

# *lifestyle* EXTRAORDINAIRE

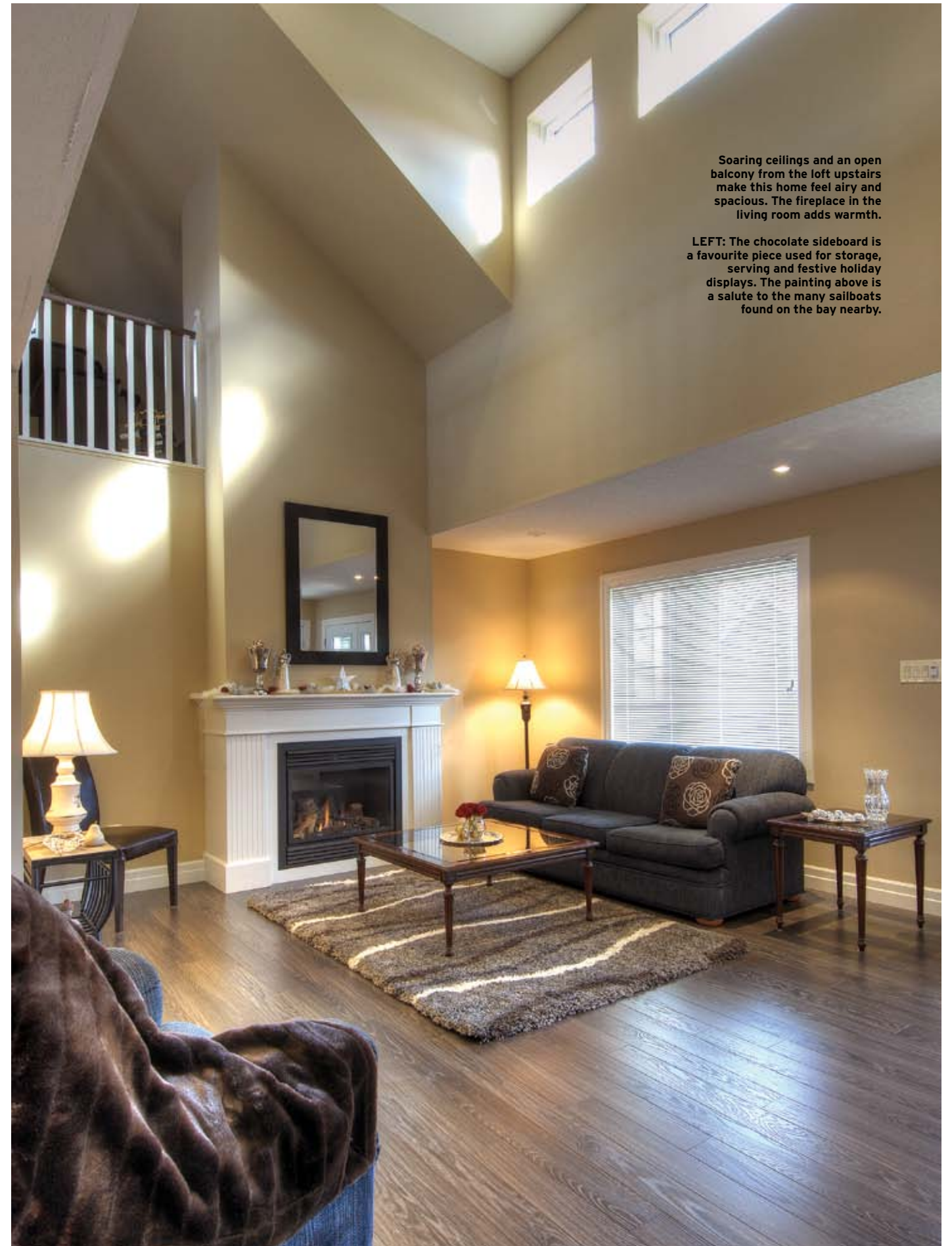
BY M. CAROLYN BLACK // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

A Jane Austen character once noted, “There is nothing like staying at home for real comfort.” Diane and Phil Eschli, new homeowners at **The Village at Bay Moorings** in Penetanguishene, couldn’t agree more. Phil says, “We’re very much home people. We’re not great travelers, we found that out. We’re very happy here at home.” And no wonder – with a roomy loft, lush leather sofa and flickering fireplace beckoning, why would you ever want to leave? *Continued on page 56*



The Eschlis downsized from their last home. Diane kept some of her furniture and added artwork, cushions, a new side table and accessories from Simply Country in Midland. A fabulous shag rug from the Area Rug Shop in Barrie jazzes up her living room.





Soaring ceilings and an open balcony from the loft upstairs make this home feel airy and spacious. The fireplace in the living room adds warmth.

LEFT: The chocolate sideboard is a favourite piece used for storage, serving and festive holiday displays. The painting above is a salute to the many sailboats found on the bay nearby.



