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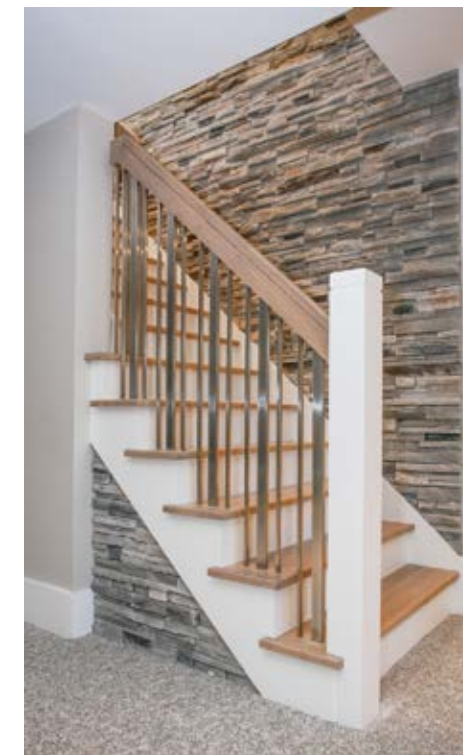
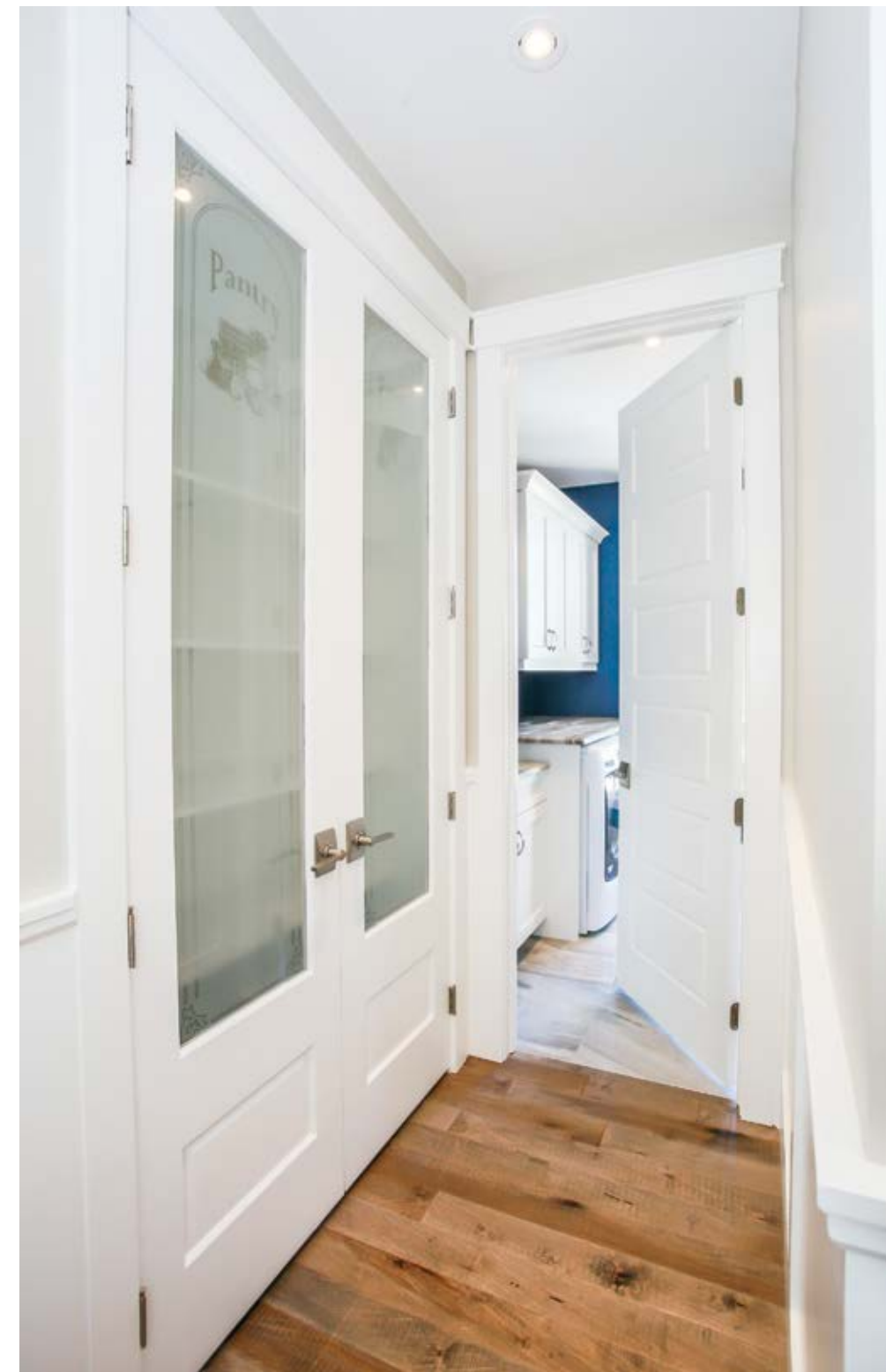
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THIS IS A VERY SENTIMENTAL TIME OF YEAR. It's a time of change, new beginnings, holiday planning and the start of the cocooning season.

Fall takes me back to my early years and returning to school after a long, fun summer. I specifically start thinking about Wendy, one of my oldest friends, and our daily walks to school. I'd leave my home, round the corner, pick up Wendy, who was always ready, and together we'd speed walk and chat for 16 blocks until we arrived at Riverside High School. It was our routine, how we started our school days and the memories will stay with me forever.

At my home today, fall is the season when our nest empties. Both boys are busy settling into another school year far away from home. The transition for all of us is always full of emotion. They get to start another adventure and test their mettle while Jamie and I settle into a much quieter (and cleaner!) home and suddenly devote all our attention to Max, our dog.

Of course, technology has made it much easier for all of us to stay in touch. Friends, especially those with kids still at home, are always asking me if I miss having my boys at home. Yes, I do. However, we text, email and Skype quite often. They even call to share a triumph, or when they need something. And we are always back together during the holidays, which makes them extra special.

In the meantime, I've scrubbed and tidied their bedrooms as I await their return to our nest. Max and I will enjoy the glorious fall season with our long early-morning walks.

We all have lots to be thankful for.
Enjoy your time at home, with family and friends.

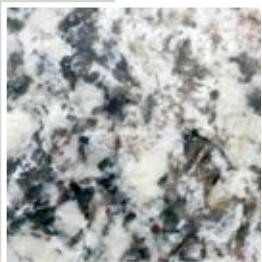
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advice



Interior Designer **Dolores Pian** shares her ideas.

LOWER LEVELS NOT THE DUNGEONS THEY USED TO BE

Gone are the days of low-ceilinged unfinished basements that smell of mould and mildew; meagre places to do laundry and store sports gear and Christmas decorations.

Now that fixer-uppers in some cities are going for a million dollars or more, spending \$100,000 to \$150,000 doesn't sound unreasonable to reclaim existing space. Basement renos are a lot cheaper than an addition and much easier than an attic.

In posh neighbourhoods with historical designation and height restrictions, contractors are now digging deep to create spaces three or four levels below ground, so that they can house bowling alleys, Olympic-size pools – you name it, just dig it. Called “iceberg” architecture, what you see above ground is just the tip of what lies below.

For regular folks, the new-found square footage becomes a fantasy space. When all the necessary rooms for daily living are accounted for above ground, the basement becomes a space where your imagination can run wild.

That's when I dub basements “The Lower Level Retreat.” With a shift in name comes a shift in thinking about the space and its possibilities and functions.

These spaces can house entertainment centres with large 50- to 60-inch televisions, sizes that would normally dominate a regular living area.

For the practically minded, extra storage room is always welcome and if you're going to have a laundry room, then why not add a little panache. The ultimate home office can double as a guest room when grandma and grandpa come to visit.

Other leisure lair spaces include wine cellars, spa retreats that double as doggie grooming centres with heated floors, therapeutic pools for athletic injuries or music studios. The possibilities are endless.

How do you design a livable, lovable space that feels warm and cosy? Let's start with the basics:

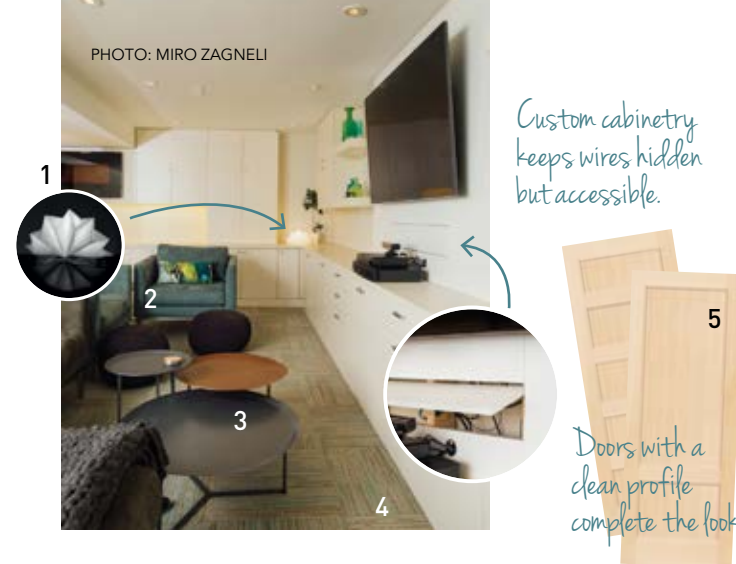
Planning

Open plan seems to work best. If you need to enclose spaces for privacy, then make the walls moveable, to enclose or open a space as required.

Building

Ideally, a finished eight-foot ceiling suits everyone best. Remember that recessed pot lights, flooring and under-floor infrastructure all reduce available height.

PHOTO: MIRO ZAGNELI



Custom cabinetry keeps wires hidden but accessible.

Doors with a clean profile complete the look.

Make sure to address structural issues and all possible moisture issues. Hire a contractor who knows all about basements.

I prefer to add radiant floor heat. If not the whole floor, then in the washroom or spa area. When your tootsies are warm, then the rest of you will feel warm, cosy and pampered.

Lighting

The trick is to find light fixtures and bulbs that spread light in all directions, filling surfaces with light and minimizing harsh shadows to help decrease the cave-like effect.

