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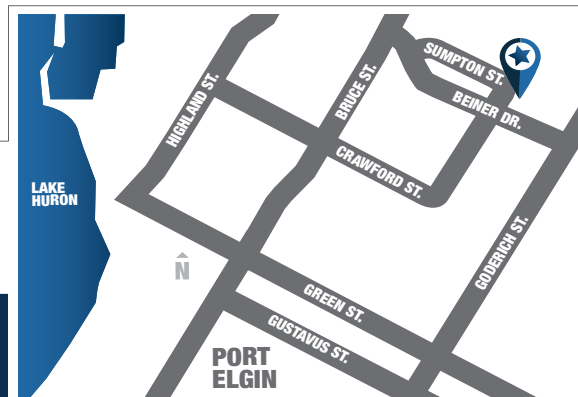
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I AM EXCITED TO SHARE that we've just purchased a new home we will be moving into this autumn. It is far from our familiar – an 1890s yellow brick farmhouse on the edge of a tiny hamlet, encased in nearly 70 acres of sprawling wild green. It is rough around the edges and needs some love and tender care, but nothing we aren't capable of giving.

Hunting for a country property that is just right (size, land, budget) has been a slow process dragging on over many years.

We've viewed many properties that met one or two, but never three of our requirements. Real estate agents have come and gone, and more time has been spent whittling away hours browsing MLS than any person should waste.

In the interim we've bought houses, had children and undertaken major renovations (great practise for a farmhouse that needs some sprucing). Regardless, we've always been prepared to take the plunge should the right home appear on the market. It took so long some people had begun to suspect that we simply liked to talk about living in the country, but would never actually arrive there. I had begun to think it a possibility myself.

We have almost always been city dwellers or town dwellers – always lived in an urban context, surrounded by neighbours, stores, sidewalks, manicured lawns and playgrounds. Town life has been good to us. Yet the quiet buzz of the country, the trundle of a tractor down a side road, the sea of autumn foliage waving in the breeze, or the sweep of relentless snow reducing the rim of the horizon to the front porch has quietly summoned us.

As a child I remember with clarity visiting rural homes and staring with wonder at the blaze of glittering stars tracking across the heavens. I remember thinking when I grow up I will live in a farmhouse and watch the universe crawl above me.

Hopefully we are cut out for this rural lifestyle we've been dreaming of. We're about to find out.

Jennifer Schleich

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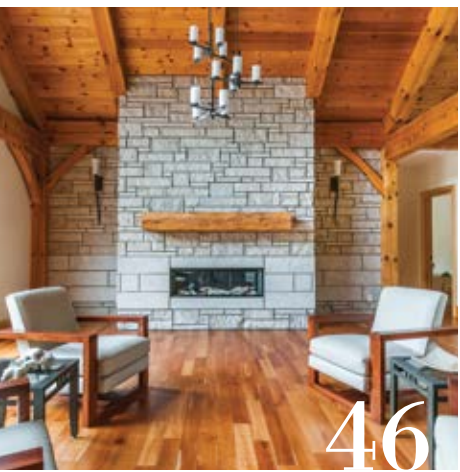
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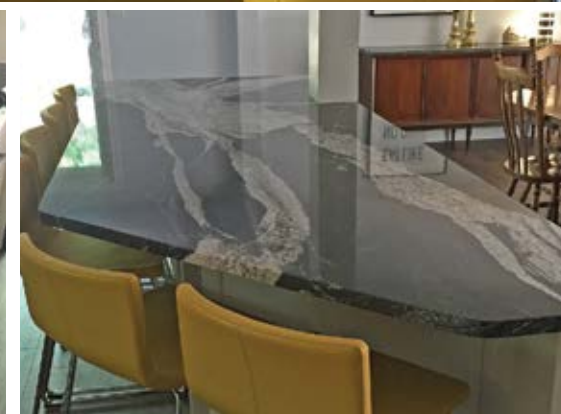


