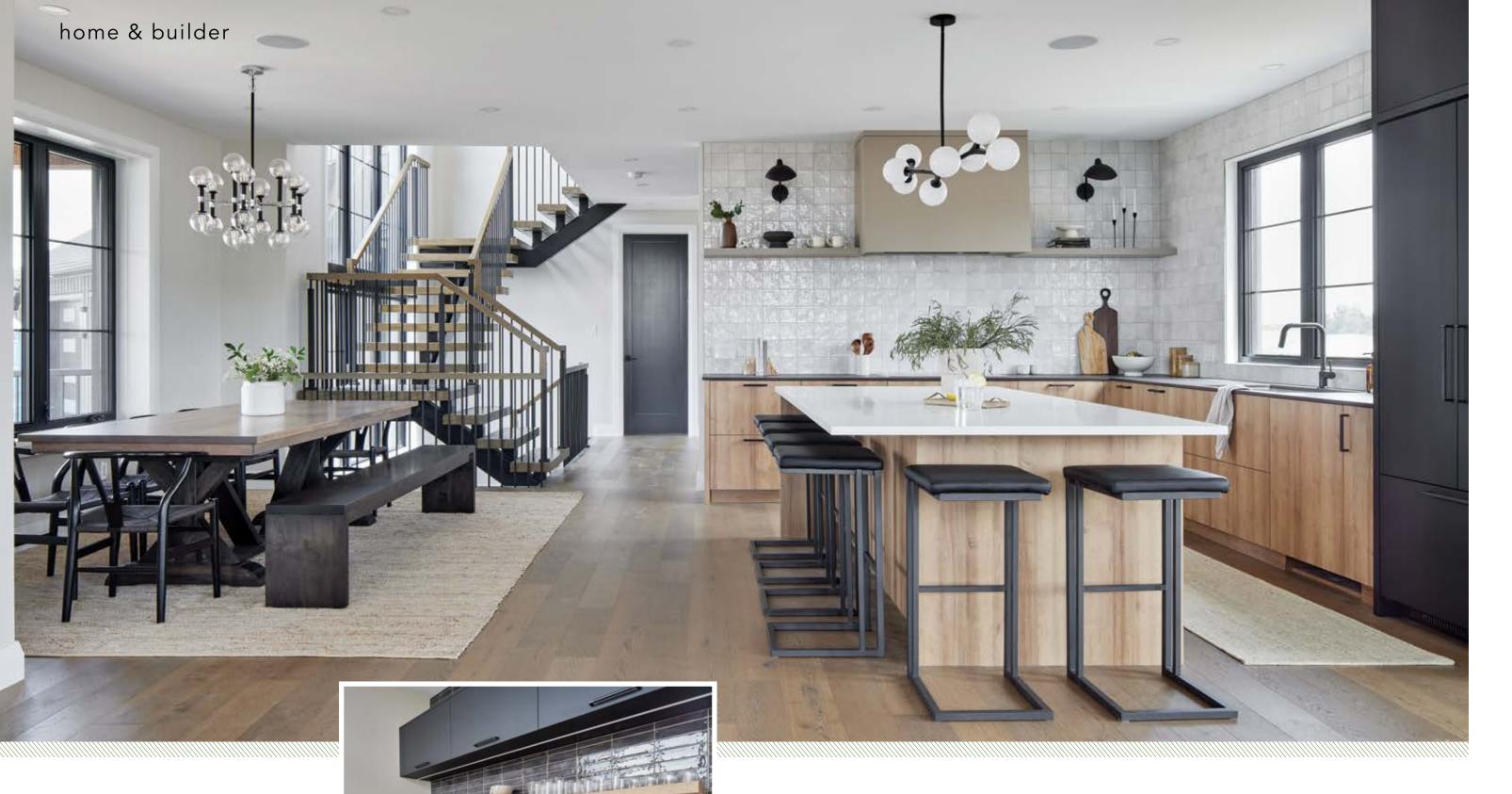


LEFT: Simple, natural cooking supplies and wood cutting boards look fresh and pop against a black stone countertop.

FAR LEFT: Built-in appliances from Goemans Appliances keep the lines in the kitchen clean and understated. Plumbing by Jaytech Plumbing Ltd. BELOW: Blackframed windows by KV Custom Windows and Doors add a modern appeal.



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**ABOVE:** A custom steel mono-stringer stairway by Stairhaus Inc. Electrical by TMM Electric. Trim, mouldings and specialty doors by Brenlo Custom Wood Mouldings & Doors add presence and dramatic effect. **RIGHT:** A hidden space next to the kitchen provides a bar and food prep area. "A personal favourite is the peek-a-boo bar that's tucked away next to the kitchen," says Ashley. "The home really is an entertainer's dream."

Kelsea Kenny, co-founder and design lead at Thirteen Design Studio, describes the home's interior style as "organic modern with hints of rustic elements," and says the build process was a pleasure. "We really enjoyed working with the team at M2 and Paragon. Our personalities meshed really well and we were able to create something stunning together," she says. "In our industry, it's very important to work alongside people you trust and have good rapport with. We found this to be true with this project."

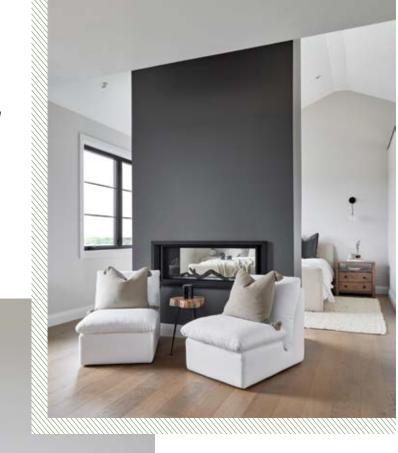
And the proof is in the results. The main level is open and light-filled

with vaulted ceilings, striking architectural windows by **KV Custom Windows & Doors**, a bold statement chandelier and a spectacular floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace surround, which is the builder's favourite part of the home. "I really love the open-concept kitchen, dining and family room with natural stone fireplace surround," says Matt Jessup, who describes the style of the build as modern farmhouse. White oak engineered hardwood flooring from **The Carpet Store Guelph** creates a warm base, and **Benjamin Moore** Classic Gray is used throughout, allowing the home's natural tones and textures to take centre stage.

ntinued on page 54

~ Ashley Saywell

"THE COHESIVE DESIGN AND FINISHES FLOW THROUGHOUT THE HOME, AND THE COLLABORATION OF A FULL DESIGN-AND-BUILD TEAM IS EVIDENT."





"The finished home is a gorgeous open-concept space that feels warm, inviting and timeless," says **Ashley** Saywell, senior designer at Paragon Kitchens. "The cohesive design and finishes flow throughout the home, and the collaboration of a full design-and-build team is evident."

Kelsea says the space maintains a clean and modern aesthetic but includes soft furnishings and accessories that warm it up and give it the serene country feel the team was striving for. "We feel it really reflects the homeowners' lifestyle and personality, all while incorporating some interesting elements that pushed them out of their comfort zone," she says.

Continued on page 56







**OPPOSITE TOP:** Upstairs, the primary suite is open concept and features a stunning fireplace feature wall that divides the bed area from a sitting area, creating connection and flow. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** One of the home's four bedrooms features natural materials, muted tones and simple lighting, which exemplify the organic modern farmhouse style.

**TOP:** The primary bedroom's sitting area is simple and calming. Black doors continue the dramatic appeal. LEFT: The primary en suite is open concept with clean lines and a minimalist style. ABOVE: A combined bath and shower room is open and functional with large black tiling on the walls, continuing a dramatic yet understated theme.





Leading to the second floor, a custom steel mono-stringer stairway by **Stairhaus Inc.** is both beautiful and functional and complements the home's modern aesthetic. Upstairs, the primary suite presented one of the biggest design challenges of the build. "The architectural interest of the house included symmetry of exterior windows and an angled floor plan from the left centre of the home to the garage," says Ashley. "This presented a challenge to best utilize the primary bedroom square footage, while creating the oasis the client wished for. We rearranged the footprint to include a suspended fireplace that acts not only as a stunning focal point, but a partition between the bed and a private lounge area."

The primary en suite is open concept with an oversize tub and shower wet room with views to the expansive backyard. Three additional bedrooms follow a similar organic neutral style that feels simultaneously luxurious yet practical. Continued on page 58

**ABOVE:** Black-and-white photographs create a gallery feel, while black doors surrounded by white trim complemented by textured natural baskets and warm wide-planked wood floor continue the organic modern farmhouse theme. TOP LEFT: An understated laundry area is functional and pristine. LEFT: A cream-andwhite bathroom is accented with matte-black taps and matte-gold fixtures.







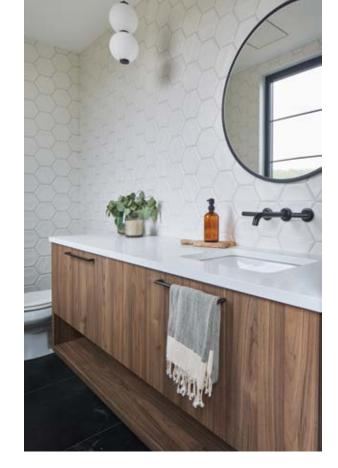


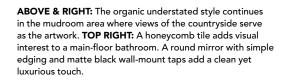


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In May 2022, the family moved into their new space. Kelsea says the working relationship with the homeowners strengthened the result. "They were extremely open and willing to trust us with the full design of the build," she says. "They gave us ideas at the beginning and let us project manage and facilitate the design from beginning to end. Having this much creative freedom isn't typical, so it was a neat opportunity for our team to tap into our design skill-set and push boundaries." **OH** 





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Holtby, a younger millennial who grew up on a small island and now lives in the city.

Meadow knows that a small change to weekend errands will only have a minor effect on her overall carbon footprint. However, this strategy helps her feel more in control.