Choose a warm colour temperature of 2700 kelvin (K) or 3000K. Bluish light of 4000K is cool and will feel fridge-like and not somewhere you'd like to hang out, especially in the winter.

Use different sources of lighting throughout the space such as lamps and LED strips in built-in shelving.

Décor & Design

Raise sofas and other large pieces of furniture off of the floor. Your eye travels underneath furniture on raised legs, keeping the look light and airy.

Use lighter colours and textures as a focal point for emphasis and drama.

Don't place a television over a fireplace. Together they are visually overwhelming.

Flooring

Make sure to use a modular flooring system. Should water damage occur, pieces can be popped out of place and new product installed easily. Large rolled goods such as carpet or linoleum should be avoided. When wet, mould and mildew occur.

I've had a lot of success with carpet tile over plywood. Carpet tile acts as an insulator. It's removable, easily cleaned and easily re-installed.

Your options for flooring are: porcelain or marble tile, or vinyl or laminate planks. Engineered hardwood is debatable, but plank flooring is your best bet.

Fixing up the basement will add much happiness to you and your home. What is your Lower Level Fantasy? **OH**

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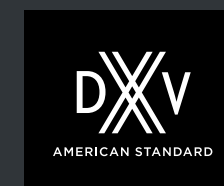
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TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME HOME SELLERS

STORY **WALTER FRANCZYK**
 ILLUSTRATION **SHEILA BRITTON**

Moving house has often been touted as an adventure, but homeowners prefer certainty when selling a home for the first time.

First-time home sellers typically own a small starter home and want to move to a larger house, more suitable for family needs.

Fred Aitken, a broker with Royal LePage Lakes of Muskoka Realty, suggests sellers first think about where they'd like to move. "Check with your bank to make sure you're in a position to buy and sell," says Aitken, who's been selling houses for 24 years.

Prospective sellers must have their financial house in order if they plan to buy another home. A lender will consider car payments, old student loans, credit card debts and whether the family has children attending college or university when it assesses someone's finances. A lender can determine if it's possible to buy a new house before selling the old one. And it may provide the bridge financing to make that possible.

Trying to sell a home on the same date you move into a new one is not easy in today's market, says Aitken. Getting the selling and buying dates to coincide is complicated. "You can get them close but to get it all on the same day is very difficult," he says.

After securing financing, the next step is to find a real estate agent. "Personal referrals are a good thing," says Aitken. "The best way to pick a real estate agent is a referral from a family member or a friend."

Ask to see the real estate agent's track record – statistics that show how successful the agent has been. Find out what the realtor's game plan for selling your home will be. Make sure you're comfortable with your choice of agent because selling your home is a working relationship.

Preparing a home for sale takes time, effort and skill. Laura Willis, a designer and stager, says hiring a stager to prepare a property is well worth the money. "A lot of people who have lived in their home for even two or three years get used to it the way it is and they can't be objective. They can't look at it through a buyer's eyes," says Willis, whose company Refresh also offers sourcing, colour consultations and pre-construction advice.

A professional stager can identify areas of the home that need attention and can make recommendations about paint colours, furniture placement and styling.

A stager can suggest what a home needs to suit the market. "If you're living in the Beaches in Toronto the way that you would stage your home would be totally different than a condo in downtown Toronto. You have to know who your market is," she explains.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR SALE:

Edit

The first step in preparing a home for sale is editing – removing items that a homeowner doesn't like or that don't complement the home. "Get rid of it or put it in storage," says Laura Willis, a designer and stager.

Fix

After thoroughly cleaning the house, determine if it needs structural or cosmetic improvements. Ensure all DIY projects are complete and good quality. "Nobody wants to buy somebody else's headaches," says Realtor Fred Aitken. "If there's something wrong, you need to address it. That's the bottom line."

Pick A Colour

Consider the furniture and wall colours. Could someone else imagine themselves in your home? "HGTV has made it so that everyone walking into a house thinks it should be perfect for them to move in," says Willis. "They have trouble seeing past what the original homeowner has in their home. They want it to be perfect. 'I can move in. I don't have to do anything.'" Avoid loud wall colours in favour of neutrals, but not so neutral that the home looks boring.

Take Pro Photos

As the Internet is the first place many prospective buyers look when searching for a home, professional online photographs are essential to selling a home. Photos taken with a cell phone won't do a house justice. "I had a professional do the last home that we sold," explains Willis. "We thought our home was spectacular, but when we saw what she did, it was amazing."

Fluff Outside

Prospective buyers who have seen a house they like on the Internet will usually drive by to look at the place before contacting a realtor. Curb appeal, a tidy yard and attractive landscaping can help prompt a sale.

Open Your House

Open houses for sales agents will familiarize them with your home. Agents with prospective buyers can immediately contact them. Public open houses should be held within two days of the house going up for sale, Aitken says.

The main lesson in first time home selling is to do your homework. **OH**



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- 1 large sweet potato, thinly sliced
- 2 beets, peeled, thinly sliced
- 1 large apple, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- A few sprigs fresh thyme, stems removed
- A few sprigs fresh oregano, stems removed
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste
- ¾ cup goat cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375°F. Slice root vegetables and apple to a thickness of about ¼ of an inch. I recommend using a mandoline.
- Place vegetables in a large bowl and toss with olive oil, herbs, salt and pepper.
- Rub the bottom and sides of a two-quart casserole dish with butter. Layer the vegetables, apple and garlic, fanning them out as you go while dropping dollops of goat cheese between the layers.
- Cover casserole dish with aluminum foil and bake for one hour. Remove foil and continue to bake uncovered for another 20-35 minutes or until vegetable tops turn golden. **OH**



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FARMHOUSE. *chic*

STORY **KATHLEEN DUNCAN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**

If the walls of this second-century farmhouse could talk, they'd likely be thanking their new (but very familiar) owners for the respectful makeover – the latest step in a rich history that parallels Canada's own. *Continued on page 32*

Beautiful, mature maple trees line the long driveway leading to Rob and Anne Bromley's renovated farmhouse. The thoughtful renovation honours the heritage of the home that they purchased from Rob's parents. **TOP RIGHT:** A large front porch frames the front entrance of the farmhouse, built in 1887. **RIGHT:** Rob and Anne in the living room of their two-storey home.



feature

Established as a farm in 1887 through the pioneering spirit of the Rutherford brothers, the two-storey brick home was built with two distinct living areas to accommodate their growing families. While their decedents continue to farm in the area, it's the second and third generation of a single family in residence today.

For Rob and Anne Bromley, who purchased the 176-acre spread from his parents in 2014, it was like coming home. The childhood sweethearts got together at age 14 and spent much of their young lives onsite. Entrepreneur and stock-car racer Rob could often be found out back working on his latest vehicle or business venture. Anne, who worked for Rob's father at 2nd Century Source for Sports



LEFT: The relaxed, comfortable living room leads down into a recreation room (**ABOVE**) where the extended Bromley family gathers for the holidays. Anne loves clocks, which is evident throughout the home.



LEFT: A fireplace keeps the back porch warm and cosy. **BELOW:** There's a spot on the back porch for the grandchildren to hang their coats and take off their little shoes. **BOTTOM:** This bright hallway separates the back porch from the living room. The staircase leading to the upper level was meticulously relocated to the other end of the hall.



in Orillia, was never far away. They were barely into their 20s when they married and settled elsewhere, but they taught their two daughters to expect holidays alongside 11 cousins at their grandparents' farm.

"We've also had our business here for over 20 years, so it made sense for us to take over the property when it was time for them to downsize," explains Anne, referring to Bromley Automotive, the collision repair and restoration shop housed at the back of the property.

With a lifetime of loving memories, she approached the full-scale renovation with a commitment to honour the heritage of both home and family.

Continued on page 35





"I want to be able to pass it on, too," adds the retiree, who prefers to spend time with her two young grandchildren.

With free rein from her husband, whose one request was a "light and bright" result, and much-appreciated moral support from her mother-in-law, Anne enlisted the help of son-in-law **Aaron Lalonde**, owner of **Vision Landscapes**, an Orillia-based home-improvement and landscaping company, to achieve the desired results both inside and out.

He, in turn, garnered the support of **Orillia Trim & Door Ltd.** and **Orillia Home Hardware Building Centre**.

The goal was to customize the home's functionality for the couple, while infusing the design with a style Anne calls "modern country with a little glam."

It's where sequins meets barn board.

In the guest suite, for example, that comfort-elegant fusion means a sophisticated chrome pendant sparkling from a classic ceiling medallion. It means a polished marble and gleaming glass shower stand opposite a hand-pump faucet and bureau-style vanity. It means tailored silk drapes by **Julie Moorhouse** and plush **Sunshine Carpet & Flooring** broadloom share space with vintage



door knobs, working transom hardware, and hand-stamped door hinges (that revealed their original splendour only after sloughing off five layers of paint).

"I like to put my own touches on things," she nods, pointing out a mirror she framed with the weather-worn boards from their barn. It's one of several pieces she's created that add charm and warmth to balance straight lines and sleek finishes.

Hand-hewn beams from the same barn provide support and style to the widened archway leading to the formerly sunken dining room. Aaron also raised the floor so the hardwood could flow continuously from the kitchen. The bright result received a check of approval on Rob's wish list. *Continued on page 36*



ABOVE: Anne white-washed the tongue-in-groove ceiling in her Bateman Design Centre custom kitchen. The black butcher-block topped island is fittingly upcountry. **LEFT:** A white apron-front sink is a perfect addition to the kitchen. The sink comes with a view of the beautiful landscape outside. **OPPOSITE:** A custom dining set is the focal point in the light-filled dining room off the kitchen.

feature



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Throughout the renovation, Anne was a hands-on project leader in the most literal sense. Using Benjamin Moore paint from **Housser's Paint & Wallpaper**, she painted every room in the house using a cool, modern palette ranging from Gray Wisp in the grandchildren's room and Cedar Key in the living room and guest bedroom, to Galveston Gray and Iron Mountain in the porch.

She also whitewashed the tongue-in-groove ceiling presiding over a custom kitchen by **Bateman Design Centre**, which also provided the dining room table and chairs, bathroom vanity and built-in wall unit.