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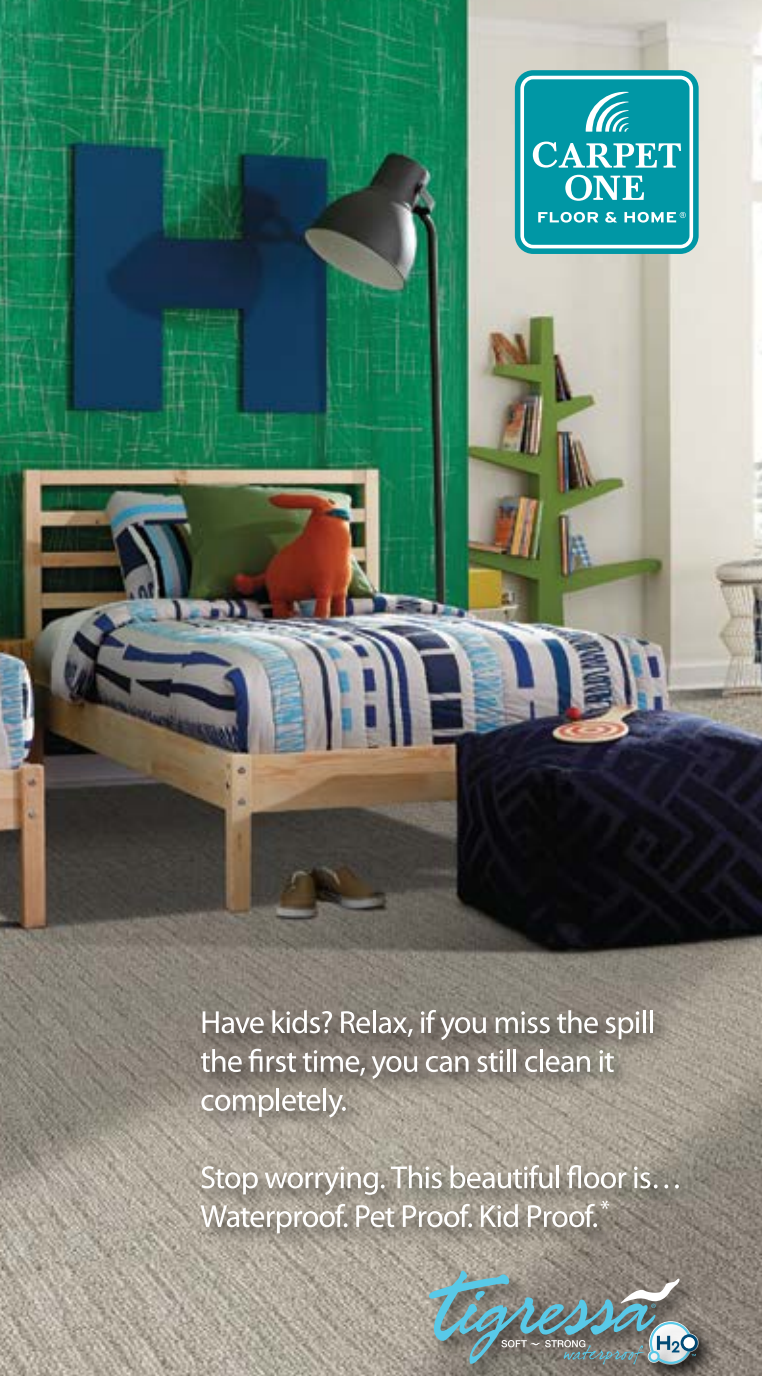
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advice



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.

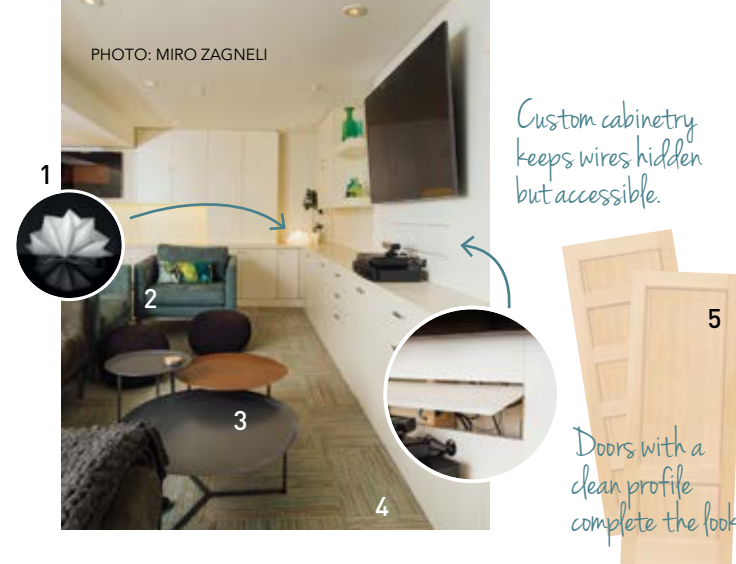
How do you design a livable, lovable space that feels warm and cosy? Let's start with the basics:

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.