For Meadow – and for many millennials – depressing headlines and discouraging politics do not offer enough reassurance to feel super hopeful about the planet's future. As the parent of a young child, Meadow finds that a single personal commitment provides the psychological stability and integrity to move forward. Continued on page 62

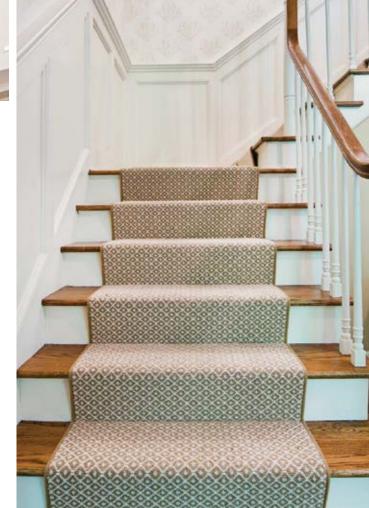
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meaningful pathway to sustainability.
"I group my errands together so I can drive less," says Meadow

Natalie DeYoung Ricci, 40, is a busy millennial mother of two. Her

"The kitchen is more accessible than other areas where changes

might be more expensive and out of reach, like vehicles or clothing,"

For other millennials, activities outside the house are a more

Natalie explains. She uses washable silicone bags in her kids' lunches

fierce determination to resist the fast-paced disposable culture of single-use plastics led her to a surprising destination: her own kitchen.

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and cloth bowl covers for baking.

#### green living

Does the prospect of switching to a green lifestyle sound complicated? You might be shocked to discover how simple sustainability can be.

Anna Culver, now 34, was in her late 20s and in between jobs when she started to seriously prioritize green living. Anna refills her soap, lotion and household products at zero-waste stores like Keep Refillery (locations in Toronto, Kingston, Creemore and Meaford). Reducing the clutter and waste of disposable products is not only good for the planet but it "greatly simplifies my life," she says.

The pessimists among you may be thinking, 'Sure, these changes are nice to read about but they won't actually change anything.' But millennials have actually hit upon a powerful insight.

Green living is not about changing the

world, it's about changing yourself.

Yes, we need systemic change. Yes, we must advocate for better policies and invest in climate-friendly infrastructure. But, what do we do in the interim?

Millennials do not have David Suzuki's hope, nor do they have Greta Thunberg's rage. However, this generation is doing something far more radical than hoping or raging: they're taking action.

"I know that my little contribution isn't the same as large-scale, systemic change," says Natalie, "but it helps me psychologically to have some agency so I don't feel hopeless."

Quietly and conscientiously, millennials are driving the green revolution by aligning their personal habits with sustainable lifestyle choices. Millennials are showing us that we can live like there's hope for the future.

#### Sustainable options for the kitchen







#### MILLENNIAL PLAYBOOK FOR **GREEN LIVING**

Identify one area of your life that creates a lot of mental anxiety for you around climate change. Example: "I feel incredibly guilty about takeout containers. I just don't have the time to wash them or cook a meal at home right now."

Figure out how your current habit is meeting some of your nonsustainability values. Example: "I love being able to spend more time with my kids instead of cooking or cleaning. I want to feed my family a balanced meal even if I'm really busy."

Brainstorm creative ways you could live your other values while making a slight improvement on sustainability. Example: Set up a meal swap with a friend. Sign up for a meal kit subscription and cook as a family. Pay your kid to wash the takeout containers. Research local restaurants to find out who offers sustainable packaging.

Commit to one small change that balances your personal values with environmental impact. Example: "I value convenience and time with my family, so takeout is still the right option for me right now. But because I value sustainability, I will make a list and try to only order from local restaurants that use compostable and recyclable packaging for takeout containers."

Nurture your new green living habit until you start to notice a difference in your mental health.

Repeat again, aligning another area of climate anxiety with your values by changing a small personal habit. он



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## How to STOCK YOUR PANTRY for a PLANT-BASED DIET



STORY BAILEY FRANKLYN

Whether you've recently adopted a plant-based diet, or want to eat less meat, a well-stocked pantry is the key to success. A plant-based pantry is similar to a regular pantry, with a few main differences, namely proteins and some baking ingredients.

If you want to start eating a plant-based diet, as a plant-based Registered Dietitian, I recommend stocking these 10 pantry and fridge staples.

#### **BEANS & LEGUMES**

Think black beans, brown or red lentils, cannellini beans, chickpeas and kidney beans. A great source of protein and fibre, beans and legumes can be found canned or dried. Both are equally nutritious, but if you're using dried, they require some planning as they have to be soaked and

cooked before use.



#### **HEMP HEARTS**

Hulled hemp seeds have a mild, nutty flavour and can be added to anything from salads to oatmeal to boost the protein content.



#### **NUTS & SEEDS**

Common staples in most
pantries, however, their uses
are more versatile in plantbased cooking. After soaking,
they can be blended to add
creaminess and texture to
dressings and sauces, while
boosting the protein and
healthy fat content.



## TVP (TEXTURED VEGETABLE PROTEIN)

A soy-based meat alternative. Great for replacing meat in chilis, tacos or pasta sauce.



#### **CHIA SEEDS**

Available whole or ground and a great source of fibre and Omega 3 fatty acids. Can be used to make a "chia seed egg" to replace eggs in baking. Once opened, store in the fridge.



#### **FLAXSEED**

High in fibre and Omega 3s, it can be added to almost anything. Choose milled/ground flaxseed, as it's more versatile and nutritious than whole flaxseed. Commonly used to make a "flax egg," which can also replace eggs in baked goods.





#### **NUTRITIONAL YEAST**

Lovingly referred to as "nooch"
by plant-based eaters, it's an
inactive form of yeast with a
cheesy flavour profile, and
packs a nutrient punch. High in
protein and B vitamins, sprinkle
it on pasta or make a vegan mac
and "cheese" sauce. Store in a cool
dark place or in your fridge.



#### VEGETABLE BROTH

Easily replaces animal-based broths, and is used the same way. If you open a container and don't use it all, freeze in ice cube trays for later use.

You can get most of these items at Bulk Barn, Costco or your local grocery store. No need for specialty stores.

A pantry takes time to stock, don't feel like you have to buy everything at once. Grab a few items every time you shop, and you'll have a well stocked plant-based pantry in no time. **OH** 

Bailey Franklyn is a registered dietitian and lives in Meaford

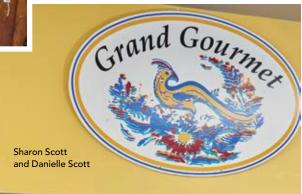
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#### spotlight









## Charmingly GOURMET

#### THE SHOP

Set on iconic Mill Street in the heart of Elora, **Grand Gourmet** is a feast for the eyes, filled with every kitchen gadget and culinary extra to give your kitchen a warm and delicious vibe. The shop was established in 1994 as an antique and kitchenware shop in the Elora Mews under its original name, Cobwebs. In 1998 owner Sharon Scott relocated the shop just down the road to Mill Street and changed its name to reflect its kitchenware-only focus. Sharon's long-time friend and co-worker Barb Walkey has been part of the development of Grand Gourmet for the past 29 years.





Over the years, Sharon says she has fine-tuned the shop's product lines to find what works for her loyal customer base and bustling tourist crowds. "After much trial and error over the years, we have learned that customers want function, price and quality," she says. "People crave simple and easy-to-use kitchen tools at a fair and affordable price with lasting quality." In addition to a large variety of kitchen tools, Grand Gourmet is well-known for its beautiful kitchen linens from trusted names such as April Cornell, Danica and a large selection of colourful stain-resistant tablecloths, which are the shop's bestsellers. "We are happy to say Grand Gourmet is a destination shop and we give thanks to our valued local customers who are so faithful in supporting us and other small businesses in the community," says Sharon.







What's trending at the shop? "Bowls, bowls, bowls!" says Sharon. "Almost everyone who enters our store buys a bowl, whether it's dipping bowls or Buddha bowls for one-dish, healthy portion-controlled

comfort meals. Many families have evolved from more formal plate settings to bowls and spoons," says Sharon, adding the shop's large selection of colourful patterned aprons continues to be popular and offers options for all ages and sizes. "We are always busy, and stock does not last long, so keep checking back for new products and options!" OH

#### Get in Touch

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#### BIRDS BEHAVING CUTELY

Bird behaviour has always been a favourite part of birdwatching for me. Courtship displays, foraging techniques, a territory being vigorously defended by a feisty wee ball of feathers, and a wide range of other avian action adds interest to your observations and provides insight into the secret life of birds.

Behaviour watching can also provide some of the most rewarding sightings and photo ops. Picture this: A mother duck swims into view. Following close behind are a string of downy ducklings. Your interest level rises; baby birds are always appealing. Click, click, you get a picture with your camera – or in your mind's eye. You're about to carry on with your birding day when you notice the row of ducklings is shorter. Where did the others go? Then you see them. A few have scrambled up onto the mother's back! The cuteness scale just shot up! Witnessing a moment such as this is one of the highlights of the summer nesting season.

#### ALTRICIAL OR PRECOCIAL

Summertime is a busy time for birds. Songbirds have nests full of baby birds that hatch out featherless, helpless and completely incapable of surviving on their own. These nestlings are classified as altricial young, meaning they require much feeding and nurturing to maturity. They are also, let's face it, not cute, with their naked featherless bodies, their big bulging eyes and their oversize gapey beaks.

But not all young birds hatch out that way. Some species crack out of the egg ready to hit the ground running, or swimming. They are the epitome of cuteness with their fluffy feathers and the way they can motor about and feed themselves. These species include the waterfowl family, which are in the precocial class of birds. Precocial comes from the Latin word for precocious and is an apt term for a chick who can swim circles around its parents and practically fend for itself from day one. However independent, these wee birds still require some level of parental protection and guidance to learn strategies for staying warm and conserving their limited energy supplies as they make their way in their big watery world.

#### PIGGYBACK RIDES

The poster bird for cottage country, and everyone's favourite, the Common Loon, is beloved for its iconic wails, yodels and tremolo calls throughout the summer. But equally endearing is its habit of carrying the young on their backs for the first few weeks of their little lives. The young loonlets instinctively know they will be safe and warm when up on their piggyback perch. Adult loons are strong, fast paddlers; baby loons not so much yet, so they climb up and snuggle down when they tire or when they catch a chill from paddling about in the cold waters of their natal lake.



#### PREDATOR PROOF

Another bonus of catching a ride is the protection it provides from underwater predators. Adult birds can move their young away from danger very quickly by carrying them on their backs. A loonlet's little legs just can't paddle fast enough. And by remaining in the water, the chicks' feet are dangling down rather enticingly in front of a lurking fish, snapping turtle or even a mink. Better to jump on the fast-moving mama's back and get outta there in a hurry!