"Their work is great," says the thoroughly pleased homeowner. "And I love that they're local. (Bateman designer) Eve came by all the time and that made a big difference." *Continued on page 38*

TOP: Major renovations continued upstairs. This bedroom is ready for the grandchildren when they come for a sleepover. **FAR LEFT:** The revamped upstairs bathroom with custom vanity and storage sits between two bedrooms. **LEFT:** The hallway separates the guest rooms from the master suite. Anne has selected beautiful furnishings, some, like the red dresser, with a pop of colour.

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Outside, Aaron updated the pool and patio, added a pergola, landscaped the gardens and added window boxes for a fresh welcome to all visitors. It also provides a lovely view for those relaxing in the sun porch, which has been upgraded to a favourite four-season sitting room, thanks to a new fireplace that keeps things cosy when the weather turns cool.

Continued on page 40



The home's backyard is a beautiful oasis. The pool received a facelift and a new pergola provides shade. **ABOVE LEFT:** The pool house with bright red Muskoka chairs sits inside the fence around the pool. **MIDDLE:** Anne with her sister-in-law Trish Titcombe, who reached out to OUR HOMES to tell us about this lovely home. Thanks Trish! **RIGHT:** A covered swing provides a spot to unwind at the end of a day.



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feature



Anne's glamorous style is evident in the design and décor in this guest bedroom. Luxurious bedding, mirrored bedside tables and custom drapes complete the room.

ABOVE: The master bedroom upstairs is an inspired space. **TOP MIDDLE:** The best part is Anne's spacious and organized closet. **RIGHT:** This cabinet holds essentials in the second guest bedroom upstairs.

Over two years, Anne and Aaron worked carefully to create the new without sacrificing too much of the old. But it wasn't always the quickest choice.

When removing the steep back staircase to provide an office in the master suite above, and to minimize trip hazards for youngsters, the existing wainscoting and chair rail in the hallway downstairs were meticulously maintained. Anne describes the care Aaron took to remove and number each board so they could be replaced in order later.

"That's why I enjoyed working here," Aaron nods. "Trying to maintain the original character of the house, but modernizing it."

With a few details remaining, Anne is ready to slow down and enjoy the process as it, like history, unfolds in due course.

In the meantime, this pioneer dream sits atop the apex of north-eastern Oro-Medonte with a 360-degree panorama that includes all of Bass Lake and a broad swath of Lake Simcoe shoreline. It seems content as well. **OH**

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“Having draperies properly fitted makes a huge visual difference.”



IT JUST *Looks* EXPENSIVE

STORY **YANIC SIMARD** | PHOTOGRAPHY **GILLIAN JACKSON**



PHOTO: BRANDON BARRE

Craving that never-look-at-the-price-tag style? The look of luxe is actually more about high-end taste than unlimited money, and with a few guiding principles anyone can get millionaire décor – even on a “first job” budget. Read on for my favourite tips for living the design high life.

A FRESH START

No matter your design past, you can start fresh with the ultimate haute palette: clean shades of white and grey. Using one all-over colour to treat your walls, trim and ceiling gives that sleek Parisian air, connects your spaces and helps visually erase any imperfections. Try CIL's faintly grey Dove White (10BB 83/020), or Crisp Linen White (61YY 89/040) for a trendy yet classic hint-of-cream look.



INHERIT CULTURE

A millionaire's estate isn't built in a day and it usually carries a sense of history. Vintage items contrast the sharpness of new finds, so look to vintage shops for great deals on pieces with some worn-in character. Try an old wooden chair as a bedside table or a salvaged sideboard as a vanity or storage cabinet. Mix heirlooms and old books into shelving displays to play history against the now. *Continued on page 44*



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DRAMATIC
INDULGENCES

If you never indulge, you won't truly love anything in your space. Basing the design around one or two splurge pieces will give a visual centre and draw attention from the "save" pieces. An eye-catching light (like a stunning mini-chandelier pendant) is a great place to splurge, as it's a natural draw for the eye that can be enjoyed from all angles.

SECRET DEALS

Trading off the splurges with smart save pieces is just good business. Avoid cheap substitutes that will look fake or break down quickly; choose inexpensive classics instead. Try plain, white porcelain subway tile for a timeless look in baths and kitchens, minimalist vanity cabinets from big box stores (you can always customize with a great faucet), and mismatched pillows from off-price resellers or vintage shops.



FEEL THE LUXURY

Your eyes aren't the only way you connect with your space; a millionaire's interior is a feast for all senses, especially touch. Plush materials will give both physical and visual texture, so include elements like wool throw blankets, shearling or Mongolian fur pillows, velvets, linens or heavy jute. Treat yourself to an irresistibly-scented candle from an aspirational store. Layering on accents like these builds up a feeling of wealth and can be done over time.

GROW ACCUSTOMED

There are some areas where it's worth it to invest in custom details. Having draperies properly fitted (especially a full wall floor-to-ceiling) makes a huge visual difference versus letting them drag or hang short, so consider splurging on custom panels or having packaged curtains hemmed.

BE A BOSS

A millionaire isn't shy about getting their way. Know what you want in your décor and make sure to be upfront with contractors or installers to get the details right (like installing flooring in a chevron pattern to add style). Don't be afraid to buck trends and make a personal statement. After all, it's you who should love your home the most – you've earned it. **OH**

THINK BIG

A few statement pieces can do a lot more talking than an extensive collection of clutter. Choose upgrades like oversize lampshades, large frames (with wide matting) or big, art-student canvases or prints, vast rugs (in plain Berber to balance the budget). Extend your trim (like baseboards or window trim) by adding strips of plain half-round or quarter-round to the edges to create the illusion of rich elaborate moulding. Then skip the small knick-knacks that bring down the look.

INVEST IN METALS

Combining elements of gold or warm brass with elements of silver and crisp aluminum gives a hint of Art Deco appeal (think Great Gatsby) and lets you add drama without committing to any one trend. Add metallic candle sticks, picture frames, dining chairs (great for indoor/outdoor flexibility), lamps, side tables and/or sculptural objets.

Plush materials, like velvets, add physical and visual texture.



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PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

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LIVING SMALL

STORY **GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH**

Home prices are going up, up, up these days. The cost explosion has left many millennials between the ages of 18 and 34 wondering if they'll ever afford a home of their own.

According to a recent CIBC poll, 85 per cent of Canadians consider home ownership important, and 59 per cent of millennials say home ownership provides a sense of personal freedom. That freedom comes at an ever-increasing cost.

In reaction, there's a movement to pare down living quarters – make homes smaller, more efficient and less costly. Tiny houses are becoming a growing trend. It's generally accepted that a tiny house covers no more than 500 square feet. That's a far cry from the average size of a Canadian home, which is still about 1,900 square feet.

Tiny homes are big business these days, but building codes and municipal bylaws are spoiling some of the fun.

The most common tiny homes are those built on trailers that can be moved from place to place. In Ontario, these homes on wheels are considered to be like recreational vehicles, which means, in most places, that you can't live in them full time.

However, some entrepreneurs are skirting the rules and building tiny quarters that fly under the radar. Dylan Euteneier's family company Güte builds prefabricated, moveable shepherd huts on cast-iron wheels in Maxwell, Ontario. A fully decked out hut offers 108 square feet. They are recommended for the backyard, cottage, garden or island and can be used as a bunkie, guest cabin, studio, home office or sanctuary.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GÜTE

The beauty of the shepherd hut, Euteneier says, is that it falls under the same rules as a garden shed. In most Ontario municipalities, you do not need a building permit if your structure is less than 108 square feet in size. Güte's shepherd huts can cost up to \$37,000.

Toronto-based The Bunkie Co. has a collection of prefabricated products that all offer 106 square feet but sit on the ground. The Bunkie Co.'s Premier model is priced at \$36,900. Partner Evan Bare says his clients are using the structures to house overflow guests at their cottages. "Most bunkies go north of Toronto to cottage country," Bare says. It's a niche product that resorts are also hip to offer clients who want to go "glamping" (glamour camping). The all-plywood bunkie does not need to meet the Ontario Building Code. The interior can include a Murphy bed, storage and even an ethanol fireplace.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BUNKIE CO.

Bill and Linda McMaster built such a bunkie on their property in Meaford because their future son-in-law's pet allergies mean he can't stay in their main house. "People have slept in it in the spring and of course in summer," says Bill McMaster. "It is especially

attractive as a private, secluded space for reading, napping or meditation."

SMALL HOMES ARE COMING

Tiny homes are just the start of the changing face of housing in Ontario. Ontario's 2011 Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act requires municipalities to change their official plans and bylaws to allow additional units in detached, semi-detached or row-house homes as well as in ancillary structures such as existing detached garages. These new units must comply with the province's Building Code, Fire Code and property standard bylaws.

The City of Ottawa, for example, is in the process of allowing coach houses – permanent standalone buildings – in the backyards or laneways of existing properties. The aim is to increase affordable housing options and make it easier for families to live together on the same property, but in different legal structures.

Port Credit architect Andy Thomson, a tiny homes activist, says the City of Ottawa should receive kudos for having fully embraced the Act. Thomson says it's time for other cities, like Toronto, to follow suit and he's urging Ontario's government to enforce the planning Act. "That would be my advice to the Wynne government – enforce the planning Act," says Thomson.

It won't be long before more companies jump on the tiny home bandwagon. Bare says his Bunkie Co. is preparing to unveil an 800 sq. ft. two-storey that would require a permit and could be a main house. His company is anticipating a future for tiny home communities and a time when small-house living hits the mainstream. **OH**

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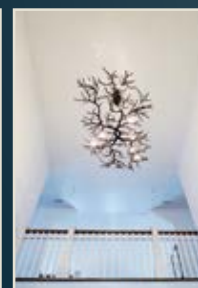
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WHAT'S HOT: Soft greys and quartz counters are in demand. While white kitchens are always hot, the addition of grey is catching on. Ernie says a classic, timeless look now includes white porcelain tiles on the floor, a quartz counter over a grey island and white cabinets around the kitchen's perimeter. In the bathroom, separate glass showers are upgraded to include sliding glass doors on rollers. Vessel tubs are in demand and expected in the master en suite.

FAVOURITES: Entertaining and preparing a meal for your family requires an organized space with everything you need at your fingertips. The design team at Designers Plus will help create a kitchen, butler's pantry or bar area that reflects each client's entertaining style, which includes the all-important seating arrangements. The design team will also create a space plan that includes room for the latest in appliances, which could include a beverage fridge plus freezer and dishwasher drawers.



