



Dan and Rachel Clayton at the kitchen island (quartz countertop sourced by Stone Innovation).

A PLACE TO GROW

STORY MERRILYN PATTERSON | PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG
FLOWERS WR DESIGNS | HOME STYLING CENTRE STAGED INC.

Dan Clayton's grandfather Jack, a homebuilder, lived on a 150-acre working farm on the north side of Guelph. Dan grew up in a neighbourhood close to the farm, and has fond memories of his time there with his grandfather.



Fast forward. Dan now lives on that same property with his wife, Rachel and their kids, Charlotte, 3, and 18-month-old Jackson. His grandfather developed most of the farmland but kept a few parcels for himself. Dan and Rachel bought two lots and built the home they planned to grow into.

They chose the property because of Dan's link to family, as well as its location on the edge of the Grand River conservation area. There are beautiful country views and easy access to walking trails. The serenity of the environment appeals to them because they work hard at Dan's business, **Dan Clayton Homes** – and their family life with two young children is often "chaos," Dan chuckles.

With Dan in the building industry, they were able to hand-pick and work closely with trusted trades and suppliers to achieve their vision. They were also able to adjust the plan as needed – on the go, to fit their budget and specifications.

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TOP LEFT: Large windows and benches allow glorious views of the Grand River conservation area. **LEFT:** Dan experimented with the marriage of a traditional country aesthetic with a more modern home design. The timberframe accent carries through to the back deck and pool house.



They opted for a sliding patio door instead of french doors to the deck to improve traffic flow in the dinette area and decided against a second-floor balcony off the master bedroom. “The learning curve while building our own home helped us understand our clients’ needs and how to accomplish their goals with a cost-effective and realistic approach,” explains Dan.

From the start, the plan was to build a home large enough for a growing family. “We wanted to keep it simple – quiet colours, simple finishes and large enough on the main floor to entertain,” says Rachel. Dan envisioned an open concept with distinct living areas.

In the 3,700 square foot house, the Claytons spend most of their time in the open-concept kitchen and living room. The colour palette is neutral, light and bright, with a minimalistic approach to the décor. Rachel finds it calming to have everything in its place, so she wanted a large kitchen with plenty of storage space.

Barzotti Woodworking Ltd. crafted the kitchen cabinetry and millwork and the quartz countertop from **Stone Innovation**. Most of the family meals are enjoyed at the large island. A double drawer dishwasher from **Goemans Appliances** is built into the island, which Dan says is the “hardest-working appliance in the house.”

Kitchen “must haves” for Rachel were a farmhouse sink and black hardware. The white tile backsplash from **Ceramic Decor** adds texture to the kitchen walls, while maintaining the quiet, simple design the couple wanted. *Continued on page 93*

TOP LEFT: The butler’s pantry is tucked cleverly between the dining room and kitchen. **BELOW:** Rachel’s dream came true in the kitchen – and Dan loves his monster fridge!



The round table allows for easy traffic flow and treetop views.



ABOVE: A coffered ceiling and soft draperies in the dining room present a more formal atmosphere. **RIGHT:** The main-floor powder room features a wall-mounted faucet and taps. Pendants are suspended from the ceiling. **OPPOSITE:** Rachel, a fan of DIY, found the wooden chairs on “kijiji” and had them refinished locally.

“Building our own home helped us understand our clients’ needs and how to accomplish their goals with a cost-effective, realistic approach.”

Appliances are a thing for Dan. Rachel laughs and says he wanted “the biggest fridge we could get.” The **Fisher & Paykel** option they selected is actually two stainless steel refrigerators connected by a joiner kit from Goemans.

Rachel loves family photos and included a built-in hutch (**Enrich It Woodworks Inc.**) to showcase her favourites. It’s a great spot to add some colour and personality

to the monochromatic scheme with found treasures and plants.

There’s a walk-in pantry tucked off the kitchen that’s great for food storage and for clearing dishes out of sight while guests are in the house. The kitchen opens to a large deck and pool, so there’s a lot of coming and going in the summer months.

Because the rest of the house has simple finishes, Rachel and Dan wanted the dining

room to have a more traditional feel. They chose a coffered ceiling and carried the millwork into the front hall.

At the top of Rachel’s wish list was a large and multi-functional laundry room. It includes counter space for folding, an overhead bar for drying, a large sink with a pull-out drawer below for pet-food storage, pull-out laundry drawers and a toe-kick drawer for pet food dishes. *Continued on page 94*



The upper level foyer is adorned with traditional millwork echoed from the first floor. It's used to display more of Rachel's treasured family photos.

Upstairs, there are four bedrooms and a flex room, which can be used as a den, office or play space. Black and white is the colour palette for Jackson's special space and Charlotte's room is pretty in pink and grey.

The master bedroom at the back of the house is designed to be separate from the children's rooms and provide a relaxing oasis for the couple to unwind from hectic business and family life. *Continued on page 98*



TOP LEFT: The piano staircase by Stairworks is a nod to the farmhouse aesthetic. **TOP RIGHT:** The soft pink and grey palette creates a serene retreat for guests. **RIGHT:** The wrought-iron bed and wooden ladder in the guest room reflect the country setting.

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The large glass shower in the master en suite was a must-have for Dan. **ABOVE:** Quiet colours and simple but elegant design star in the master suite.

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The pool overlooking the conservation area – heaven at home for the Clayton family!

From planning stage to completion, the building process took almost a year. The family moved in August of 2017 and are loving it, “though it’s a work in progress,” Rachel says. “We’ve learned a lot from building our own home,” Dan explains, “and we share our experience with our clients as we grow.” **OH**



LEFT: Charlotte’s teepee and sleepy-time space. **ABOVE:** The multi-functional mudroom/laundry with ample storage space, a counter for folding laundry and built-ins for pet food and feeding station.

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