#### GETTING YOUR DUCK(LINGS) IN A ROW

Hitching a ride isn't the only energy-saving strategy in the baby duck repertoire. They soon learn that swimming all in a row behind their mama is easier than swimming in a bunch behind her. There's physics at work here. The V-shaped wake the mother duck makes as she swims along forms a tiny wave the ducklings can surf down the sides and into the trough below. This wave energy gives them a wee push forward and the ability to keep up with their fast-moving mother. Each duckling down the line seems to know where to precisely position itself to get the benefit of the next ripple in the wake. That's why the ducklings are so evenly spaced out in their row and this perfect symmetry makes for such an appealing scene.

#### SNUGGLE DOWN

Even fully-feathered precocial baby birds aren't totally able to regulate their body temperature at first. For the first few days after hatching from their warmly incubated egg, the chicks of some species will simply scramble onto the patient parent's back and snuggle down into its thicker, warmer feathers. They'll even do this on the nest, perhaps getting ready for the parent's launch into the lake. This back-brooding is common with the Pied-billed Grebe and again provides such appeal to birders' eyes and camera lenses alike.

#### BIG BIRD

Nature is full of surprises. It turns out piggyback rides are not limited to just the waterfowl family. The Sandhill Crane is a big bird; more than one-metre tall, with long legs that raise it over the tall vegetation of its marsh-and-meadow habitat. Their young on the other hand – known as colts – are but centimetres tall at hatching and somewhat unequipped to keep up with their long-legged parents. The short wee colt (so named because of its ability to run around right after hatching like a young member of the horse family) is not averse to taking it easy when it can. So why not hitch a ride and get a bird's-eye view of its domain.



As a bird behaviour buff, I highly recommend an early morning paddle or stroll along the beach, camera or binoculars at the ready, for a chance glimpse into the life of a baby loon, grebe, or merganser, or any other gift nature may present you with. It's time well spent. OH







These are a few plants I like to use in gardens. Some are native and some are not, but all are growing in zones 5 and lower. They are low maintenance, drought tolerant and will resist some of the diseases common with overused plants. Some are good pollinators as well.



Instead of prickly horizontal junipers, try soft-needled Microbiota decussata or Siberian Carpet Cypress. Grows 30 cm tall and 175 cm wide. This evergreen can be grown in dry shade or full sun. The operative word here is dry. A bonus is that their foliage turns a copper penny colour in the late fall and winter.

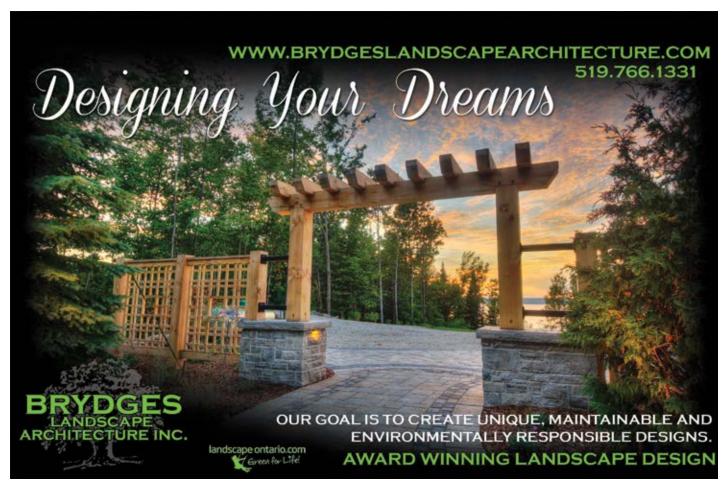


Hypericum kalmianum or Pot O' Gold St. John's Wort can work very well instead of lower growing Spireas. This St. John's Wort has four seasons of interest starting with profuse golden yellow flowers on a two-foot-high shrub with bluish green narrow leaves. Persistent brown seed capsules and exfoliating bark add winter interest.

Hepatcodium miconioides or Seven-Son Flower is a large (four-by-two-metre) uncommon shrub with white blooms later in the season. The highlight of this shrub is the pink to red calyxes left on after the flowers fade. The exfoliating bark is great for winter interest. Use this plant when you need a focal point in your garden.



Amelanchier canadensis or Serviceberry is a well-used native in our landscapes for its beautiful white flowers, edible fruit and great red fall colour. I would use this native large shrub/small tree as a replacement for Burning Bushes (Euonymus alatus) which is now considered an alien invasive as it is a prolific self-seeder. Continued on page 72







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# gardening



Caryopteris x clandonensis or Bluebeard could be used as an alternative to Lavender in the garden when you still want purple flowers, but later in the season. Caryopteris is drought tolerant, a great pollinator and has fragrant foliage. Grows 80-by-80 centimetres.



Clethra alnifolia or Summersweet is a summer fragrant flowering shrub with white or pink bottlebrush type flowers, ranging in height from 100-to-200 centimetres. It attracts the pollinators, too.



Geranium macrorrhizum or Bigroot Geranium and Asarum canadense or Wild Ginger are great ground covers for full-shade areas in the garden. Periwinkle is considered an aggressive alien and should not be planted anymore. Geranium has pink or white flowers with fragrant foliage. Wild Ginger has interesting flowers half hidden under the leaves.



# TIRED OF CEDARS? HERE ARE A COUPLE OF EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVES:

Picea abies 'Cupressina' or Columnar Norway Spruce is a great choice when space is limited. It grows to eight-metres tall and 200-centimetres wide and has dense branching to the ground with dark green, stiff, short needles.

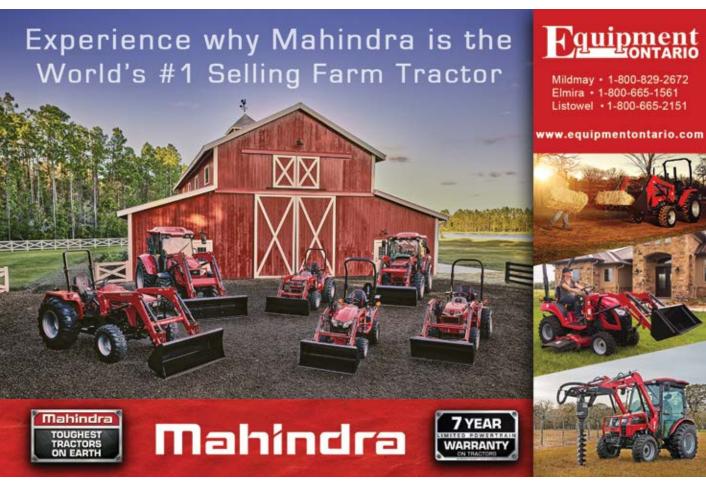
Thuja x 'Green Giant' or Western Cedar (a cross between Thuja plicata and Thuja Standishii). Although this is a cedar, it is not on the menu for deer, which is why I have included it here. It can grow to 13-metres tall and four-metres wide. It can be used for hedges and tolerates trimming too.



By using some of these less common selections, you are supporting sustainable landscaping practices.

The next time you are at the nursery, look for these plants. If they don't have them, ask for them. We need more diversity in our gardens and if we ask the garden centres for these not-so-common plants, we create a demand, and they will start bringing them in. **o**H

Teresa Matamoras has a Bachelor of Science degree, an Ontario Diploma in Horticulture and is an ISA Certified Arborist.













# BUNKIE

STORY JANET WHITE BARDWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG

TUCKED INTO THE EDGE OF TARA
SCHUETT AND BILL VAN DE VEN'S
PEACEFUL WEST MONTROSE PROPERTY
– JUST PAST THE MAIN HOUSE,
LARGE BACKYARD AND POOL – SITS
A COMPACT, OPEN-CONCEPT LOFT
BUNKIE THAT MAY BE SMALL IN SQUARE
FOOTAGE BUT PACKS A STYLE PUNCH.



ABOVE: Natural wood, black steel roof and dramatic architectural lines create a striking silhouette for this compact bunkie.

LEFT: The front part of the rectangular space holds the garage and workshop, while the back portion holds the living area and loft overlooking the rural fields beyond.

Tara and Bill, owners of Elora-based Xanadu Homes Ltd. and Xanadu Fine Cabinetry and Interiors, purchased the main home and property from extended family in 2018 with intentions to renovate or rebuild immediately. The rural property, with views of expansive farm fields and a natural, peaceful vibe holds a personal connection for Tara. "I grew up attending 50-plus family pool parties at this property so it holds great memories," she says. "The previous homeowners were here for almost 80 years and completed numerous renovations along its lifespan so there is real history here." And with the couple's combined expertise in cabinetry, home building, renovation and interior design, they knew they could create something great.

But as years went by, life got busy and home plans were delayed.

With the knowledge that the existing house would not be livable once they began a reno or new build, the couple decided that building a smaller dwelling on the property to act as a home base would be a good start.

The couple worked with **Elevate Home Design** to draw up plans for a loft suite with a bunkie vibe, lots of storage and a garage/workshop. The couple knew they wanted something with a wowfactor. "It needed to be a statement!" says Tara. "We truly believe if you're going to build something, make it something beautiful to you as well as functional. Form and function are always a balancing act but if you keep an open-mind and stay true to the reason you're doing it you'll be able to enjoy the journey." *Continued on page 79* 

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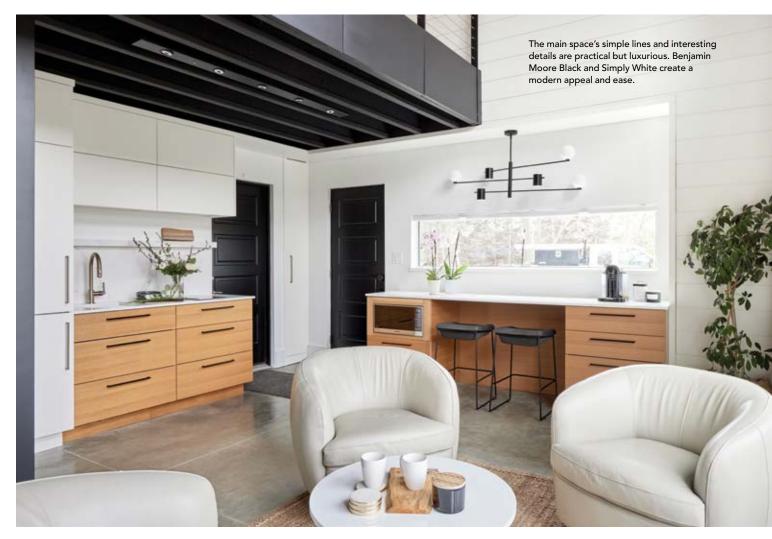


The project began in October 2019, so when the pandemic began in early 2020, the couple had some time to devote to the build. "When COVID hit it was the perfect distraction for us to work on during the downtime of everchanging work parameters," says Tara.