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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SELLING WITH CERTAINTY

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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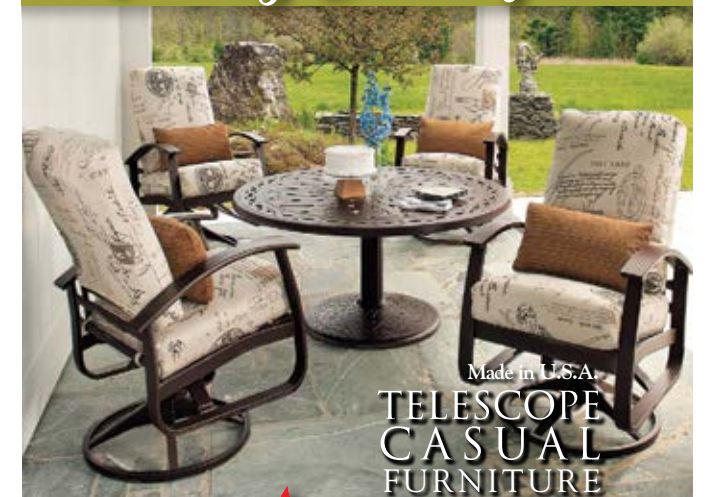
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STORY **BARBARA NYKE**

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 barstools 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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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.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BUNKIE CO.

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.

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.

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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Fancy

AT THE FARM

STORY **JENNIFER SCHLEICH**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**
STYLING **HEATHER SMILLIE**

In the rolling hills of Grey County, a rancher's dozen trots in wild exuberance through the grassy pasture at **ChriScott Farm** on the outskirts of Hanover.

Unimaginably playful, the 10 miniature horses, two quarter horses and a Shetland pony belonging to Christine and Scott Robinson are spurred by the fresh air after a morning resting in the stunning showpiece of the couple's hobby farm: a luxury show barn crafted by expert local tradespeople to the joy of the Robinsons' horse herd.

When the delightful horses finally tire from an afternoon spent in the warm autumn sun, they will return to their barn through the classic Dutch double doors (**System Fencing**) for a little respite and relaxation.

Continued on page 32

ABOVE: Doll gallops through the front pasture at ChriScott Farm, chasing some of the other miniature horses present. **TOP RIGHT:** The front entrance of the new show barn is complemented with a country harvest look, thanks to the styling of designer Heather Smillie. **RIGHT:** The ChriScott Farm sign, by David Lloyd Graphic Signarts Studio, welcomes visitors to the equestrian paradise.



feature

The show barn, with its accompanying indoor riding arena, was designed by the Robinsons with the help of designer **Heather Smillie** and team at **House Rules Design Shop**. Materials and supplies were sourced from **North Wellington Co-operative Services Inc.**, **Ionson's Saddlery**, **Southgate Tack** and **The Horse Habit**. **Chris Hopkins** of **Hopkins Unlimited** was the general contractor. The framing of the show barn, installation of the cupola and windows were all completed by **Bram McEachnie** of **Eric Hopkins Carpentry**.

"It's a custom designed and custom built show barn," says Christine. "Scott and I designed our dream barn for equestrian luxury, functionality, operational needs and equine comfort."

It is the latest addition to the hobby farm, which also includes the property's original red brick farmhouse, bank barn, various pastures and beautifully manicured lawns and gardens (landscaping by **S & E Lawncare & Snow Removal**), which are interspersed with a series of internal gravel drives (**Cedarwell Excavating Ltd.**). The rare shrubs and trees from **Yesterday's Garden**, which are planted on the sprawling property, add immeasurably to the peaceful atmosphere at ChriScott Farm.



The double Dutch doors leading from the indoor riding arena to the stables are a striking combination of wood and black framing. **BELOW LEFT:** The front porch of the Robinsons' farmhouse has been decorated in a charming rustic style, complete with wooden wheelbarrow garden planters. **BELOW:** Christine leads two of the couple's horses out of the bank barn to stretch their legs.



One of the resident kittens, tasked with hunting mice, lounges on the residential barn's ladder staircase.

TOP: Christine pets one of the miniature horses in the front pasture, adjacent to the new show barn. **RIGHT:** The bank barn's preservation anchors the historical authenticity of the property.



"The residential barn is very functional," says Christine about the 100-year-old structure, "but the show barn was a vision that my husband had and wanted to build for me. I do training with the horses every day and it's nice to have this space."

The show barn is the place where Christine grooms the miniature horses and prepares them for the numerous shows the family participates in annually across Ontario. It's downright spa-like, even by human standards. Thanks to **A & D Heating and Cooling** the barn's internal temperatures are regulated, and along with radiant in-floor heating (**Wilson Plumbing Service**) plus an infrared heat lamp in the wash stall (System Fencing), the barn is capable of creating a cosy atmosphere even during the coolest months (wiring by **Richardson Electric**). The barn is also equipped with an outdoor wash stall for particularly muddy minis, but even so the Robinsons contract **Tammy Bishop Cleaning** to help keep the show barn relatively sparkling.