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PHOTOGRAPHY **BONNIE FOX**

THE PLACE: Designers Plus Kitchen & Bath is celebrating 40 years of creating beautiful lifestyle spaces. Designers Plus continues to build relationships with clients by understanding their needs, which always include graceful, functional and timeless kitchens, baths and storage. "Our design team works with our clients to create custom interiors that suit their lifestyle and needs," says Ernie Lehmann, who leads the design team.

THE STYLE: It's all about enhancing every client's home. "Our clients want a kitchen that's easier to enjoy with their families," Ernie explains. "It's a kitchen the whole family can gather in – including the grandkids – while Nonna is cooking. Our aim is to maximize the enjoyment of that time." Designers Plus offers the best products to achieve the exact look each client desires.



The Design Team: Ernie Lehmann, Shelby Lewis, Shona Silver and Sheree Toffan



MUST-HAVES: Storage and more storage, but designed in a way that provides easy access to the important things we need in the kitchen, bathroom, mudroom or closet. And don't forget the lighting, hardware and faucets. This design team will make sure everything works together in harmony in every space. Happy Anniversary Designers Plus!

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EXTREME milkshakes

RECIPE AND PHOTOS JENELLE MCCULLOCH

Foodies across North America are giving in to their sweet tooth to indulge in the new craze of extreme milkshakes or “Freakshakes,” as the more insane versions are called.

Black Tap, a New York city restaurant, is on the cutting edge, creating shakes like Sugar Sugar and Sweet & Safty.



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THE BASIC

INGREDIENTS

Ice cream of your choice

Milk

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add 1 pint of ice cream and $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of milk to your blender and blend until smooth. Easy, right?

THE VERY GOOEY BLUEBERRY PIE

INGREDIENTS

“THE BASIC” milkshake, vanilla

Cake icing

Graham cracker crumbs

Blueberry pie filling

Mini blueberry pie

Whipped cream

INSTRUCTIONS

- Grab a chilled milkshake glass and coat the edge of the glass in cake icing.
- Next, dip the coated glass into your graham cracker crumbs.
- Alternate layering the blueberry pie filling and vanilla milkshake until three-quarters full.
- Top with mini pie, whipped cream and any other crazy ingredients you desire.

THE RISE N’ SHINE

INGREDIENTS

“THE BASIC” milkshake,
vanilla or chocolate

1 tsp cocoa powder

1 tsp espresso powder

Cake icing

Cookie crumbs

Chocolate sauce

Mini doughnuts

Whipped cream

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add cocoa powder and espresso powder to your basic milkshake recipe and blend.
- Grab a chilled milkshake glass and coat the edge of the glass in cake icing.
- Next, dip the coated glass into your cookie crumbs.
- Smear some chocolate sauce into the sides and bottom of the glass.
- Fill three-quarters full with the espresso-infused milkshake.
- Top with whipped cream, mini doughnuts and any other sweet ingredients you may desire! **OH**

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STORY **M. CAROLYN BLACK**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**

Joe and Maria Scali bought a scrub-filled, lakefront lot on the outskirts of Orillia in 2010 and immediately saw what many others couldn't – they envisioned a spacious family retreat with rare lakefront privacy, afforded by retaining a screen of trees.

It took about two years of clearing and engineering to adapt the land for home building. "We tried to retain a lot of the original, natural landscape," says Joe. Today, their family retreat provides an enticing escape for their growing family.

"We had another place over at Joyland Beach," Maria says. "It was about 2,000 square feet, and it also had five bedrooms but it was tall and not spread out." The couple, who own Pro-Tek Electric Inc. in Richmond Hill, have three grown sons and even five bedrooms were a squeeze when extra guests wanted to visit. This new residence totals about 4,200 square feet – with eight bedrooms. "We believe it's important to spend quality time with your parents and children and this allows us to be together more often," Maria explains.

The couple served as their own contractor. **Orillia Home Hardware Building Centre** supplied much of the lumber and building materials and Joe says his focus was on using as many local suppliers as possible.

Their lakefront has a fire pit, popular with visiting teens, a small tiki hut built by Joe's brother-in-law and a spacious accessories building that holds boats, kayaks and other water toys. The lot's remaining trees house many birds, and birdsong and lapping waves are just some of the soothing summer sounds that accompany the backyard pool's waterfall feature. The front yard contains a bocce court, which Maria laughingly notes has its own "Zamboni," a large scraper designed to level the gravel on the court, a truly Italian-Canadian touch. *Continued on page 59*



When the pool just doesn't cut it, the family gathers at the lake to enjoy a drink at the tiki bar or light a fire.



“When we came up with the exterior design concept we wanted it to be rustic, lots of rooflines and timbers as well,” says Joe. “It’s not a city home.” Maria adds, “We wanted stone and siding.” The exterior Douglas fir timbers are recreated inside the home atop the dining room ceiling and the two-storey great room. Wood is featured prominently in the exterior design from the midnight-blue siding to the soffits, which need special venting. Other natural materials, like limestone from **Rockleith Quarry Ltd.**, are fashioned into front and backyard steps, porch column caps and the interior fireplace hearth. The front porch is covered in Rivenstone from **Unilock**.

Windmill Garden Centre & Landscaping completed all of the incredible landscaping, installing the beautiful Rivenstone out front, all the interlock pavers and constructing the lakefront fire pit.

Although most of the floors are wood, part of the main floor is porcelain tile that closely mimics timber. “We still wanted that wood look but I didn’t want a wood floor in my kitchen,” explains Maria. The porcelain is water-resistant and durable in the always busy kitchen and dining room but maintains the rustic look the couple wanted. All hardwood flooring installed by **Fieldgate Custom Carpentry**. *Continued on page 60*

ABOVE: The magnificent front exterior of the home is a rustic mix of stone and midnight-blue siding. A bocce court fills the front lawn. **BELOW LEFT:** The pool has an automatic safety cover. The cover rolls over the water at the press of a button. **BELOW RIGHT:** The pizza oven in the outdoor kitchen is always in use at the Scali home. Maria has an amazing recipe for a thin pizza crust. **OPPOSITE:** Relaxing by the pool is easy at the Scali getaway. The cabana has a bar and holds all the pool toys.



BELOW: Joe and Maria are always entertaining and the sun porch is a destination because of its close proximity to the outdoor kitchen, deck, pool and lakefront. **OPPOSITE:** The traditional dining room is just off the kitchen. Venetian plaster on the walls and ceiling gives the room an old-world ambience. The custom chandelier is from Northern Iron.

Maria has a no-fuss but colourful eye for decorating. These dishes can be moved outside without worry of glass breaking around the pool.



A three-season sunroom off the dining room opens to a fully functional patio kitchen by **Outdoor Custom Kitchens** and includes a pizza oven, which cooked a record 33 pizzas during their son's 30th birthday celebration. The oven's exterior was given a mosaic look by Maria and Joe with leftover marble tile from their master bedroom en suite.

The roomy yet cosy interior kitchen boasts a large all-gas Thermador stove from Appliance Canada and a walk-in pantry, which houses staples, extra countertop appliances and a freezer. The expansive granite island anchors the room and provides ample space for rolling out pizza dough, enjoying hors d'oeuvres and wine or sharing breakfast with guests. "This is the heartbeat of the house, right here," says Joe.

The lower level has several bedrooms, a large games room that includes a dart board along with ping pong, pool and foosball tables, plus a full bathroom that guests can access from the backyard pool area for a shower after a swim.

Continued on page 63



feature

The kitchen is the busiest room in the house. But it is large enough for the whole family to pitch in with meal prep. A stunning piece of granite tops the huge island. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT:** The large all-gas Thermador stove is surrounded by custom, vanilla cabinetry that includes a lovely range hood. **RIGHT:** The kitchen opens into the living room where a wood-burning Napoleon fireplace warms the home. **TOP LEFT:** Another custom chandelier from Northern Iron is the focal point.



A washer and dryer in the main-floor mudroom conveniently helps deal with the towels the pool generates and an extra fridge is useful for the couple's frequent entertaining. The main floor has several guest bedrooms, including one with a Murphy bed that doubles as Maria's home office. And it was important to the couple that their elderly parents didn't have stairs to navigate. Maria's parents and Joe's mother have their own main-floor bedrooms when they visit.

All the trim and doors were manufactured by **Steve Nimz** of **Nimz Woodworking**, who also created a custom vanity for the main-floor powder room based on the couple's design, along with a matching mirror and coffee table top for the great room. The iron base for the coffee table, along with three iron chandeliers and unique fireplace tools were custom made by **Northern Iron** – the chandelier designs were also based on the couple's specifications. The chandeliers are majestic and unique, creating a focal point in the entrance and the living room. The wood-burning great room fireplace is by **Napoleon Home Comfort**; the stack of wood tucked into a niche comes from trees cleared from the land.