The end result is a chic, light-filled living space with an adjacent garage/workshop showcasing natural materials, neutral tones, sunset views to die for and enviable privacy. Tara describes the exterior style of the bunkie as Scandinavian-inspired and the interior as modern with some organic textures.

The front door by **Strassburger Windows and Doors** leads directly into the open-concept living area with floor-to-ceiling windows (also by Strassburger), bathroom and

kitchenette. Roof from Mar-Span **Home Hardware Building Centre** and polished concrete floors by **Gary Leitch Concrete Floors Limited** create a clean, industrial foundation. A striking feature wall with a **Bast** Home Comfort fireplace and Dekko **Concrete** surround gives the small space a refined presence. A stunning spiral staircase leads to a loft bedroom with open views of the fields beyond. "From the beginning I was set on having the bed face the view but there wasn't enough depth in the loft in the original design," says Tara. "Our draftsman **Rob Vanderwoerd** at Elevate Home Design suggested pushing the loft into the adjacent shop space a couple of feet to get the space we needed. It required some additional structure but was well worth it in the long run." Continued on page 80



ourhomes SUMMER 2023 | 79

# "WE WANTED TO KEEP THE STAIRS COMPACT BUT STILL CREATE A VISUAL FEATURE." ~Tara Schuett

BELOW: The staircase adds a whimsical appeal and a wow factor. RIGHT: A hidden part of the fireplace adds ingenious extra storage. "We had no space to store any cleaning supplies or books/games and miscellaneous stuff, so we brainstormed and realized we had space behind the fireplace cladding," says Tara. "We designed matching custom cabinetry that's invisible from the front but as you walk up the stairs you can access a bookshelf and on the other side is a closed cabinet that houses cleaning supplies."





The compact space is bursting with style and memorable details. The spiral staircase is a beautiful blend of form and function. "We wanted to keep the stairs compact but still create a visual feature and the spiral staircase was the solution!" It is composed of more than 200 custom-cut pieces of plywood, which were cut, sanded and finished at the Xanadu workshop and assembled on site in more than 24 hours, says Tara. "It was quite a process but it is such a dramatic feature, so it was worth it!"

In the bathroom, wall tiles by **Grand** Valley Tile & Flooring, countertop by Quartz Co Surfaces, plumbing by CJ Brubacher Ltd. and vanity by Xanadu create a sleek, classic space. In the kitchenette, cabinets by Xanadu, countertop by Quartz Co and appliances by **TA Appliances & Barbecues** complete this memorable space.

The fireplace surround was another painstaking endeavour that was also worth the effort. "It is made of a new pre-made concrete product that can be cut like tile," says Tara. "We also custom-designed and fabricated the black metal vertical panel to help the tiny fireplace scale appropriately with the space. We love how it turned out and it is truly one of a kind." Continued on page 82



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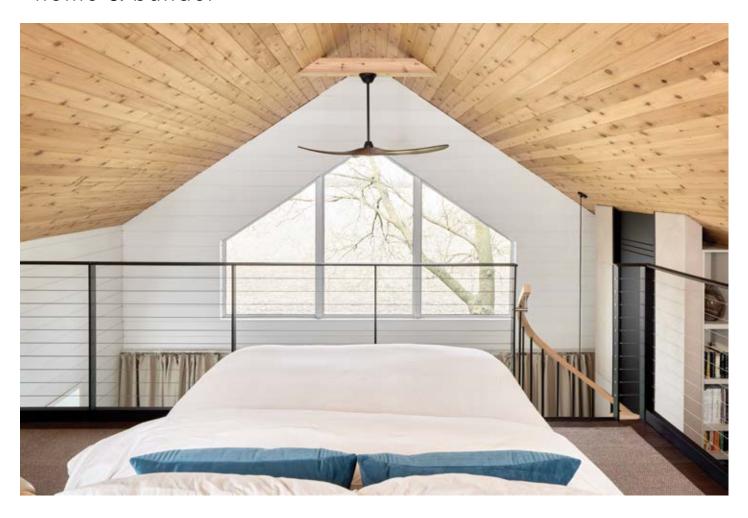








# home & builder



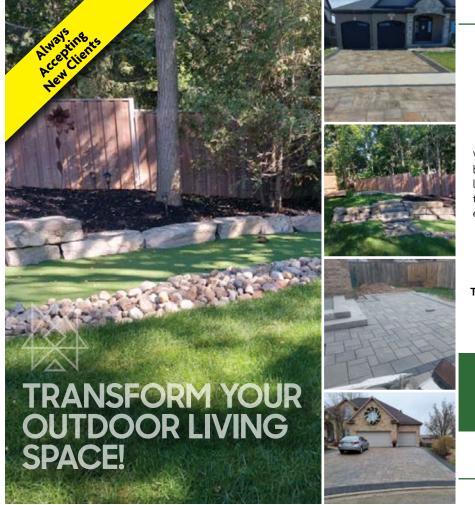


With the bunkie complete, Tara says they are finally starting the design process for a new main home build but with no set start date. In the meantime, this special little spot can be enjoyed and will no doubt influence the design of the main house to come.

"We really didn't expect to use it as frequently or enjoy it as much as we do," says Tara. "It is an incredible feeling at the end of a long week to be able to grab a bottle of wine and some cheese and wander through the backyard to our own personal retreat and enjoy a beautiful sunset. The space is serene, relaxing and rejuvenating." OH

TOP: The couple wanted enough room in the narrow loft to position a bed with a full view through the massive windows. The goal was achieved with a simple and beautiful effect. **ABOVE:** The minimalist railing serves its purpose without blocking the pastoral views. RIGHT: The bunkie's sole bathroom packs a style punch with luxurious materials and highend fixtures.







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STORY CONNIE JESKE CRANE
ILLUSTRATION SHEILA BRITTON





THE LAST FEW YEARS, fuelled by inflation, interest rate hikes and lack of supply, an affordability crisis extends well beyond hotspots like Toronto and Vancouver.

Is there any recourse? We looked at some government initiatives

and contacted Gary Taitt, a broker with RE/MAX Hallmark Realty Ltd. in Toronto. While there's no magic solution, creative longer-term strategies can be very helpful for many first-time buyers. Here's a closer look:

Continued on page 86



# **DOWN PAYMENT REALITIES**

Understanding Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation requirements is a crucial first step. (Hint: you may need more of a down payment than you think.) Talking with a lender can help buyers get clear on how much they need to save.

For example, the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada states, "If your down payment is less than 20 per cent of the price of your home, you must buy mortgage loan insurance." At the same time, "Mortgage loan insurance isn't available if the purchase price of the home is one million dollars or more." It means many first-time buyers are constrained to stick under that million-dollar price.

Gary says due to lofty requirements, even dual-income buyers with healthy salaries can struggle with a "down payment problem."

# **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

As for financial assistance, Gary says, "The government's come up with new incentives to help first-time buyers."

This April, among several initiatives, Canada introduced a First-Time Home Buyers' Tax Credit (HBTC), plus a registered First Home Savings Account (FHSA). The FHSA allows first-timers to save up to \$40,000 tax-free towards down payments - and unlike RRSP Home Buyers' Plans, funds don't have to be repaid.

Provincially, Ontario first-time home buyers may qualify for a land transfer tax rebate.

# **FAMILY HELP**

Where possible, asking for family help is an increasingly common strategy for younger buyers. According to a recent CIBC report, almost one-third of first-time buyers get financial help from family for down payments.

On the ground, Gary says, "I see that way more now, where people get money from the bank of mom and dad."

# **CREATIVE STRATEGIES**

Finally, by necessity, today's first-time buyers can apply other can-do strategies:

**Smaller centres** – Choosing to buy outside of Canada's priciest centres can boost affordability. As Gary says, "If you're living in Toronto, it may seem daunting, but if you're living in Calgary or Ottawa, you just need a really good plan."

Fixer uppers - While many buyers gravitate towards magazine-perfect "showpiece" homes, Gary says the "junky houses, the fixer uppers" are where buyers can find lower prices and add value.

**Condos** - In this niche, Gary says, "Now it's kind of flipped where buying a new condo costs more." Currently Gary sees more resale condos available and says for first-timers, these can be more affordable and easier to upgrade. "They only really have to do flooring, kitchen and bathroom."



**Co-ownership** – Slowly gaining traction in Canada, Gary feels this strategy works for some, citing three buyers he worked with who bought a large house together in Toronto. "They held it for four years and by the end of it, they sold and each made enough for their down payments and moved on to their own houses."

Finding tenants - Becoming a landlord during the early stages is another route Gary is seeing. "I would live in a basement and rent out the upstairs until my principal came down."

# **MINDSET**

In Canada, Gary has seen affordability concerns rising for 10 years or so. "I started hearing it when my kids were around eight or nine. 'Oh, they'll never be able to afford a house' and parents say these words."