Each of the barn's custom-designed stalls is specifically made for a miniature horse and

Continued on page 34

feature

is equipped with automatic water bowls and frost-free taps to bring the horses fresh water from the barn's water tank, regardless of crisp weather (Wilson Plumbing). The beautiful pine stalls (varnished by **John Baak Livestock Equipment and Construction Ltd.**) were installed by Hopkins Unlimited. The stalls pair elegantly with the Australian timber oil pine walls (**Calvin Rydell Carpentry**), and custom cabinetry and shelving (Hopkins Unlimited, stained by **Troy Beresford** of **ECOpainters**, cabinet pulls from House Rules Design Shop, hardware from **Welbeck Sawmill**). The cabinetry, which provides ample storage, is topped with sleek granite from **The Old Barn**.

“The stalls are very multi-functional,” explains Scott. “Though they are designed for the mini’s small statures we can put the larger horses in here if we wanted.”

Ironwork horse profiles adorn the interior walls of the show barn.



The interior of the show barn is fully clad in pine, and decked out with industrial meets modern farmhouse light fixtures. Metal partitions and doors by System Fencing. **ABOVE:** The interior wash stall, complete with in-floor heating and infrared heaters, is a luxurious bath for the miniature horses.

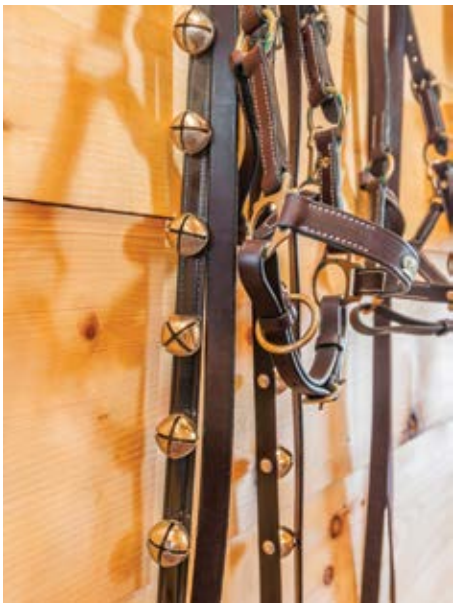


One corner of the show barn is devoted to storing some of the miniature horses' equipment, including harnesses and a horse-size jacket. The interlocking rubber flooring creates a comfortable easy-clean surface for the horses to walk on.

To the right of the barn's entrance is a lounge complete with comfy sofas where guests and visitors at ChriScott Farm can view the awards won over the years, take a break from the sun, or look out over the pasture through a gracious-sized window (**Van Dolder's Home Team Custom Exteriors**). The Robinsons contracted designer Heather Smillie to help them select their paint colour (Nautical Star by PPG's Manor Hall Paint), décor, furniture, interior light fixtures, masonry and tile flooring (sourced from House Rules Design Shop,

tile installed by **Gary Voisin Flooring**, painting by ECOpainters, **Drywall by Phase V**). A selection of wall art and other décor was also sourced from **Eckhardt's Floral Treasures**, **Durham Florist**, and **The Rusty Star**. The exterior of the show barn has been graced with contemporary stone-grey siding, clad in charcoal trim (**Chalmers Aluminum Ltd.**, exterior paint by **Carl Noble Barn Painting Ltd.**), and paired with a charcoal grey roof and vents (**Ridgeway Metal Forming Inc.**).

Continued on page 38



Ribbons, horse memorabilia and paraphernalia, and a small collection of farm-related antiques are intriguing decorative embellishments in the barn.

OPPOSITE: The show barn's lounge is a luxurious respite for the farm's visitors, complete with a leather sectional and an appropriate wagon-wheel table.





LEFT: A small collection of wildlife statuary welcomes guests as they approach the home. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Princess trots eagerly in the crisp autumn air. **BELOW:** Cedar fencing and mature trees line the gravel drive that leads to the Robinsons' red brick farmhouse.



Together with the large ChriScott Farm sign from **David Lloyd Graphic Signarts Studio**, the barn is a landmark that draws the eye of passersby. Christine and Scott are always happy to welcome newcomers to their farm, to share their story and teach people about their small herd of miniature horses.