Continued on page 64

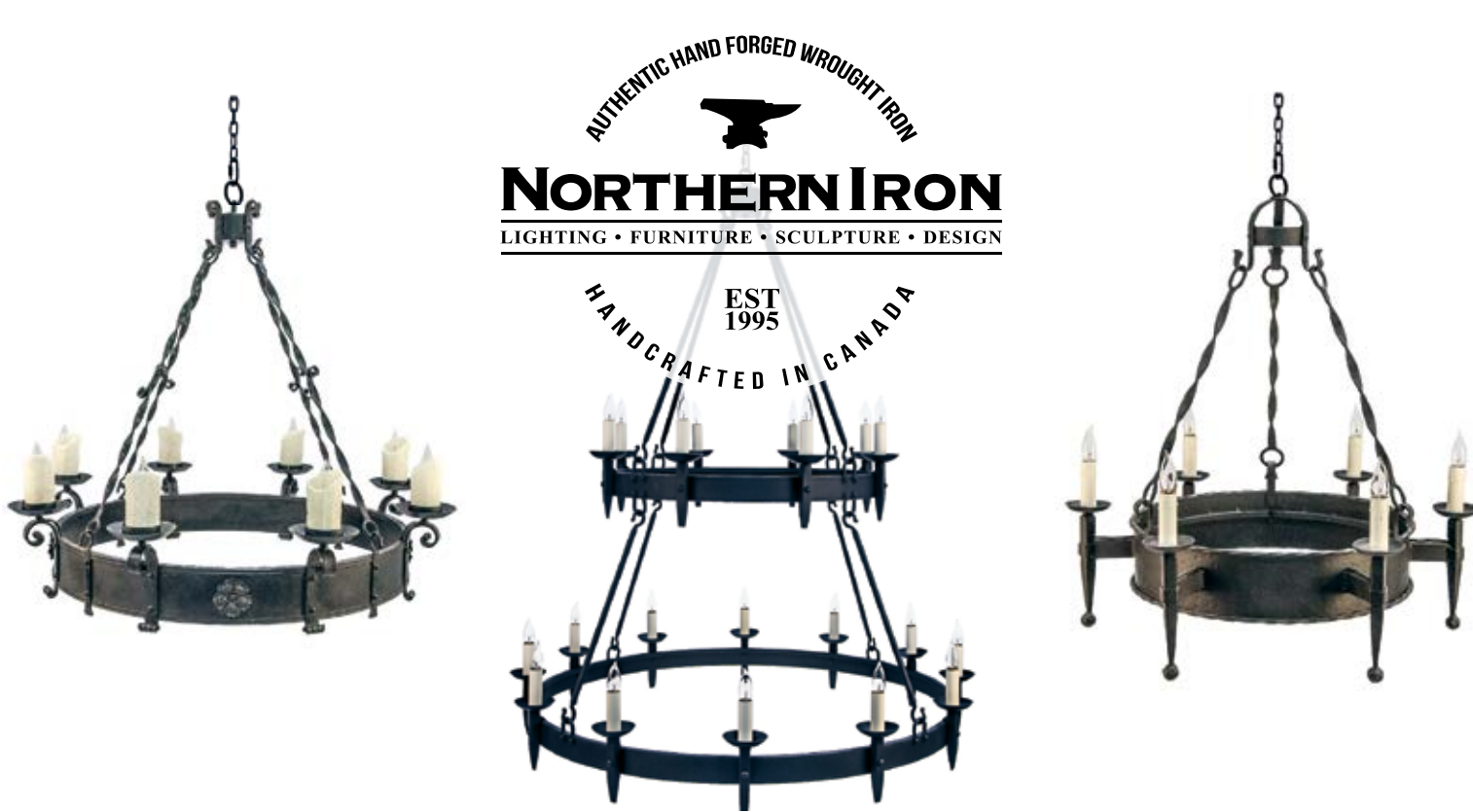


The upstairs has four bedroom suites; one master, with another Napoleon gas fireplace, and three for the couple’s grown sons. The family will expand soon with Maria and Joe expecting their first grandchild in November. The two rear bedrooms have balconies for enjoying the lake view. Another laundry room on the upper floor features thermal-wrap, bamboo-look cabinets. **Janet Torella** of **Creative Brushworks** painted the entire house in warm hues, even adding a lovely Venetian plaster finish in the dining room.

Joe says they walked a fine line between choosing something for the home that was modern and functional and picking things rustic, traditional and suitable for a country home. They succeeded admirably, creating a comfortable yet thoroughly modern home that complements its woodsy lake setting. They love living near Orillia, with its vibrant waterfront along Lake Couchiching, Mariposa Festival and Saturday morning farmers’ market. Maria says, “There is such serenity here, close but yet so far from the hustle and bustle of a big city.” That serenity, along with the wildlife, sunsets and calming chirp of crickets are reminders every day that they truly succeeded in designing the family retreat of their dreams. **OH**



TOP: The master suite upstairs has a balcony overlooking the pool and the lake. The view from here is priceless. **ABOVE:** The en suite has a vessel tub and a large glass shower. Custom cabinets hold all the essentials.



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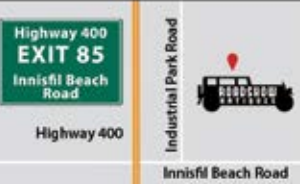
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Tell Us About Your Company:

Established in 2010, MNT Consulting is a small and specialized engineering firm with a cooperative team. We work closely with our clients to prepare plans and designs relating to lot grading plans, septic designs, stormwater management and topographical surveys. As a graduate with a degree in environmental engineering, founder Michelle Tremblay has more than 10 years of experience knowing the ins and outs of current regulations.

What is Your Company's Philosophy?

At MNT Consulting we strive to make our clients feel safe during their new home or renovation project. We know that these projects can be challenging and we assist in making projects safe, easy and run smoothly for our customers. We offer personalized services, as we understand each site is unique and may have its own requirements. An efficient and effective design that suits a client's wants and needs is our goal!

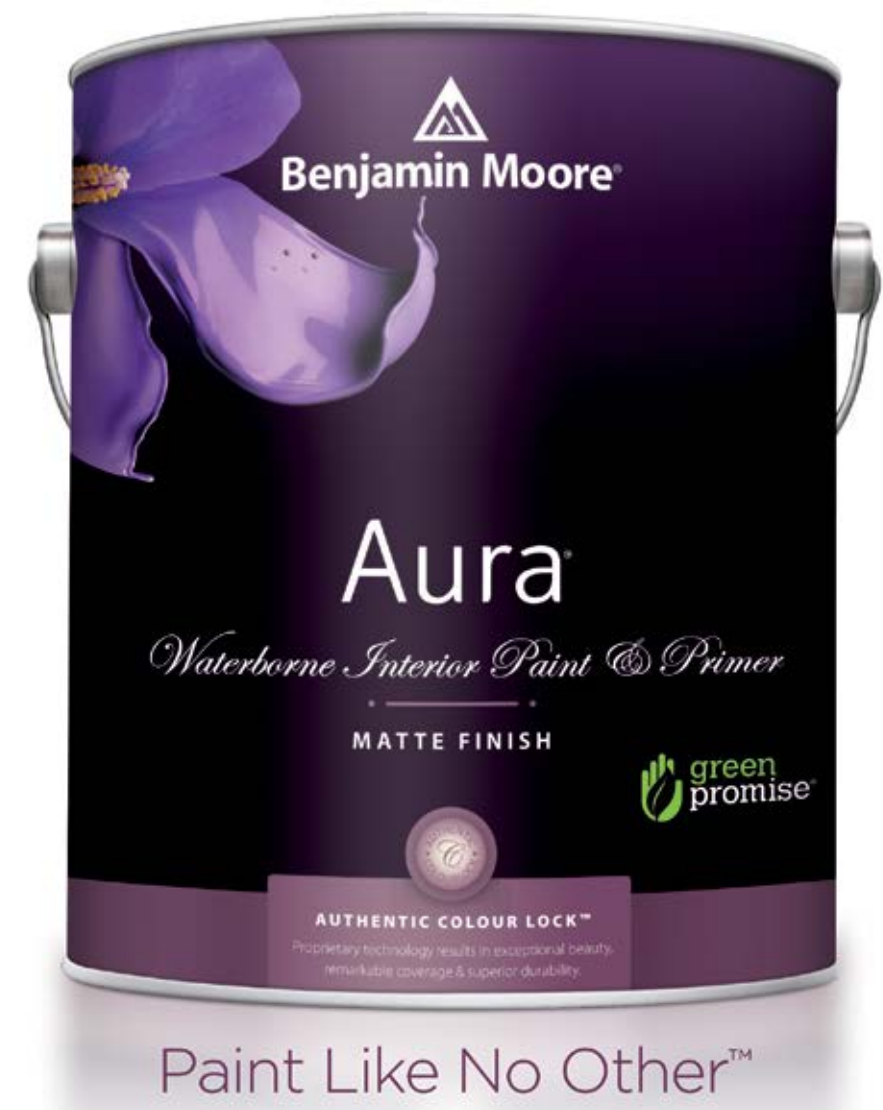
How Does Your Company Make a Difference?

MNT Consulting focuses on the client feeling accompanied and safe, while having a high-standardized product and service. We are transparent with our clients on what they can expect during the process and whom they will need to consult with. We offer full service in-house as it relates to information gathering, design and approvals. We take the guesswork out of development approvals! *Continued on page 68*


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ADRIAN WORTON
Daymark Design Incorporated

Tell Us About Your Company: Daymark Design is a contemporary design and architecture studio situated in Midland, specializing in custom homes, cottages, restaurants and commercial design. Our focus on sustainability, technical excellence and design sensibility sets us apart as a fresh alternative to traditional design firms.

What Amenities Are Your Clients Asking For? Clients often share stories of how the surrounding scenery of their properties is central to the history and future memories they create. Wanting undivided environments, where the exterior and interior are seamless, Daymark often incorporates long-span openings and large windows to invite the outside world into every space, capturing surrounding panoramas.

What Are the Most Important Rooms in Every House? Daymark takes a whole-house approach where no one room is left behind, carefully considering each client's specific needs. Gathering spaces where we break bread, entertain and relax after a long day are most important. Kitchens, living spaces and outdoor gathering areas are where memories will live on for years to come.



ANGELA IACOBACCIO & JUDY SALNEK
Salnek's Custom Window Treatments

What's New in Window Treatments at Salnek's? The idea of motorizing shades is not such a new application but it has become a very important part of our offerings to our clients. I would say that because of child and pet safety and really a just a cleaner look, people are tending to ask for motorized blinds and drapery tracks. There are no distracting cords now with power. Power blinds work remotely off our iPhones and Androids as well and can be easily integrated with other systems in the home.

How Do I Decide What's Best for my Windows? With so much available on the market today making decisions is difficult. At Salnek's we are qualified and certified experts on all the window coverings we carry in the store. We visit our client with samples and are able to easily guide clients to the correct window covering for each application. We also have a worry-free guarantee, as we are a Hunter Douglas gallery store. Our clients can buy with confidence!

What Do You Love the Most About the Glorious Fall Season? I love the colours! Vibrant, bright, warm and inviting! We are fortunate to live in a part of the world that can experience four beautiful seasons. Fall is truly a breathtaking time of the year.

Continued on page 70



FRANK REEDY
*Manager
Home & Cottage Interiors
by Severn Timber Mart*

Tell Us About Your Products and Services: Home & Cottage Interiors offers many interior project ideas for customers building or renovating their homes or cottages. Part of Severn Timber Mart in Coldwater, we offer a selection of flooring, lighting, bathroom fixtures and accessories, vanities, kitchen cabinets, shelving systems and more. Benjamin Moore paint is a fabulous new addition to our assortment – with a wide range of colours and finishes. We also carry outdoor furnishings, Traeger smokers and barbecues and a variety of gift-giving ideas and décor. We also offer Air Miles, delivery service and financing upon approved credit.