Challenges aside though, Gary believes in home ownership. "Real estate values double every 10 years, give or take," he says, and five or 10 years down the road. OH

a solutions mindset, and in the lasting value of encourages buyers to have a vision not just of today's challenges but of where they could be

36 is the average age

of first-time home buyers in Canada

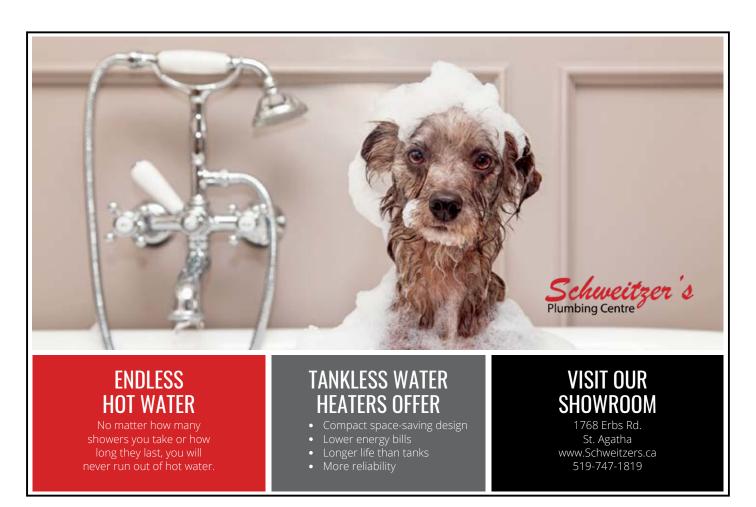
**\$40,000** is the maximum first-time buyers can contribute towards a home purchase via Canada's new tax-free First Home Savings Account (FHSA) (up from 20 per cent in 2015)

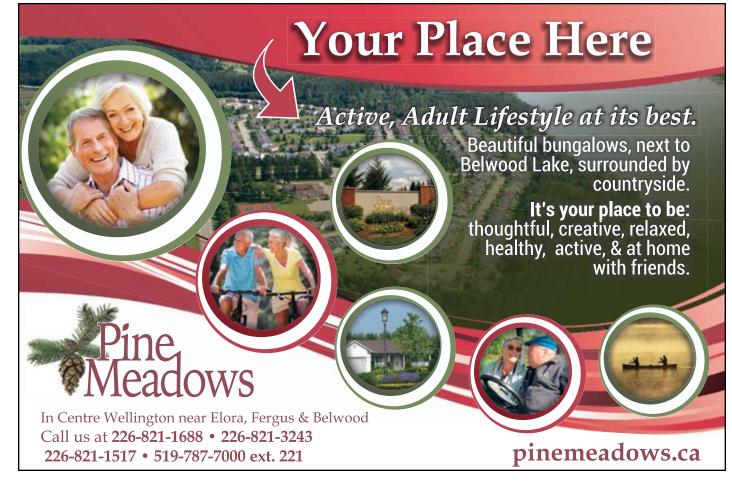
BY THE NUMBERS

43 per cent of Canadians aged 20-34 own their ome (30 per cent lower nan other age groups)

30 per cent of first-time buyers in 2021 received financial gifts towards a down payment (up rom 20 per cent in 2015)

**\$82,000** was the average down payment gift received by first-time buyers in 2021 (up from \$52,000 in 2015)





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# How to Create a FEATURE WALL

Feature walls come in all shapes and sizes and they all serve a very important purpose – to create a focal point, attract attention and deliver that essential wow factor that no room is complete without.





STORY DIANA ROSE

# FEATURED FUNCTIONS

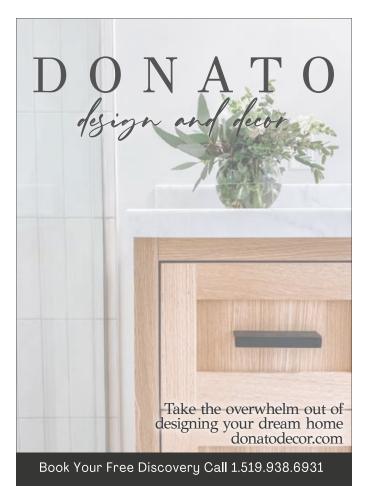
The purpose of a feature wall is to catch your eye. Will your feature wall be the focus, or will you use it as a way to highlight another focal point in the room?

A feature wall is a great way to invite attention to existing elements, such as a unique architectural feature or as a dramatic backdrop to a sophisticated fireplace, a fabulous staircase, a powder-room vanity or a prized piece of furniture. You can see how a bold colour or wallpaper selection can complement and underscore the high points throughout the home.

In the absence of an existing focal point, a feature wall can serve as the highlight every room needs. It is an eye-catching yet cost-effective way to make a visual impact.

When choosing your feature wall, consider your view when you enter a room, or in the case of an open-concept area, the view from various points in the space. Which wall is your eye naturally drawn to? What's the first thing you see when you walk in? That's likely to be your target area. Avoid walls with windows and doorways, which can diminish the artistic integrity of the wall itself. Plus, a large blank wall is practically begging for some flair.

Continued on page 92







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# decorating

# MATERIAL MATTERS

A little paint can go a long way. When choosing a colour for your feature wall, create contrast. If the room is light and neutral, consider a vibrant or dark colour. If colour graces your walls, look opposite the colour wheel for some options that pop.

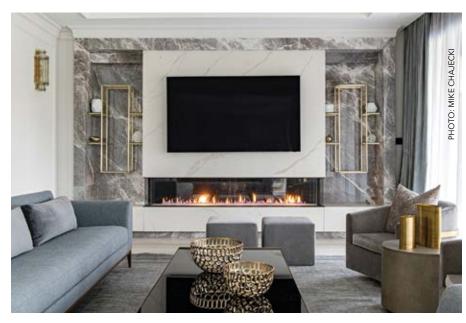
This opposite approach works for materials, too. Think glossy meets matte, rustic meets refined, classic meets minimalist - you get the idea. Create an element of surprise with unexpected additions such as metal inlays, upholstered wall panels, eccentric wallpapers and unusual tile patterns. From sleek to rustic, wood is another neutral material for an accent wall that is high impact and goes with everything.







TRENDING: Use three-dimensional tiles and marble slabs to create a feature wall that elevates a space by adding texture, colour and movement. There are some truly stunning paintable 3D tiles on the market, which use shadow and light to create an ever-changing effect - from subtle to dramatic, depending on the time of day.



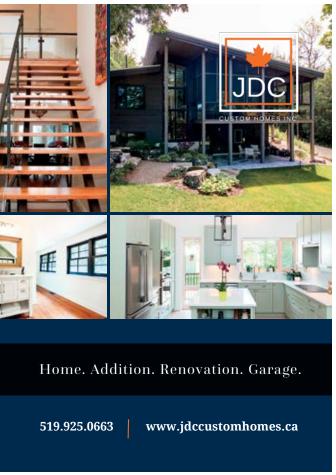
# THE OPEN-CONCEPT CONUNDRUM

Open-concept homes have risen in popularity in recent decades, but their proliferation has also brought to light some distinct design challenges. One of these is defining various functional areas within these vast, wall-less floor plans. Adding a feature wall is an effective way to visually differentiate a specific area without closing it off or straying from the overall style of the space. Adding a feature wall behind the dining table creates just enough drama - especially if you've taken my advice to leverage contrast! Similarly, a feature wall can also be applied in a front entrance area, in the office or reading nook and in the kitchen, to help visually separate these distinct areas from the others. If you're planning to create multiple feature walls, don't finish them with the same treatment. Remember, the goal is to make them stand out. Just be sure to give each one enough breathing room, so they don't clash or compete for your attention.



Perhaps the best part about adding a feature wall is that sometimes it can be relatively easy to do and requires no structural changes. All it takes is some design creativity and a little bravery on the homeowner's part. But trust me, it'll truly transform and make for stylish and impactful interior spaces. OH

Diana Rose is the award-winning principal and creative director for Diana Rose Design.







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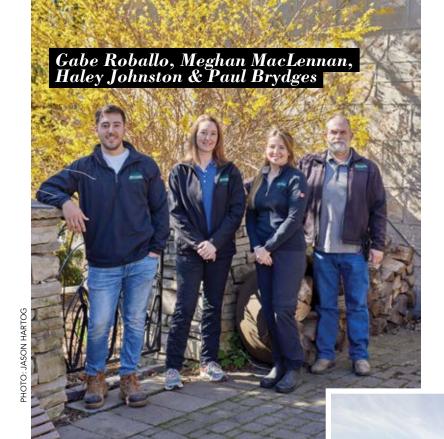
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Brydges Landscape Architecture's goal is to create unique, manageable and creative solutions for our clientele. Working with our clients and the site allows us to bring the natural attributes of the site to the forefront while sometimes solving complex challenges. Locally-sourced materials allow for a lighter environmental impact for the project as a whole.

# **OUR SPECIALTY**

Our specialty is residential design with more than 35 years of experience. The use of native plants and locally-sourced materials are a key component of our design style. This helps to balance the scale environmentally when planning out a project.

"Our goal is to create unique, manageable and creative solutions for all of our clientele."



# LATEST TRENDS

Backyards and family entertainment spaces have never seen a greater focus than in the last two years. Creating that oasis to truly be able to staycation is one of the most sought-after components to a new design. Architectural features for shade, dining and entertaining are becoming central parts of the overall design. We design these structures in-house to allow for a holistic composition of our clients' projects.

Continued on page 96



# **ALL EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS**

All Exterior Improvements Inc. is a landscaping and property maintenance company that has served the Kitchener-Waterloo and Wellington County for more than 26 years. We treat every property as if it was our own, providing a complete range of services to improve and maintain your residential or commercial property year-round.

# **OUR SPECIALTY**

When it comes to landscaping and lawn maintenance services, you get the best of both worlds with All Exterior Improvements. We are reliable and complete projects in a professional and timely manner. We offer competitive rates, both seasonal and hourly, and we hold liability insurance. We look forward to discussing new and challenging projects for your year-round property maintenance or landscape planning and construction projects.

"When it comes to landscaping and lawn maintenance services, you get the best of both worlds with All Exterior Improvements."

# Adam, Jake, Patrick, Krista, Derek, Paulo & Aidan (not shown: Kala) Flannery

# FLANNERY ELECTRICAL INC.

Flannery Electrical Inc. is locally owned, serving Guelph, Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Wellington County since 2010. We are a fully licensed and insured electrical company and an approved ESA contractor. We pride ourselves on excellent customer service, and superior quality and workmanship.

# LOCAL & HANDS ON

Being local, we care about our customers and the community we work and live in. We have a dedicated, hands-on approach and we are involved in every step of a project, paying serious attention to detail. We are built on professional, high-quality workmanship by all members of the team.

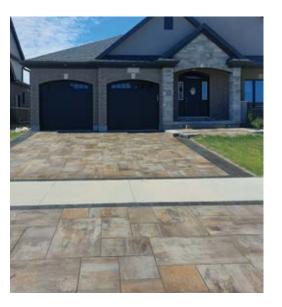
"We have a dedicated, hands-on approach and we are involved in every step of a project."

