

# SURROUNDED BY *memories*

STORY **LEE-ANN CHOQUETTE** | PHOTOGRAPHY **HAROLD CLARK**

Kim, John and their children have enjoyed many evenings cosied up and watching flames dance in a fireplace. As a family, they have spent countless hours playing shuffleboard, pool and Pac-Man. For two decades, they have called Cobourg's Sunset Drive home, but all of that is about to change. Now emptynesters, they are thinking about selling the roost. Continued on page 24



After 20 years in their spacious Cobourg home, Kim and John are considering downsizing.



“We have lived here for 20 years. We love the house and it is going to be difficult to leave it. But our children are adults now so we do not need a house this size for the two of us,” says Kim. “It’s time,” she sighs.

Originally from Oakville, the couple moved to Port Hope in 1997 to operate their own business. Renting until they could find a home in the area, they purchased the lot in Hamilton Township, Cobourg and built their two-storey Cape Cod-style home in 1998.

While their house is big, about 8,000 square feet in total, the couple’s love for rustic, cottage country décor makes the home quaint, warm and cosy. Fireplaces, there are five inside and one outside, and lots of comfortable seating make the home warm and inviting. “We like the cottagey, put your feet up and relax, do not worry about your shoes kind of feel,” says Kim. “It’s not uppity or froufrou,” she says from a main-floor space she calls the gathering room. The room, part of a two-floor addition built 10 years ago by **Dave Vander Schaaf** with **Dadon Construction**, features a large, stone wood-burning fireplace, an antler-cascade chandelier and rough hand-hewn beams on the ceiling.

Antiques, art and treasured timepieces add to the room’s rustic vibe. A shadow box frame displays fishing lures, flies and spoons that belonged to Kim’s grandfather. An avid angler, her grandfather passed away just before they built their home. His fishing basket and rod are nearby. A woodcarving of a chickadee sitting in a tree is also very special to Kim. “I like to be surrounded by memories. It makes me feel calm,” says Kim. Like a treasure chest, the home is full of many loved and cherished things. She points out a small, black antique pedestal bowl that belonged to her great-grandmother, adding her grandmother, as a child, remembered seeing little white marshmallows in the dish. *Continued on page 26*



**TOP LEFT:** Rustic timbers span the high walls of the lodge-like living room on the main floor. **LEFT:** Dentil crown moulding rings the ceiling of the central dining room. **OPPOSITE TOP:** A sunken parlour just inside the home entrance welcomes visitors and guests. **BOTTOM:** The compact kitchen has a double-drawer dishwasher, granite countertops and dining bar.

## feature

The addition also created a sitting room adjacent to the dining room. Glass doors between the two rooms make it easy to expand the dining room table into both rooms when Kim and John are entertaining large groups. They also added a three-season sunroom, which overlooks and provides access to the scenic backyard. Screens can replace windows during the warmer months.

The generous, eat-in-style kitchen is part of the original home as is the nearby dining room. It was Kim's preference that the spaces not be open concept. "When we are entertaining, I can just close the pocket door between the kitchen and dining room and nobody can see the mess," she says. Glass cloches, cookie jars and cake holders sit atop warm, golden granite countertops. Seeded glass in the upper cupboards adds an antique look to the room's floor-to-ceiling black cabinets.

Mike the moose, a majestic taxidermy mount, is at home in a large, lodge-like living room and sitting area. It was a surprise Christmas present from John many years ago.



Other main floor rooms include a powder room, a his-and-hers office, and a sunken living room, or as Kim likes to call it, a parlour near the front entrance. In the walk-out basement, a pinball machine is quiet. This is where the family watched movies, played shuffleboard and hung out. When they were teenagers, children Britany and David would bring their friends over to swim, play pool and play video games. The basement also includes a full bath, kitchen and bedroom as well as a full bar with french doors leading to an outside patio with a wood-burning fireplace.

Upstairs are four bedrooms, a large main bathroom with double sinks and a laundry room. The master bedroom, with its large sitting area and fireplace is where the family would go after dinner to watch a movie or to just chill out. From the many windows are sweeping views of the Northumberland Hills. The Juliette balcony is a perfect perch to enjoy a glass of wine and take in the view. The master's en suite, also part of the addition, has a spa-like feel. It is bright and roomy and includes his-and-hers sinks, a large soaker tub and a glass and tile shower. *Continued on page 28*



**TOP:** Behind mirrored pocket doors, the master en suite is finished with tumbled travertine and porcelain tiles. Matching vanities flank the entrance. **ABOVE:** A four-poster pine bed furnishes the master bedroom. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Morning sunlight fills the comfortably furnished, bright and cheery sun room. **BOTTOM:** Around the fireplace in the gathering room is one of the family's favourite spots.



Outside, a wall of tall, manicured cedars surrounds the home and provides privacy. A dining area sits under a pergola on the large, backyard stone patio. A nearby cascading waterfall spills into the backyard pond, home to large koi. An in-ground swimming pool sparkles under the rays of the sun. There is also a hot tub. Mature gardens grow and bloom. **Sian Pritchard** of **The Cutting Garden** assists Kim with the greenery and flowers. Prized plants include four different species of peonies. From her grandma's garden, the peonies have followed Kim and John to all of their homes. This move will be no different.

Life changes and so, too, does the way we live in a home. "Your family changes and develops and so does where you sit and gather and entertain," says Kim. The kids are adults now. When Britany and David

come home, the family usually congregates in front of the wood-burning fireplace in the Gathering Room. It is a great space to relax and catch up on everything.

The couple has yet to decide where home will be when they do sell their Sunset Drive house. They could buy a condominium. They could build a small spec home on the property they own behind their existing house. They have a cottage on Upper Buckhorn Lake, and there is a wall there for Mike the moose. There are many options to consider. One thing is certain; it will be a big change. **OH**

**ABOVE:** A cedar hedge screens the backyard pool as seen from the Juliette balcony. **BELOW LEFT:** A deck just outside the kitchen is an ideal spot for brunch. **BELOW:** Ringed by comfortable armchairs, a poker table complements the wide array of games in the ground floor family room.



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