What Products are Popular this Fall? With fall comes the urge to renovate inside the home. Laminate and vinyl flooring are very popular right now. Either in stock or ordered in, we can estimate and supply the project. Interior painting, bathroom and kitchen renovations start happening as people prepare for the Christmas season.

Why do You Love Coldwater in Fall? Trees, leaves and the fall colours in and around the area are the most wonderful part of the fall in Coldwater.

MIKE RUDKINS
Mike the Mattress Guy

Tell Us About Your Company: Mike the Mattress Guy is a small but busy family-run mattress and furniture store. We opened in Barrie in November 2010 and have been in the Mapleview plaza ever since. We proudly serve the Barrie and surrounding area for everyone's mattress and furniture needs. We sell Canadian-made mattresses and furniture for fair prices. We also like to give back to the community by encouraging customers to donate to the Food Bank or the Barrie Shelter for Women and Children in exchange for free delivery of our products.

How do You Determine the Right Mattress for You? Come try them out! We have 18 different Canadian-made mattresses on display that customers are more than welcome to lie down on and get a feel for. We are confident that we have the right mattress to suit any preference, including soft, firm, pocket coil, pillow top, gel foam, memory foam, adjustable and many more.

Why is Fall the Perfect Time to Buy a New Mattress? As the kids head back to school parents might notice just how much they've grown over the summer, and their mattress needs may have changed, too. It's important to get a great night's sleep to do well in school for students of all ages, from kindergarten to university and beyond. Even for those who aren't hitting the books, fall is a great time to get a fresh start and love your bed again so you can feel your best.

Continued on page 72





**BRAD TROTTIER
& MATT SCOTT**
Innisbay Custom Homes

Tell Us About Your Company:
We build custom homes really well! Our quality of work and ability to partner with our clients to exceed their expectations sets us apart. Our wealth of experience in building and other sectors allows us to run projects on time and on budget. Innisbay is where quality and integrity meet; on every build.

What is Innisbay’s Signature?
We provide an Innisbay wow feature. The feature is our client’s choice and some examples include a full stone fireplace surround, box coffered ceilings, various built-ins, or brick/stone/tile feature walls. The Innisbay wow feature truly depends on the type of home/space, and of course, our clients.

What is the Most Important Room in any Home? The move to open-concept homes has created a hybrid “most important room,” – your entertainment space. This is usually your great room and kitchen combined. You will want to ensure that this room is inviting, clean and comfortable. The feeling of the space should make your guests want to stay, even if you burn the turkey!

STACEY KOST
Simply Design

Tell Us About Your Design Services: Simply Design provides interior design consulting and project management to busy homeowners to give them spaces that function for their needs and reflect their personal style. Simply Design lets you keep living your life while we plan and manage your renovation to give you a space with function and style.

What Are Your Favourite Rooms to Design and Renovate? I love working with any space that is being “lived in” by a family. Family rooms, recreation rooms, bathrooms, outdoor living spaces and kitchens. Kitchens are the bulk of my work because they are such an important room of the house with so many factors to consider when renovating.

What’s Your Favourite Activity Outside of Work? Outside of working, I climb! Outdoor climbing in the Blue Mountain area is where I spend any spare time. I also enjoy hiking and swimming. In winter, I ski. I also enjoy painting, cooking and cycling. For exercise, I like fitness kickboxing. *Continued on page 74*





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ALL THE RIGHT STUFF

STORY **KIM MASIN** | PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**



John and Lynne Raimondi enjoy the sunshine at home with their dog Crosby. **BELOW:** Timbers from a barn frame the foyer. Inside the entryway, this modern rustic vignette, paired with a traditional chandelier show off Lynne's decorating style.

Vintage meets modern style at this impeccably designed and constructed family home nestled on the shores of Lake Simcoe.

Lynne and John Raimondi, principals of **Meridian Design Build Inc.**, have created a warm and welcoming waterfront home.

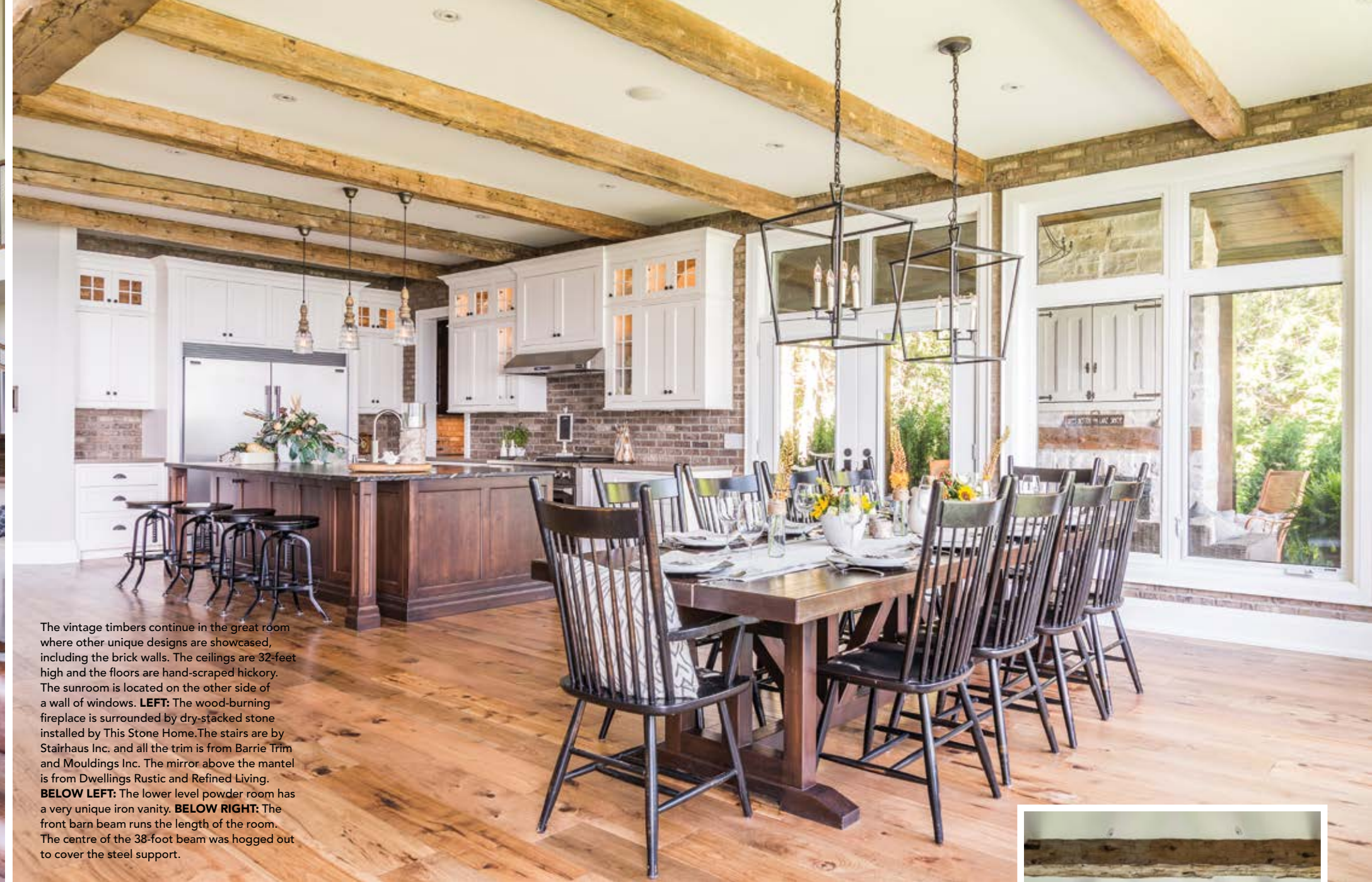
The couple, along with daughters, Olivia, 10, and Sofia, 7, spend a great deal of time entertaining family and friends. "We love sharing this home with other people," says Lynne. "Most of our summer weekends are booked and half of the time our guests sleep here. Sharing our home is the best."

John, a structural engineer, has an exceptional vision for space and design, offering clients of Meridian Design Build Inc. a unique building experience from start-to-finish. John is known for his constructive and efficient solutions while providing the same desired outcome on a new build – a huge benefit of using a structural engineer as a builder with a focus on architectural design.

"We've been fortunate enough to build many great homes for other people in many different styles," John humbly explains. "It's a process I enjoy."

The Raimondi home showcases Meridian's expertise. *Continued on page 78*





The vintage timbers continue in the great room where other unique designs are showcased, including the brick walls. The ceilings are 32-feet high and the floors are hand-scraped hickory. The sunroom is located on the other side of a wall of windows. **LEFT:** The wood-burning fireplace is surrounded by dry-stacked stone installed by This Stone Home. The stairs are by Stairhaus Inc. and all the trim is from Barrie Trim and Mouldings Inc. The mirror above the mantel is from Dwellings Rustic and Refined Living. **BELOW LEFT:** The lower level powder room has a very unique iron vanity. **BELOW RIGHT:** The front barn beam runs the length of the room. The centre of the 38-foot beam was hogged out to cover the steel support.

Lynne, guided by designer **Lidia van Zyl** of **LVZ Design**, played a vital part in the interior design of the house, researching and discovering the appropriate, affordable finishes, furniture and accessories. Together Lynne and Lidia created the exquisite combination of informal elegance throughout the house with vintage rustic style. Lidia helped with colours, custom linens and the purchase and placement of furniture for optimum flow and style.

“People should design their home around things that make them feel comfortable,” John says. “It makes the home feel like your home the minute you move in because you’ve

been so involved in the selection of so many things. You’re choosing the tiles, the vanities, the kitchen knobs and there are so many stories behind those choices by the time it’s done – it’s like your favourite blanket the minute you move in.”

Nestled on a tree-lined lot, this home is reminiscent of a historic home built centuries ago. “We wanted the house to look like it had been here forever with the flush grout, that old-world look,” says John. “They used to create this look with limestone but with the sandstone I selected it looks even older.” John searched and found the unique sandstone at Ducharme Quarries in Quebec and it was

installed with precision by **JP Contracting Masonry Ltd.** The stucco, coloured in Benjamin Moore’s Revere Pewter, was completed by **Openview Contracting**. The stucco complements the rustic barn-board shutters crafted by **Jake Wice** of **J. Wice Custom Woodworking**. Custom wood doors from Maxwell Wood Turnings Ltd., frame the entranceway.