# 

# **OUR SPECIALTY**

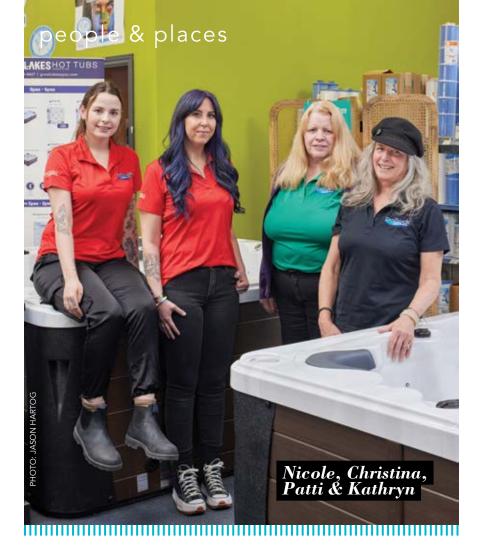
We have a team of qualified electricians specializing in residential and commercial projects as well as custom homes and renovations. We also provide installation of backup generators, hot tub wiring and spa packages, and LED lighting upgrades, which have become very popular. In addition, we perform code compliance work for rental units and are current with the latest smart home technology.

Continued on page 98



# **OUR LEGACY**

We serve homeowners as well as commercial and industrial businesses, handling all aspects of property maintenance and landscaping. Thanks to our quality workmanship and dedication to customer service, we have earned many existing customers who have been loyal to us for many years.



# WHAT'S TRENDING

We can provide you with the newest products in the industry, such as Solei and Dryden Agua Activated Filter Media, and can help you reduce the number of chemicals you add to your pool or hot tub. Trending with our customers are cordless pool cleaners as well as advanced oxidation processing systems, which use less sanitizer. At Pollock Pools we are about relationships and providing treatment regimens that work.

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# MORE THAN REAL ESTATE

Royal City Realty prioritizes our community and the people in it. Some of our favourite initiatives are our charity events like The Summer Soirée, an evening garden party with a silent and live auction to benefit the Shelter Foundation. This year it will be on Aug. 17 at The Aberfoyle Mill in Puslinch. The Royal LePage Shelter Foundation has proudly grown to become the largest public foundation in Canada dedicated exclusively to funding women's shelters and domestic violence prevention. Locally, every dollar raised by Royal City Realty directly supports Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis. Royal LePage is the only Canadian real estate company with its own charitable foundation and Royal City Realty is proud to continually contribute to the \$42 million dollars raised to date.

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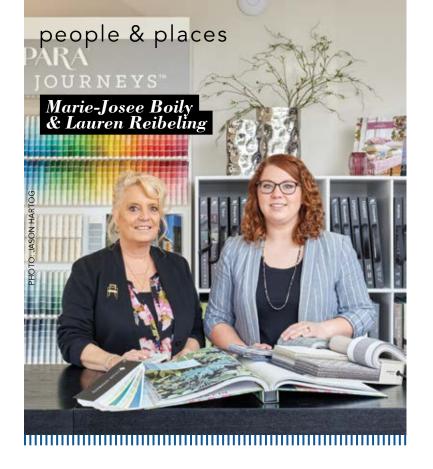
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The design team of Marie-Josee, Lauren and Melanie at Decorators Corner will help you maximize the potential of your space, while reflecting your style and honouring your budget. Follow us on Instagram @decoratorscorner and visit our new studio in Waterloo to start on your next project!

# **FULL-SERVICE SHOP**

As a full-service interior design and decorating firm serving the Kitchener-Waterloo area for 20-plus years, we have been involved with projects that range from interior décor and paint to kitchen and bath renovations and full custom home design. With our amazing local industry contacts, we can support you through your project from start to finish.

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president Mike Woroch grew up in the door

and trim industry alongside his father Bob Woroch. Together, they learned that nothing is more important than providing customers

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After taking an 18-month break, Bob is happy to be back in the industry he loves, building on his 40 years of experience. As vice-president, he is working with Mike and the team to establish Elmira Door + Trim as the premier supplier in Waterloo Region and beyond. He looks forward to continuing longstanding business relationships, as well as forging new ones.



# **OUR SPECIALTY**

Every homeowner is different and has their own unique eye for design and different goals and objectives. Our favourite type of project is where we can introduce a lot of character, colour and texture into a space. Rather than try to sell you on a standard design, we work with you to create your dream look for a room or your entire space. Do you love celadon green and Mid-century modern design? Then let's go for it.



# A SHARED COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

With a shared commitment to excellence, Mike, Bob and their team are dedicated to providing top-notch interior doors, trim and hardware products and getting them on site when their customers need them.

# THE RIGHT PRODUCTS, WHEN YOU NEED THEM

From the idea stage through to delivery, Elmira Door + Trim has the expertise to help you select the products and styles you need to complete any building project to perfection by providing the kind of personal attention that only a smaller family-owned-and-operated business can offer. We take a lot of satisfaction in providing an unmatched high level of service.

Continued on page 102

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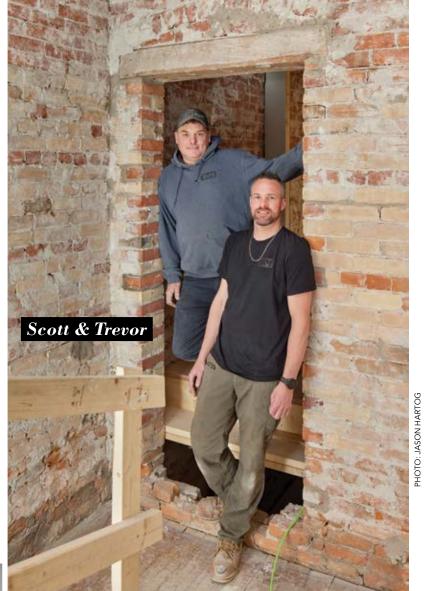
# people & places

# T&M CONSTRUCTION & RENOVATION

T&M Construction & Renovation has been helping home and property owners design and build their dream spaces in Guelph and the surrounding area for 20 years. As local business operators and homeowners, we know the importance and value of taking pride in our living spaces. Follow our projects on Instagram to see how we design and transform mundane spaces into truly wow places.

# **FAVOURITE PROJECT**

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# 75 YEARS of HOME & COMMUNITY

# THE PLACE

Founded in 1948, Original Home Furniture marks its 75th anniversary this year. This legacy store in North Guelph continues to build on family business principles and offers some of the best brands in the business – Palliser, La-Z-Boy, Decor-Rest, Amisco, Canadel, Crate Furniture, Durham, BeautyRest, Liberty Furniture, Vokes, and more - all displayed in a large, beautiful showroom. Emily Johnston and Jon Macklin have taken the reins from long-time owners Lynn and Darlene McClellan, keeping the business in the family and posting remarkable growth with more to come.

# THE BIG ANNIVERSARY

The store's 75th anniversary year kicked off with a celebration in the Woodlawn Road showroom attended by 150 quests, including vendor representatives, media and local business executives. "It seemed fitting that the best way to kick off 75 years would be with fellow entrepreneurs and businesspeople and the companies that have helped us reach this milestone," says Jon. "When I came onboard, one of the first changes I made was to decrease the number of manufacturers we dealt with to make it easier for our staff to master the brands and be more meaningful partners."

# SHOWROOM

One of the high-tech changes customers will notice when visiting the showroom is the state-of-the-art virtual custom studios throughout the space, which allow customers to envision their selections and customize their choices to fit their home. "This is a huge advantage over our competitors, to be able to change colours, fabrics, leathers, legs, pedestals and tabletops – building furniture piece by piece," says Jon. "This is what I believe to be the future of the custom furniture industry."









# **STAFF**

Quality staff and community involvement also make Original Home Furniture the rewarding and thriving business it is. "We have a very diverse staff, by age, gender and experience on our floor," says Jon. "We pride ourselves on being organized, knowledgeable and low pressure, but eager to help." In the community, Jon recently received the Rotarian Peter Moore Vocational Services Award, which acknowledges individuals for service above self in their community. "As business owners I do feel that it's our responsibility to not only take care of our own people but to also take care of others in the community to the best of our ability." он

# Get in Touch

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# what's your STORY JANE LOCKHART DESIGNAESTHETIC?

Coastal, minimal, Mid-century modern, farmhouse, Bohemian - these are just a few design styles popular today. Type any one of these in a search engine and multiple photos pop up displaying rooms for each look.

But what is a "design aesthetic?" Isn't it the same as picking a style? In today's world, it seems like they should be interchangeable terms and "design aesthetic" is simply another way to describe your style, right? In fact, a design aesthetic is a more in-depth understanding of a style. It relates to all elements included in the lifestyle represented by that style, not just the things we see in beautiful photos, like pillows or furniture. It digs deeper than the surface elements. To simplify, a design aesthetic includes not only the décor elements but also how you interact and behave in your space.

For example, if you lean towards a modern design aesthetic, simple furniture shapes and an uncluttered interior would appeal to your sense of style and you would also prefer to own

minimal stuff in general, with clean, organized closet interiors as important as the exterior living space. Design aesthetic is the way you live IN a space as much as the space itself.

A personal design aesthetic represents the authentic you. It captures what you love, rather than a passing fad or design trend that may come-and-go over your lifetime. That's not to say an aesthetic won't change as we age - it should change, as it represents our true self. As we evolve and re-evaluate our lifestyle over time, our style evolves with us.

How then do we identify our design aesthetic? It sounds a lot harder than just picking a style! The two do cross over, but to really drill down to finding a style that's meaningful to you, it has to fit your lifestyle. Continued on page 108





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HERE ARE SOME GUIDING
PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTING YOUR
PREFERRED DESIGN AESTHETIC.

# LOOK AT YOUR SPACE

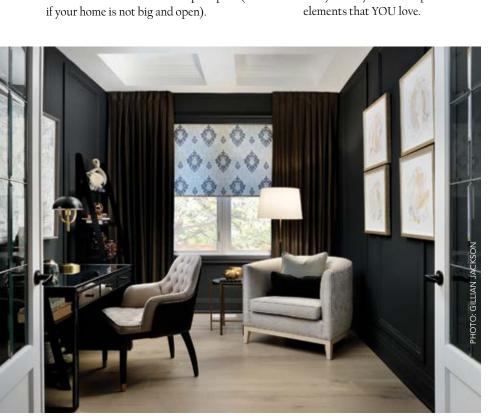
Do you like open spaces, high ceilings and light walls, avoiding the feeling of being closed in? If the answer is yes, look for design aesthetics that incorporate this feel, such as modern, Mid-century modern, farmhouse modern or architectural. These styles all share light-painted walls, light floors, minimal decoration, large windows and lots of lighting, all of which create the feel of open space (even if your home is not big and open).