"It really gives an opportunity for the horses' personalities to come out when you work with them and care for them. It's a nice project to have an enjoyable thing for us to do together," says the couple. "The reality of this barn comes down to Chris Hopkins, who we would highly recommend as a general contractor. We were more than pleased." **OH**

SOURCE GUIDE

A & D Heating and Cooling • Bram McEachnie • Carl Noble Barn Painting Ltd. • Calvin Rydell Carpentry • Cedarwell Excavating Ltd. • Chalmers Aluminum Ltd. • ChriScott Farm • David Lloyd Graphic Signarts Studio • Drywall by Phase V • Durham Florist • Eckhardts' Floral Treasures • ECOpainters • Eric Hopkins Carpentry • Gary Voisin Flooring • Grey Bruce Construction • Hopkins Unlimited • The Horse Habit • House Rules Design Shop • Ionson's Saddlery • John Baak Livestock Equipment and Construction Ltd. • North Wellington Co-operative Services Inc. • The Old Barn • Ridgeway Metal Forming Inc. • Richardson Electric • The Rusty Star • S & E Lawncare and Snow Removal • Southgate Tack • System Fencing • Tammy Bishop Cleaning • Troy Beresford • Van Dolder's Home Team Custom Exteriors • Welbeck Sawmill • Wilson Plumbing Service • Yesterday's Garden

Photo courtesy of Edinburgh Club

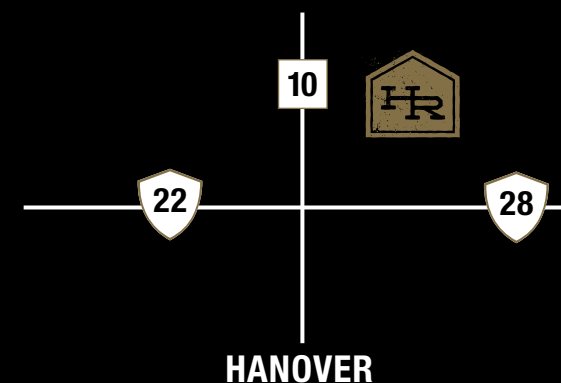


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Photo courtesy of Edinburgh Club



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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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Corinne Robertson-Brown



Amour DÉCOR

STORY JENNIFER SCHLEICH | PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE SMALL

THE PLACE: The front door jingles subtly as it swings inward in invitation. As the bustle of the streetscape vanishes behind, you are transported into the French countryside. Hand painted antique treasures imbued with rich Annie Sloan hues set the scene, and adorning every space of wall and floor is a vast array of carefully curated décor. Welcome to **J'Adorn**, a fine furnishings, décor and gift boutique operated by Corinne Robertson-Brown in Hanover and Kincardine. Corinne, who is an Annie Sloan stockist with an eye for style like no other, founded the shopping destination in 2010, which draws in tourists and locals to its two locations.

THE STYLE: "We feature classical European elegance, a touch of Victorian romance, a little shabby chic and a lot of sparkle and shine," explains Corinne. Though both boutiques feature the same style, the variety of products varies between locations, making each shop a unique experience. Both boutiques also feature workshop space where staff and customers can play and learn the intricacies of working with the famous Chalk Paint decorative paint.



WHAT'S HOT: J'Adorn's regular Annie Sloan workshops have proven to be exceptionally popular among customers in recent years. "Many people come in for the Annie Sloan paint, aka 'perfection in a can,'" notes Corinne. Other hot items include framed artwork, jewelled hair clips, luxurious soaps from Italy and France and a wide selection of fun and fabulous cabinet pulls. "We also have an assortment of greeting cards," says Corinne. "Our perennial top seller is the Aunt B line, lovingly handmade in Owen Sound." The boutique was recently given the prestigious honour of being named a Retailer of Distinction by the Canadian Gift Association – one of only two stores in Canada that receives the award each year. "We already love what we do every day, so this was the icing on the cake," she adds.

FAVOURITES: Staff picks include a fun line of vintage kids' toys, décor and handmade costumes, as well as the Canadian Barefoot Venus bath and beauty products, an assortment of Parisian dripless, smokeless and odourless dinner candles, and the quaint chandeliers strung from the heritage building's ceilings.

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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

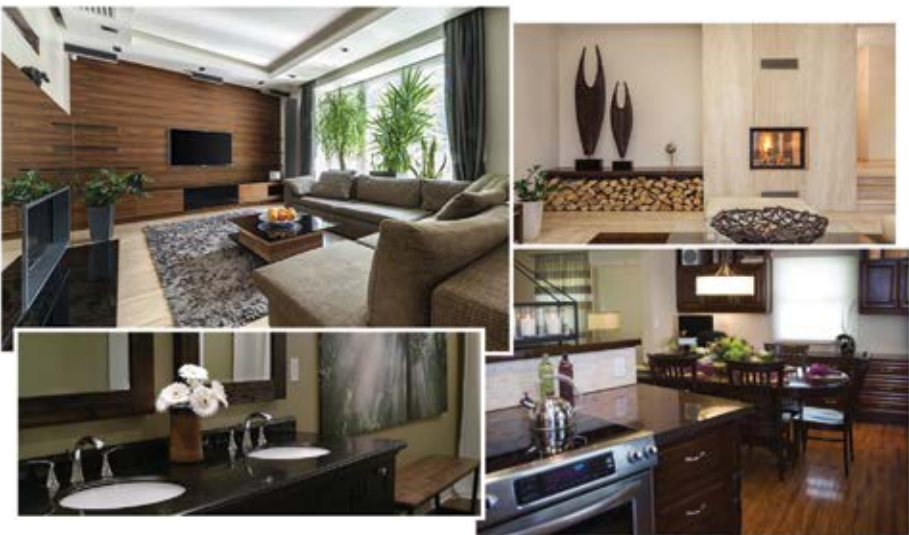
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River Run