# home & builder

The Eschlis have lived in the Penetanguishene community for only one year, but it's felt like home for much longer. Phil, a retired commercial contractor originally from Nobleton, says, "Our friends have their boat here at **Bay Port Marina** and we came up for years to boat with them."

Patricia Pearce, sales representative for The Village at Bay Moorings notes that "most of the Village residents are 50 plus and about half of them are local people and the rest are from other communities. Some owners are transient boaters at **Bay Moorings Marina** and have ended up purchasing, so people really like what the area has to offer."

Indeed, the Eschlis came to the area to retire but Phil ended up working as the maintenance manager at two local marinas, including Bay Moorings Marina across the street from their **Parkbridge** community. Diane, a former switchboard operator for Summit Ford, laughs and says, as for her, she's "totally retired and loving it!"

She adds, "Phil and I were looking for an adult lifestyle community for about four or five years and some of our friends were in Parkbridge communities so we were looking around and not sure where we wanted to go. Our friends, Brian and Chris Vickers, came to look at the luxury townhouses that are part of this development. I asked them to pick us up a brochure and that was it. It was perfect. We're familiar with the area, it's close to our circle of friends and family in Toronto, plus we wanted to be close to the water. To me, it's heaven to be able to walk along the waterfront."

The Vickers ended up buying a bungalow with a loft, and another set of close friends – Dan and Linda Barnes – purchased a home in the same cul de sac. Phil says, "Our best friends coming here; that was a bonus that we hadn't figured on." *Continued on page 58*



Diane loves her white kitchen with serving bar and easy access to the dining room.

**LEFT:** The holidays are merry and bright at the Eschli home. Diane loves to display her finest when company's coming.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** The table in the dining room is set for a holiday dinner party. Diane had the corner hutch refinished at Marcelville to match the kitchen.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Diane checks out what's cooking on her gas range.





RIGHT AND BELOW: Diane and Phil love to relax and entertain upstairs in the large loft.

Diane loves the neighbourly close contact. She says, “We use the front porch a lot because it’s nice to sit out and have your coffee and sometimes the neighbours join us in the morning. In the afternoon they’ll join us for cocktails. Last winter we had a little dinner party where we had cocktails and hors d’oeuvres at one house, then walked around the block and went to another house for the next course. It’s really nice to be able to do that.”

Both Phil and Diane are in their early sixties and they say it’s the perfect age to retire. Phil notes, “We’ve both worked hard our whole lives and Diane had a rule that she wasn’t going to work past the age of 60, so that was our goal.”


Although new to the area, the Eschlis have made every effort to meet new people and shop at the local merchants. Phil says, “Our neighbours have spoken highly of the local butcher in town, **Rawson’s Meat & Deli.**” Diane loves reading and is really looking forward to checking out the local library and **The Reading Room** bookstore. She says, “There’s so much history here, this is what I love. I can hardly wait to delve into the history.”

Phil says, “We like the small town lifestyle, everyone is really friendly here. We’re only 40 minutes away from Barrie, which is great. We’ve got the best of both worlds up here. We’ve got the quiet country life and yet it’s busy enough for everything.” *Continued on page 60*



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BELOW: The master suite is located on the main floor.

RIGHT: The lovely master en suite in their bungalow loft has a separate glass shower.



They were pleasantly surprised by the housing prices in the area. Diane says, "We thought we would get a smaller house but with Parkbridge it afforded us the opportunity to get a bigger house for the money." Phil adds with a chuckle that he likes having access to the waterfront without paying the higher taxes associated with waterfront property. Parkbridge is installing a pond with a fountain behind the houses in the court, which the Eschlis intend to enjoy from their backyard deck

They are very pleased with the quality of their home, the 2,159 sq. ft. Chesapeake model. Phil says, "We have lived in four custom-built homes and I've got to say the workmanship is top notch. They've done a nice job here."

They also like the **Parkbridge Advantage Card**, a discount card for local attractions and merchants. Diane says, "We've been trying to buy as much locally as we can and if we can't get it here we go to Barrie." Diane purchased accessories and art from **Simply Country** in Midland and found a beautiful shag carpet for her living room at the **Area Rug Shop** in Barrie.

The couple couldn't be more pleased with the tableau that greets them each morning. Phil says, "I start work at 8 o'clock and I'll be standing there on the dock looking out and just thinking how gorgeous the view is. Maybe people who grew up here are used to it but we really appreciate what we're seeing here - I'm taking my camera to work to take pictures." Diane agrees, "I take a walk along the road by the water and then I stop and look at the scenery. I can hear the church bells in the background and it's just beautiful."

Excursions to the local **Farmers' Market** at the Penetanguishene dock and **Art in the Park** along the historic waterfront have whet their appetites for more weekend adventures, and they're looking forward to cruising Georgian Bay on the **M. S. Georgian Queen** next summer with visitors. Phil says, "We also haven't had a chance yet to go to the **King's Wharf Theatre**, which is just down the street, and that is something we'll really enjoy doing."

Diane has a favourite saying: "Happiness is not having everything you want, it's wanting everything you have, and I think we have it all right here." **OH**



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