# INJECTING COLOUR

Do you love colour and gain energy from having it applied to walls or furniture? If you do, consider a rustic, coastal or Mediterranean look, as each incorporate colour as a main staple.

# INTEGRATING KEEPSAKES OR MEMENTOS

Do you find comfort in seeing your memories displayed, and photos of family around you, or do you like to collect items from travel as reminders of the past? If so, select a style like countrycore or rustic country that incorporates more surfaces, walls and furniture for display of precious photos and mementos. These styles don't fight your natural preferences and instead easily allow you to incorporate elements that YOU love.





# FINDING WARMTH

Does wood add warmth and a casual element you've always loved? If so, select an aesthetic that heavily incorporates both casual living and wood touches to it naturally. This would include a coastal or rustic look, even cottagecore or lodge. Each of these styles use wood as a main expression, whether light or dark and would fit your overall design aesthetic.

These principles offer simple examples of how to reverse engineer the style question to become "what are things that make me happy and that I want to experience every day in my space?" Once you know this answer, look at photos to see where your preferences fit within the millions of images of spaces available today.

Upon choosing a design aesthetic that captures how you want to live and feel, start building your style from there. And, of course, make it your own. All of these aesthetics can mesh into your own style, which is entirely the point! OH

Jane Lockhart is an award-winning designer, colour expert, TV personality, author and the principal designer at Jane Lockhart Design



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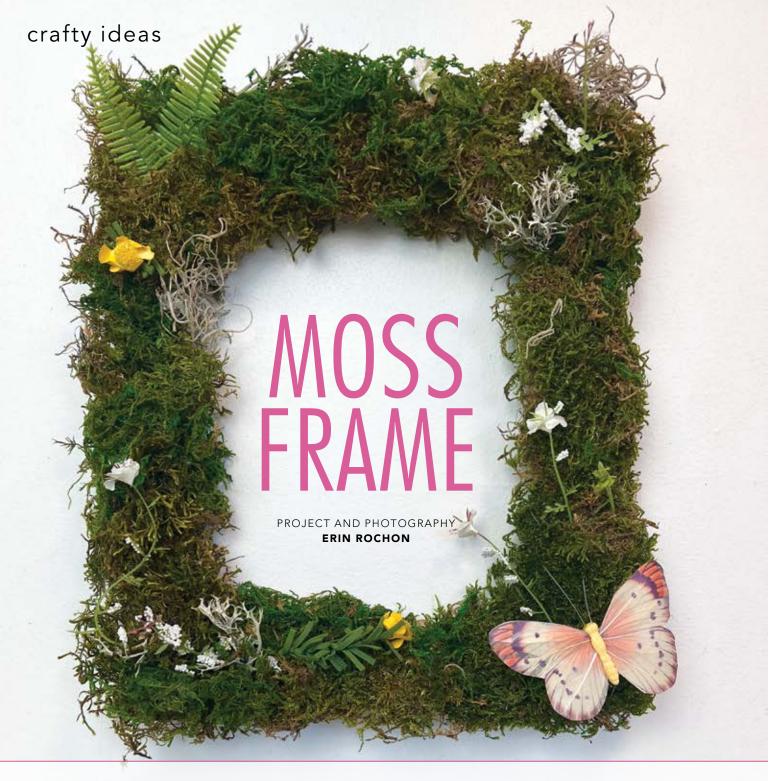
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#### **MATERIALS**

Picture frame
Preserved moss
Glue Gun
Optional –
artificial flowers,
decorative
butterflies or birds



Start by removing the glass from your frame.

Next, glue the moss to the frame.

Continue adding sections of moss until there are no gaps and the frame is completely covered. To add some depth, layer moss on top of moss and glue in place.

Then, glue some flowers and butterflies into the moss.

Now find a spot to showcase your moss frame! **oh** 







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**BELOW:** Off the main room, the kitchen features natural materials, warm hardwood floors and simple solid cabinetry. **BOTTOM:** Sleek energy-efficient appliances are an important part of a high-performance home. **RIGHT:** James describes the home's style as "industrial farmhouse meets village modern," and the kitchen's materials and style choices reflect this aesthetic.







But they had a vision. James, owner of Frontiers Design Build Inc. with partners Doug Taylor and Adam Taylor, wanted to execute a deep energy retrofit and whole home interior/exterior renovation to transform the house into a fresh, modern high-performance home where James and wife Katherine could enjoy and grow their family. James would manage the renovation and Katherine would handle the design and décor.

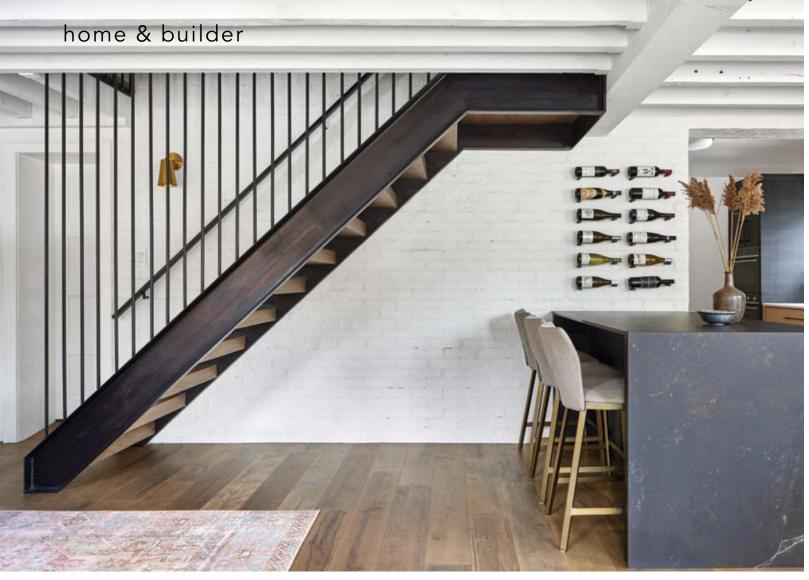
It was an ambitious project, but James was up for the challenge. His company specializes in creating high-performance and passive house certified homes and landscapes and has a strong reputation for creating sustainable and stylish homes in Guelph and surrounding areas. High-performance houses must adhere to strict building criteria and consume up to 90 per cent less heating and cooling energy when compared to conventional buildings.

The project was executed in four phases beginning in 2019, with notable features including original exposed timbers, architectural ventilation ducts and flush grills, an open-rise staircase with a two-storey steel partition and cathedral ceilings. The home is cool and clean with bold choices and a modern, natural vibe.

James calls the style of his home "industrial farmhouse meets village modern" and says he and wife Katherine are thrilled with the results. "It has turned out so much better than we ever could have imagined when we bought the property," he says. The couple lived in the home throughout the renovation, a choice James says he would reconsider if doing it again. "Living through a renovation of this scale is a monumental challenge and something I strongly advise against! Fortunately, we managed to make it through in one piece but would never do it again – especially with the addition of our new baby boy Brooks born in June 2022!" Continued on page 118

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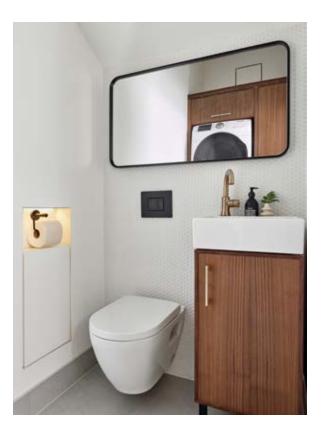
In the first phase of the renovation, the main bathroom was gutted and replaced with new insulation, drywall by GTA Drywall and Finishing, electrical by **Dekeyser Electric**, plumbing by JayTech Plumbing Inc., HVAC by Cornerstone Trade **Solutions** and trim and interior doors by Riverside Millwork Group, with a custom curbless shower and in-floor heat and plumbing fixtures.

Phase two began in spring 2021 with a complete interior and exterior demolition, featuring a new kitchen and vaulted ceiling, with cabinetry and built-ins by **Enrichlt** Woodworks, a new laundry and ventilation system, new floor system and a restructure of the second floor to create an open-concept space. "During this time we discovered

the rotting perimeter post/beam structure, which required a complete restructuring of the exterior walls," says James. "We also reinsulated with R28 Rockwool and installed a new ERV ventilation system for a continuous supply of fresh filtered air and put in European high-performance triple pane doors and tilt/turn windows from **Vetta Windows.**"

Hardwood floors from Tielemans **Fine Flooring** were next on the agenda, as well as a striking open-rise stairway and custom millwork by Dave Dekeyser + Frontiers. The kitchen was outfitted with built-in appliances from AMG Studios and Dekton porcelain countertops from **Paragon Kitchens** installed by **Quartz Co Surfaces** 

Continued on page 120



**ABOVE:** The family's golden doodle Archie relaxes in their functional, beautiful highperformance space. **ABOVE** LEFT: A spacesaving and striking staircase leads to the couple's openconcept bedroom LEFT: A compact bathroom is both gorgeous and energy efficient.