STORY **SARAH SLOAN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**

Imagine for a moment slipping into the bathtub, where your only interruption is the light of the moon cascading through the windows as you lay stargazing into the dark night sky. All you can hear is the sound of the river and the leaves rustling in the wind. For Anne and John North, this is a reality in their new 2,376 sq. ft. home nestled on a rocky escarpment property near Chatsworth.

While Anne would most likely laugh and say things aren't quite so harmonious at *River Run* – the name aptly given to the property – there's certainly opportunity to soak in the serenity of such a setting. Pulling up to the Grey County property, not only are you greeted by the couple's beautiful retreat, built by **Pliny Loucks** of **The Great Lakes Frame Company**, but by their bounding golden retriever, Matthew.

"That's why we call it *River Run*, because Matthew goes up there and he runs like mad, and the river runs; everything is in motion," explains Anne. "So even though it looks extremely relaxing, cool and calm, life is constantly moving right along." *Continued on page 48*

TOP RIGHT: Melissa Emke, Bill Turner and Pliny Loucks of The Great Lakes Frame Company pose in the Norths' timber frame home. **RIGHT & BELOW:** The stone exterior of the home is complemented by the natural stone landscaping, giving it a sense of oneness with the land. **OPPOSITE:** A swirling pool of water in a bend of the river on the Norths' property is a favourite swimming destination for their golden retriever Matthew.



Upon climbing the natural-stone stairs, guests are welcomed to the entranceway (footings and foundation by **Neelcrete Concrete Designs and Construction**), which is flanked by timber columns and beautiful masonry work. **McCutcheon's Masonry** completed the cool, earth-toned stone on the exterior and all the masonry work inside.

“The thing about Anne and John’s house that is different, is that 100 per cent of the outside is stone, all local ledge rock (**Owen Sound Ledge Rock Ltd.**),” explains Pliny.

Leaving the shelter of the large portico, you are led through an impressive front door and into the foyer. Grey stone tile greets and ushers you through beautiful French doors and into the main living area, complete with wooden pillars and beams finished with precision by Pliny’s team to mimic the beauty of the home’s natural surroundings – a property that’s been in the family since the 1970s. *Continued on page 50*



The rustic look of the stunning timber frames is contrasted by the contemporary style of the light fixtures, fireplace and leather arm chairs. **LEFT:** French doors open into the living area from the home’s spacious foyer.



Much of the surrounding forest has been planted with trees from the **Grey Sauble Conservation Authority**, which have grown to maturity over the past 40 years.

“John and I were really interested in developing the property because there’s just so much nature and things to preserve: the water, the forests and the lands,” says Anne.

To achieve their goals, the Norths worked alongside Pliny and Construction Engineering Technologist **Melissa Emke** (Great Lakes Frame Company), who was responsible for drawing up the plans for the home.

“It had to all look natural,” says Anne. “To show how the timber that is growing out there can be preserved when brought inside for the future.”

Overhead, hand-cut traditional timber-frame beams and arches sourced from local, sustainable harvested wood become the focal point next to the impressive, stone floor-to-ceiling fireplace (**Chantico Fireplace Gallery**) and surround. Huge windows enrich the great room, granting Anne’s wishes of bringing the outdoors in, with light bouncing from each of the rustic wooden beams. Pliny worked alongside an impressive team of tradespeople to accomplish the look his clients desired and it is reflected in the final product.

“It is a very energy-efficient house,” he describes. “There is in-floor heating and very good quality windows and doors built with energy efficiency in mind.”

All of the home’s windows and coverings were purchased at **Van Dolder’s Home Team Custom Exteriors**, while the window framing and trim was completed by **J.E. Trim Johnson Enterprises**.

When it came to decorating their home, Anne stuck to the mind-set of less is more, embracing a minimalist style.