Stepping over the threshold into a beautiful, open great room, old meets new with refurbished and antique furniture, barn beams and exposed brick.

The kitchen to the left boasts a large island, custom made by Wice Custom Woodworking

with a leathered granite top from **Northern Granite Works**. A three-eighths-of-an-inch brick faces the wall behind the upper cabinets. It is a unique touch that adds to the interior’s rustic charm. White custom kitchen cabinets, again by Wice Custom Woodworking, brighten the entire space along with the stainless-steel modern appliances. Pilot pendants suspended over the island are from Lëuk Bij Hermas Interiors.

The 12-foot solid-wood dining room table made by **Bateman Design Centre** has a base made from trusses that John designed. “We designed the wall overlooking the bay to match the table,” he says. *Continued on page 80*





The sun porch is a favourite destination for the whole family. The fireplace warms the space in all seasons. The dining furniture, including the cabinet that houses a television above the fireplace, came from a heritage home sale.

Personal elements like the dance hallway are essential for entertaining and family fun. “The kids do gymnastics here,” Lynne says “and we taught Crosby, our dog, how to fetch down this hallway.”

A massive oak beam culled from a barn in Coldwater runs the length of the ceiling over the great room. “We hogged out the entire length of a 38-foot barn beam to cover the steel beam,” says John.

Engineered hand-scraped hickory floors by Antique Impression and purchased through **Irvine Carpet One Floor & Home** are installed throughout the home.

The ceilings are 32-feet high. Floor-to-ceiling windows from **United Lumber Home Hardware Building Centre** provide natural lighting, transporting nature indoors. “We wanted it to feel like one big window but they’re four individual ones,” explains John. “I wanted to maximize the limitations of the windows because we could only go 48-inches wide without going to custom sizes and more expense. We based the design of this window on that fact.”

Details like this exemplify John’s philosophy at Meridian – building, designing and working with his clients to ensure he produces the most desired effect while keeping costs in mind. “These are tricks working with someone who can design and build,” he explains. “In the design stage, I can steer people away from making costly mistakes by offering compromising solutions that give 99.9 per cent the same effect.”

The indoor dry stacked, natural stone, wood-burning fireplace creates a stunning visual for the great room, installed by **This Stone Home**. “This was non-negotiable for us,” says John. “We burn a lot of wood here and in the fireplace in the sunroom.”

The sunroom is Lynne’s favourite spot in the house, located right off the kitchen. A striking stone wood-burning fireplace and a 12-foot sofa from Restoration Hardware create a comfortable lounge outside. “A lot of naps happen out here,” jokes Lynne. There are screens that can be drawn for protection from pesky bugs or up for lovely breezes off the water. *Continued on page 82*



ABOVE: The view of the home from the lakeside of the property. All windows are from United Lumber Home Hardware Building Centre. John is particularly proud of his design that allowed him to use stock windows on a

grand scale. The home has a Napoleon furnace. **TOP LEFT:** Meridian tamed the rugged piece of land with exquisite landscaping and a deck mid-way between the house and the dock. **TOP RIGHT:** The views are exquisite from the sunroom.

home & builder

Edgecomb Gray by Benjamin Moore was the paint colour selected for the main floor and upstairs, where the bedrooms are located. Olivia and Sofia's rooms are beautifully decorated. Lynette Van Greunen of Shabby Chic Houzz repainted some of the furniture. Lynne furnished their bathroom with furnishings from Restoration Hardware and Lëuk Bij Hermas.



The majority of the furniture in the sunroom and in other rooms came from a dear friend who was selling her heritage home and downsizing. John and Lynne jumped at the chance to purchase the vintage-style furniture.

Coloured, stamped concrete and all of the patio installations were completed by **Lavalee Concrete**, however Meridian completed all of the other landscaping.

Open, wide-planked oak stairs from **Stairhaus Inc.** lead to the second floor. The stunning girls' rooms are complete with walk-in closets. "That was the only thing they asked for from John," laughs Lynne. The vintage beds and furniture were part of the heritage home sale and **Lynette Van Greunen** from **Shabby Chic Houzz** painted them.

The master bedroom's windows provide a calming view of the water. An opulent, oversize pendant light in the master is another find from their friend's home. "It was sitting in the garage, dirty and dusty," says Lynne. "But once John cleaned it up, it was the perfect piece."

A spa-like en suite has a large shower and, more importantly to Lynne, a vessel tub (from **Bathworks**). All plumbing was installed by **Custom Plumbing**. Tile is from **Desert Tile**. Granite-topped vanities and matching storage towers are from Restoration Hardware.

Continued on page 84

The master suite has an envious view through a large window. The headboard was a wonderful find for Lynne. Desert Tile provided the tile for the en suite.





Guests have their own, beautifully decorated space. The cottage space above the garage includes a living room, bedroom with a desk nook and a full bath. This soft carpet in this bedroom, from Irvine Carpet One Floor & Home, resembles straw.



The loft “cottage” space over the garage sits behind an eight-foot pine door, made by Maxwell Wood Turnings Ltd. The space houses two cosy bedrooms, an en suite bathroom and a comfy lounge area for their guests to relax. “We want our guests to be comfortable and have their own space,” says Lynne. The plush straw-coloured carpet from Irvine Carpet One Floor & Home warms the rooms. Guests sleep between luxurious Brunelli linens ordered by Lidia.

The original lot was the site of a burned down old cottage where only the fireplace and foundation remained standing, and it was overgrown to the tenth degree. “One thing we’re proudest of is that we turned this lot into something spectacular from an old burned down house,” John says. “It’s the angle of the house on the lot versus the water and the road. It’s not just the drywall and brick, it’s the entire development of the property. That’s the real art of what Meridian does.”

“We feel 100 per cent blessed to live here and to be able to build a home like this,” adds Lynne. **OH**




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STORY **BARBARA NYKE**

lounging AROUND AT HOME BRINGING BACK AT-HOME BARS

An anonymous writer said, “Why limit happy to an hour?” When you have a well-designed and inviting bar in your home, happy hour can last as long as you want.

If you're the kind of person whose favourite cool weather activity is cosy comforts of home, having your own customized bar will help to chase away the fall and winter blues.

Back in the 60s and 70s, it was popular for homes to have a basement bar, complete with wood panelling, a curved bar with a few bar stools and a mirrored back wall to display the barwares. Thankfully, that clichéd design trend is over and home bars

aren't relegated to the basement any longer.

Bars can be incorporated into the overall design scheme, whether it's a modest well-appointed bar cart, or a free-standing wet bar complete with a sink, running water, specialty appliances and bar stools. At the end of the day, you want your home bar-lounge to surround you with interesting textures, colours, lighting and ambience and ultimately to be relaxing.

Here are three key considerations to include in your home bar:

1 **How will you use your bar?**
Entertaining is easier with a central gathering spot. Whether you're welcoming family for dinner or hosting a small cocktail party, a bar is a big attraction. You'll have to decide on the size and the location, which will depend on how you plan to use your bar. Do you have a sink for a wet bar? Will it be a stand-alone feature in your home, or will your bar complement an elegantly appointed outdoor kitchen?

2 **What's your style?** A bar could be a major feature of any room. Its location within the home will determine if the style will be harmonious with adjacent rooms, particularly if they open onto one another, or if the bar will be in a separate room. Then it can be a different style. Do you like a particular design era for bars and lounges? Maybe it's the mod-60s style, or contemporary-luxe style. Its placement, size and how it relates to the other rooms will affect the flow of your home.

3 **What features do you want?**
Customization is the ultimate enjoyment of any bar design. Homeowners can choose from an incredible selection:

Wine fridge • Mini-fridge • Ice machine
• Hot water spout • Sink • Drain board
• Under-counter lighting • Various light levels • Sound system with customized music selection • Television • Storage
• Display area • Counter space for small appliances • Wall-mounted oven
• Bar seating • Lounge area

Defining these criteria will influence your bar's aesthetic, the design materials you choose and its ultimate functionality. **OH**



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outdoor living

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NAPOLEON: Linear Patioflame. Many media options to choose from. Stand it alone or install in a built-in custom application as shown here.

PALOFORM: Bol Carten Fire Pit. Choose from river rocks or lava rocks.



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Extend your time outdoors with a stylish gas or propane fire pit, fire bowl or fire table.

AMERICAN FYRE DESIGNS: French Barrel Oak Cosmopolitan Round Firetable. Features a reclaimed wood-style table top.



ELDORADO STONE: Marbella Artisan Fire Bowl. Choose from a smooth, honed or textured travertine surface. Four colour options available.



DEKKO CONCRETE: Alea Firepit. Rock options include slate or ivory river rock, black lava rock or bronze glass. Six colour options to choose from.



PALOFORM: Fold Fire Table. Available in black, graphite or white powder coat. Choose from lava rocks or glass. OH



HEARTH PRODUCTS CONTROLS: Tempe Copper Fire Bowl. Also has a fire and water option. Many media options to choose from.



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living with GOLD

STORY & ROOM DESIGN **JACKIE GLASS**
ROOM PHOTOGRAPHY **PAUL CHMIELOWIEC**

The golden rays of summer sunlight streaming through our windows to brighten our interiors are slowly fading away. It's the time of year to capture every bit of light, so our interiors continue to glow until our sunny summer appears once again.



My Jackie Glass Inc. design team creates spaces that look sunny, bright and airy all year-round. Generating light in a space is key to how comfortable and happy a room can make our family and guests. Think about how a dark sky at night can be cold and ominous but when the stars are twinkling bright, the dark universe comes alive and makes us feel happy and amazed. We want to linger and enjoy every little twinkle, no matter the size.

The smallest hint of sparkle can instantly bring a room to life. Every room in the house, whether light or dark, can benefit from a little shine. From the bathroom to the kitchen, when you add reflective elements to a space, it is suddenly transformed and becomes an attractive room you want to live in.

Both artificial and natural light from light fixtures and windows brighten every room. Reflective metals, glass and mirror accents will enhance these light sources and bounce reflected light around the room, adding life and personality.