# HIGH-PERFORMANCE DETAILS

# 1. What is a high-performance or passive house home? 3. Does it cost more to build this way?

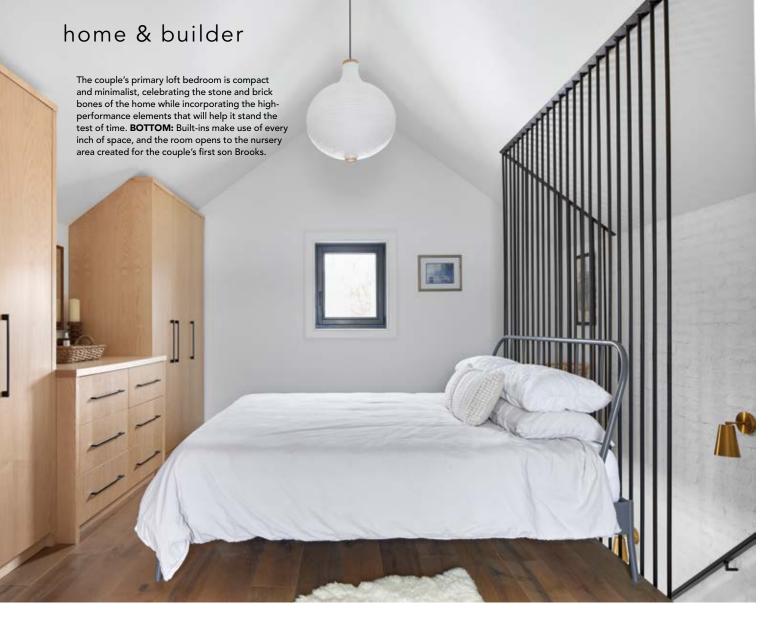
A high-performance home recognizes the house as a system and surpasses outdated conventions in both design and construction, says James. "And a passive house sets a clear and simple goal: to provide the highest occupant comfort using the least amount of energy."

# 2. How is this result accomplished?

James says the process is composed of five fundamental principles: heavily insulated walls, airtight construction, premium quality windows, thermal bridge-free design, and a ventilation system with heat recovery. "Passive house design relies on an Integrated Design Process from a collaborative team, which includes detailed design and energy modelling, careful pre-construction planning, exemplary construction and third-party quality-assurance testing and commissioning."

"These are higher-quality buildings," says James. "As such, costs are often slightly higher due to more intensive planning, superior components and exceptional craftsmanship." However, reduced energy use – up to 90 per cent for heating and cooling and 60 to 80 per cent overall – translates into lower monthly bills and protection from rising energy costs, making occupancy affordable, he says. "Ultimately, you can sleep at night knowing you are making a thoughtful investment in your family's well-being, saving money on rising energy costs, and contributing to a more sustainable future."

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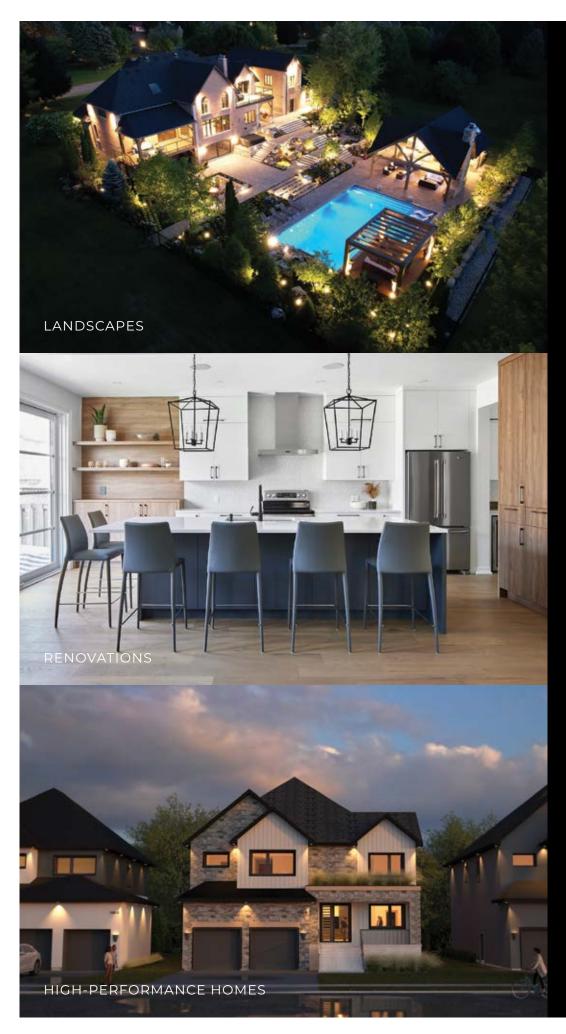


The third phase began in fall 2021 and featured a complete gut of the second floor. "We removed the entire roof, reframed and raised the perimeter wall height, created a vaulted roof, and installed all new hardwood floors and custom closets," says James.

The fourth and final phase began in winter 2022 (with a newborn in tow!) and included a renovation of the home's back room, which had been an addition in the 1980s. New hardwood floors, custom millwork, a gas fireplace with masonry surround and dramatic black-painted walls and ceiling create a modern yet warm and memorable space. To crown the makeover, a new standing seam metal roof by **Advanced Metal Roofs Inc.** and siding were installed.

James admits the major structural degradation they discovered required substantial framing repairs, which extended the project timeline and put a dent in the budget. "Although this ultimately increased the cost of the project, we can rest assured our home is now structurally sound and built to last at least another 160 years," he says. Continued on page 122







(Tetaway at home

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The result is a beautiful and functional space for this young family, with some impressive high-performance features that are both sustainable and cost-saving. James says it is difficult to define one thing he likes best about the home, but rather the achievement as a whole. "Taking a high-performance passive house approach to our renovation has delivered tangible improvements to our lives and our home," he says. "We enjoy the home's comfort, quietness, health benefits, durability and energy efficiency - in other words, realworld benefits every homeowner deserves, all while maintaining a sophisticated interior and exterior design." он

**TOP LEFT & ABOVE:** The nursery adjacent to the primary bedroom is serene with calming colours, top-notch air quality and energy efficiency thanks to the home's high-performance features. FAR LEFT & **LEFT:** The main bathroom is functional and beautiful with fixtures and tile work from Ideal Home Design.





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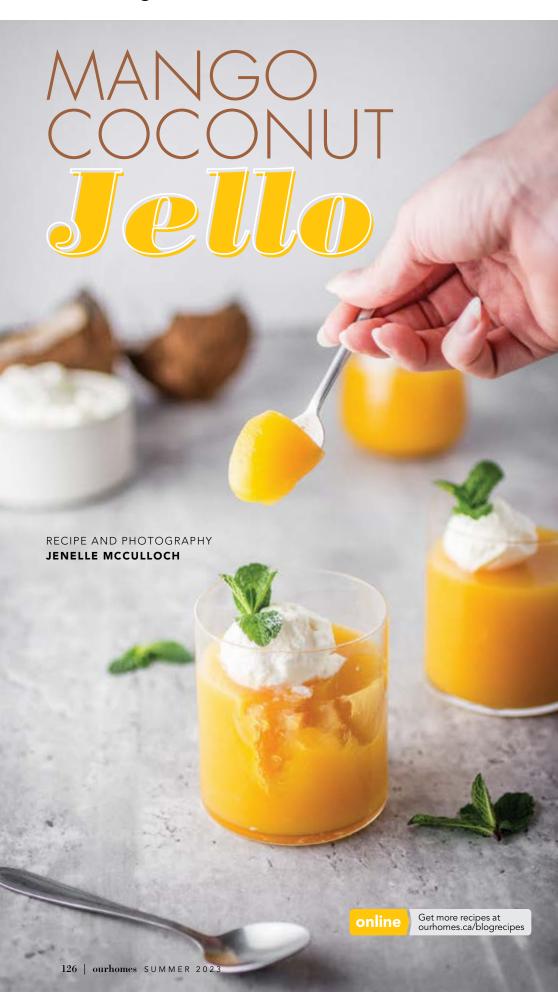








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# **Ingredients**

# **SERVES 4**

3 cups mango juice

2 packets gelatin or 4 Tbsp of agar-agar\*

½ cup mango purée\*\*

1 cup coconut water

1-3 Tbsp honey or sweetener of choice

Whipped cream for garnish

\*Use agar-agar for a veganfriendly version of this recipe. Agar-agar does not need to be bloomed and can be added right into the heated juice. Cook for 5-10 minutes.

\*\*Make your own mango purée by blending the fruit of one mango.

# **Instructions**

Bloom the gelatin by placing ½ cup of mango juice in a bowl and sprinkling gelatin on top. Wait five minutes until the gelatin activates.

In a saucepan over medium heat, heat the rest of the mango juice, mango purée, coconut water and honey. Adjust amount of sweetener to taste.

Add bloomed gelatin and whisk until dissolved.

Pour into four serving glasses and let cool in the fridge until firm.

When ready to serve top with a dollop of whipped cream. **OH** 







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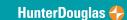
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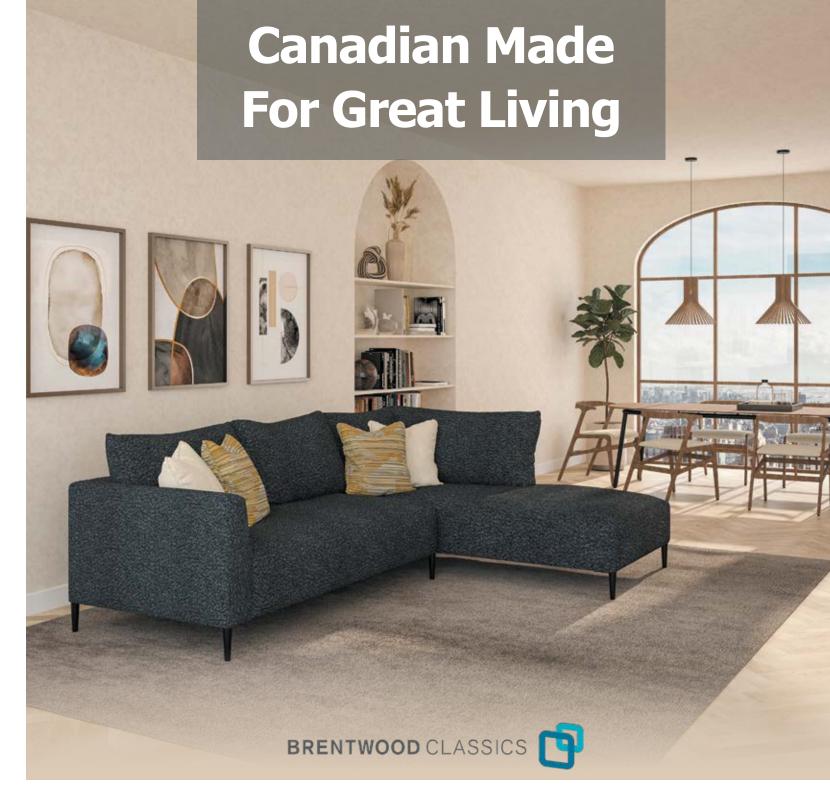
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