This wall-to-wall windowed room adjacent to the patio allows for the view to be enjoyed during inclement weather. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** An oversize island offers casual dining and ample workspace. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The main floor laundry room has been given the same cabinetry and countertop as the kitchen for a cohesive look. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The expansive span of the open-concept kitchen and living room is achieved with stylish wood pillars, which also help achieve delineation in the space.

“The art is what is outside; the windows are the frame,” explains Anne. Pliny kept their aesthetics in mind while working alongside carpenter **Harvey Stutzman** to design and install the Norths’ open-concept kitchen. Rather than closed-in cabinetry doors, Anne and John requested glass for the uppers that radiates in the abundance of natural light in the space.

Working with **Mario Nunno** of **The Stone Shop** (countertops in kitchen, bathrooms, and mudroom) and other local companies, such as **MacDonald’s Brandsource Furniture & Appliances** and **Fulford**

Kitchenware Bathware Hardware, Pliny was able to accomplish the state-of-the-art look Anne and John desired.

The home is illuminated by Hubbardton Forge Lighting and was selected by Anne to match the rustic and rugged construction found throughout.

The couple have always wanted their guests to feel relaxed and at home from the moment they walked through the door, which spurred them to create a series of guest spaces in the lower level of the home, accompanied by additional seating and kitchen space. *Continued on page 52*



LEFT: The metal railings of the staircase mimic the black metal of the Hubbardton Forge light fixtures, while glass panels are a clean contemporary alternative to spindled railings. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The walk-out lower level is infused with natural light, and is home to a set of handcrafted tables made by the builder. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A farmhouse-style guest bedroom is flooded with natural light and features an intricate hand-carved headboard.

"It's a retreat," Anne says of the space, "A sanctuary away from everything."

John also finds comfort in the home's 1,500 sq. ft. basement, as he can put his feet up by his wood burning fireplace (Chantico Fireplace Gallery) after a day on the slopes or taking in the splendour of their rural property. And while tile can be found on the floor of the basement, Anne was able to make the space cosy and comfortable with deep, reclining leather chairs and rustic wood furniture constructed by Pliny and his team from The Great Lakes Frame Company.

"Anne and John had brought us a design of another house – a similar house – and we took that design and altered it to suit the timber frame and Melissa made it work and flow properly for them," says Pliny. "They were pretty open to new ideas and different local sources."

"Melissa helped to make it what it is," adds Anne. "She was my go-to person and made sure the rooms were the spaces we needed." *Continued on page 56*



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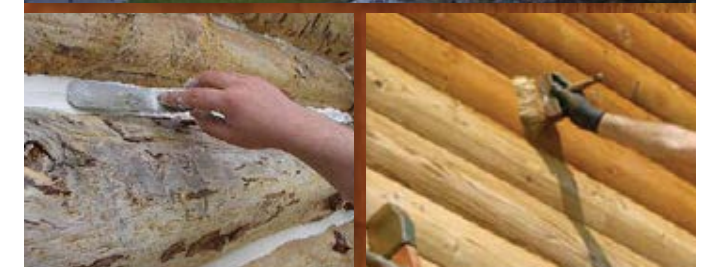
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RIGHT: The floating vanity in the principal en suite is given a contemporary edge with flat drawer faces and oversize cabinet pulls. **BOTTOM:** The principal bedroom offers a waking vista of the forested Grey County property.

Anne knew they needed a place more substantial than a cabin, but needed the help they received to make it into the space it is today. *River Run* is now somewhere they can be close with nature and within close distance of the ski hills and other recreational activities. The build took approximately five years from drawings to completion, a length of time that Anne feels was appropriate.

“The house has evolved like a painting,” she says. “It’s good to wait. Your thinking evolves as you talk with retailers and tradespeople you meet during the building process. It’s really good not to have something permanent in your mind while you are building.”

Though *River Run* was only meant to be an overnight stop, it has developed instead into a beautiful home.

Describes Anne, “*River Run* itself is like the river – flowing from the past to the present to the future – and so the house as well is coming from the past to the present, and hopefully future elements will be in there too. It is really nice to see what it has become. Not many people are able to experience that, coming to a property and living through its lifetime of change.” **OH**



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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.

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

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**

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.

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.



weeding out THE GARDEN MYTHS

STORY AND PHOTOS MELANIE REKOLA

As a landscape designer and certified horticulturalist, I come across a lot of misconceptions when it comes to gardening.

Myth 1: *Cedar trees attract mosquitoes*

Reality: In nature, cedar grows in moist soil, which mosquitoes adore. It's not actually the cedar that attracts them, though mosquitoes are attracted to shaded environments of any type.



Myth 2: *Garden lines have to be curvaceous*

Reality: Some spaces don't have the room to accommodate the serpentine lines loved by many. Sometimes straight lines just work better and can be equally striking.