For me, I love to maximize and capture light in a room with reflective gilded decorative elements that feature either decadent polished or demure matte finishes. Whether you fancy gold leaf or polished brass for a touch of glam or prefer champagne gold, rose gold or aged brass for a more classic look, they'll all elevate your décor with the Midas touch.

» Use golden accents in small doses so they don't compete but rather complete the space. Even the smallest touches of shine, whether matte or polished in golden, brassy or rosy tones, will add a golden glint you can't ignore.



« Pairing golden tones with dark wood and dark neutral colours like royal blue or the rich purple velvet chairs (as shown here in my client's living room) makes a regal statement in an otherwise traditional room. Set against walls and draperies in whispery golden tones, gilded accents like the lamps, cocktail tables and mirrors truly make the room sparkle and draw the eye toward the light and around the room.



BENJAMIN MOORE: Concord Ivory HC-12
GRAHAM & BROWN: Metallic Tropic Aqua/Gold Wallpaper

CURATED KRAVET: Orleans Glass-Topped Gold Cocktail Table

» If you want to make a truly stunning statement in a room, introduce large objects like a glass-top table with a gold base or a large work of art or sculpture in an entrance hall or living room. Chandeliers, floor lamps, walls and draperies in warm golden hues will set off any neutral palette and satisfy our need for brilliant beams of sunlight to warm our souls, brighten our days and lift our spirits until the return of summer's sunbeams. **OH**



KEVIN O'BRIEN STUDIO: Metallic Arches Velvet Gold Pillow

CURATED KRAVET: La Jolla Ottoman in Kravet's Join The Club Platinum Fabric

CRATE & BARREL: Starburst Bowl



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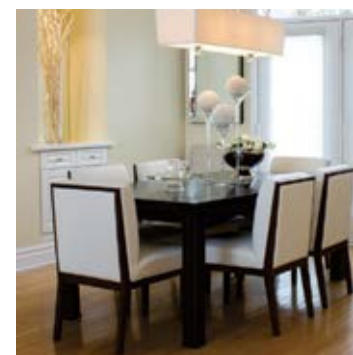
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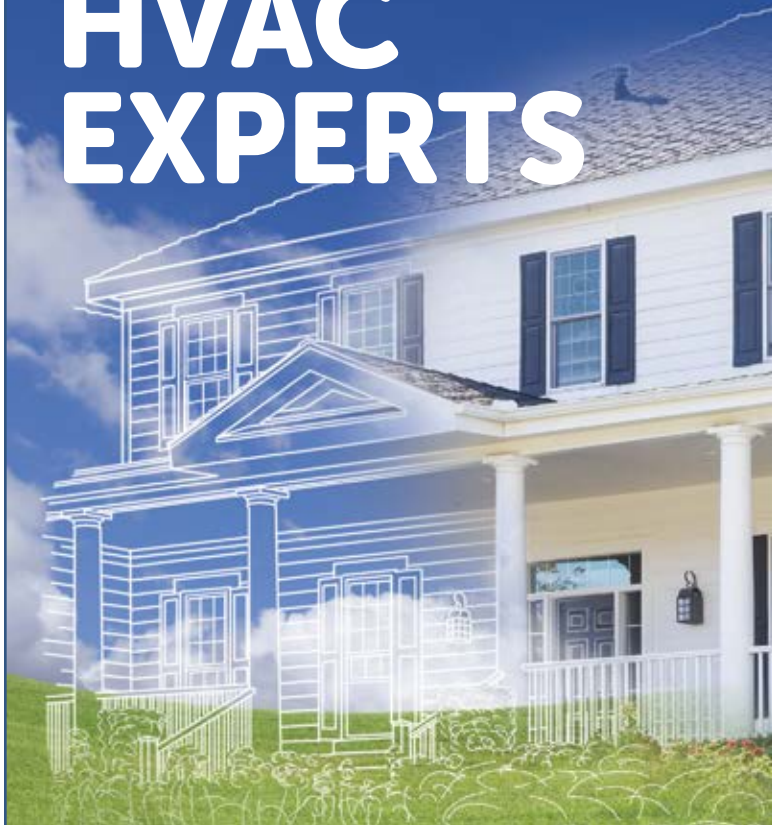


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Prior to real estate, Kelly worked as a CGA/CPA for several GTA Real Estate developers in the 1980's and 1990's. In 1997 she ventured out on her own, forming a partnership specializing in taxation. She eventually transitioned into real estate a Sale Representative with Forest Hill Real Estate. Kelly currently services and sells in the GTA, Innisfil, Barrie and Oro-Medonte regions concentrating on executive and luxury real estate.

David Wagman, a founding managing partner of Forest Hill Real Estate, formed the company in 1985 with his partner David Fingold, creating a boutique service with vast resources emphasising on technology. With 50 years in the real estate industry as Builder and Sales Representative, David brings a wealth of knowledge, high-profile connections, strategy to the buying/selling process and strong negotiating/closing skills.

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STORY AND PHOTOS **TARA CHATTELL**

Add a touch of rustic glam to your table and wow your guests with these pretty gold-stenciled chargers, made from salvaged logs.



TOOLS & MATERIALS:

Log slices, as many as you would like to make in your set, approximately 18 inches in diameter, 2-3 inches thick

Water-based wood stain, colour of your choice

Clean rag, for staining slices

Stencil(s) of your choice

Circular shape for tracing, such as a paint can or large plastic lid

Temporary spray adhesive

Gold acrylic craft paint

Foam paintbrush, for stenciling

Water or sink, for rinsing stencil

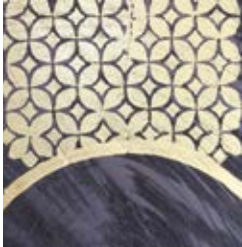
Dry cloth, for drying stencil

Clear, water-based wood finish

Large paintbrush, for applying wood finish

online

For a how-to on cutting your own log slices visit ourhomes.ca/mag/slices



HOW-TO:

Step 1 – Stain

- Using a clean cloth, apply wood stain to the slices according to directions on the product. I found that the wood really absorbs the stain, so I had a better outcome pouring the stain directly onto the wood in small batches and rubbing it in with a cloth. I used two coats of stain. Allow to dry according to product directions or overnight.

Step 2 – Stencil

- Set a circular shape (I used a paint can) in the centre of your first wood slice. With a foam paintbrush, trace around the shape with gold paint, creating a circle on your wood. You will be stenciling between this circle and the outer edge of the wood slice. Remove shape and allow the painted gold circle to dry to the touch. Wipe excess paint off the shape. Repeat with remaining slices.

- Spray temporary adhesive onto the underside of the stencil and place it on the wood where you'd like to begin stenciling. With the foam paintbrush, dab gold paint onto the stencil sparingly to help limit paint bleeding. Lift the stencil and allow area to dry to the touch, about 3-5 minutes, to prevent smudging when stenciling the adjacent area. Rinse and dry stencil, and re-apply adhesive as needed. Repeat this step, matching up your pattern as you go, until the entire outside rim of the wood slice is covered. Repeat with remaining slices.

Step 3 – Apply Finish

- Allow the gold paint to dry thoroughly, according to product directions.
- Apply clear wood finish to the top and sides of the wood slices. Allow to dry according to directions on the product. **OH**



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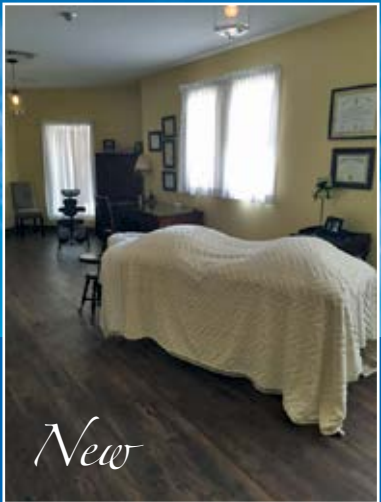
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RECIPE AND PHOTOS **PAT CROCKER**

Homemade chili sauce complements eggs any style and bacon or sausage meats like no other condiment.

I especially like to have a pint on hand for the one or two occasions when we serve a huge country breakfast to guests who have come out from the city for the weekend. Nothing communicates the simple country pleasures like the first meal of the day cooked in cast iron skillets and grills, over a wood stove. If you get beyond breakfast, this heritage chili sauce also tops meatloaf and lends the hint of cinnamon and spice to skillet dinners and roast beef or chicken at Sunday dinners.

If you like your chili sauce with some heat, add fresh or dried hot cayenne pepper (crushed or chopped) or hot sauce to taste.



INGREDIENTS

(Makes 9 pint jars)

- 12 cups heritage tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped, with juices (from about 7-½ lbs. whole heritage tomatoes)
- 4 cups paste tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped, with juices (from about 2-½ lbs. whole paste tomatoes)
- 8 large onions, chopped
- 5 red bell peppers, chopped
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- ¼ apple, chopped
- 2 cups white wine vinegar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp salt
- 1 Tbsp whole mustard seeds, crushed
- 1-½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- pinch chili powder, or to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

- In a Maslin pan or large, heavy pan, combine tomatoes, onions, peppers, celery, apple, vinegar, granulated and brown sugar, salt and mustard seeds. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and boil gently, stirring occasionally for 1-½ hours until sauce begins to thicken. Add cinnamon, cloves, ginger and chili powder. Boil gently, stirring frequently for about 30 minutes, or until thickened and sauce begins to mound on a spoon.
- Meanwhile, in a large stockpot or canning kettle, cover nine, one-pint (2 cup) jars with water and bring to a simmer. Cover and turn off heat. In a shallow pan, arrange the lids, lifter, funnel and tongs and pour boiling water over and set aside.
- Using tongs, lift hot jars one at a time out of the pot. Fill with hot chili sauce, leaving a ½-inch headspace. Run a thin nonmetallic utensil around the inside of the jar to allow air to escape. Add more hot chili if necessary, to leave a ½-inch headspace. Wipe rims, top with flat lids and screw on metal rings (do not over tighten rings). Return jar to the hot water bath and continue to fill remaining jars. Cover the pot and bring the water to a full rolling boil over high heat. Keep water boiling for 20 minutes.
- Remove pot lid, turn off the heat and wait five minutes before removing jars to a towel or rack to cool completely. Check seals, label and store in a cool place for up to one year.

Pat Crocker is a Culinary Herbalist, writing and growing herbs in Grey County. She is the author of 18 cookbooks.

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