Myth 3: *Existing garden soil needs cultivation*

Reality: Cultivation of the earth around existing perennials and shrubs breaks their vital hair roots, thus injuring the plant.

Myth 4: *Gardens are a lot of work*

Reality: Start gardens with a thick layer of good quality soil with additional bonemeal supplement. Spread a good layer of mulch yearly to retard weeds and keep moisture in. Do this and a garden will need little weeding and may never need fertilization or supplemental watering after establishment. How's that for low maintenance?

Myth 5: *Vegetable gardens are an eyesore*

Reality: Veggie garden placement counts. Raised planter boxes add definition and look great flanking a path. Edibles such as leaf lettuce have lovely foliage and many food plants sport pretty blossoms.

Myth 6: *Containers are only for annuals*

Reality: Many trees and shrubs can live in pots for years. They need less care and watering plus offer a bigger bang for your buck than a typical annual display. For example, a \$20 Curly Willow shrub can survive for years in a large pot, has amazing form and makes a bold statement. Compare that with what you spend on annual displays.

Myth 7: *Trees stop growing*

Reality: Trees don't reach a certain height then suddenly stop growing. Some trees do have shorter or slimmer habits that suit smaller spaces.

Myth 8: *Bees sting unprovoked*

Reality: Flowering plant materials are fine poolside choices. Just because you have more skin showing does not make your chances of being stung any greater, though flailing around wildly will increase the likelihood! Stay calm and learn to enjoy and respect bees.

Myth 9: *Overwatering isn't harmful*

Reality: All new plantings require water to establish, yet overwatering quickly drowns plants. Stick your finger in the soil. If you feel moisture, don't water. Plant roots require gaseous exchange for survival and need to dry out a bit between waterings to accommodate this.

Myth 10: *Vines are bad for intact brickwork and woodwork*

Reality: Current studies show vines such as ivy act as a thermal blanket, warming up walls by 15 per cent in cold weather and offer a cooling effect in hot weather by 36 per cent. Plus they look gorgeous! But take care to keep vines out of windows and soffits.

Myth 11: *Landscape designers are landscape architects or garden designers*

Reality: Landscape designers approach design as a whole, including pool, patios and outdoor living spaces, trees and gardens, lighting and even outdoor furniture and accessories. Think of us as exterior designers. **OH**

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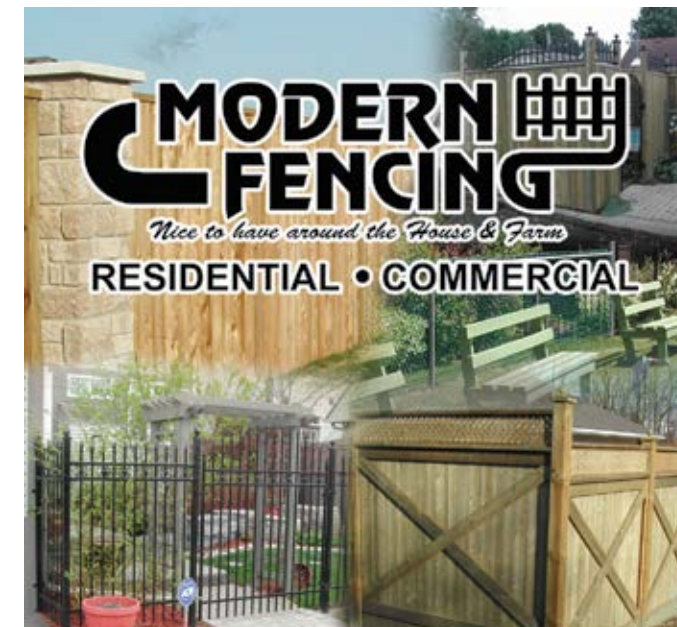
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EXTREME milkshakes

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 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**

THE BASIC

INGREDIENTS

- Ice cream of your choice
- Milk

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add 1 pint of ice cream and 2/3 cup of milk to your blender and blend until smooth. Easy, right?

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DIY STENCILED LOG-SLICE CHARGERS

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

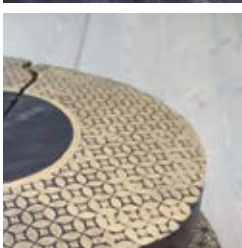
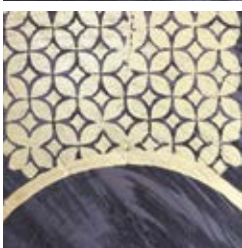
Dry cloth, for drying stencil

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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(Please see ad on pg 28)



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Walker Homes is committed to building quality homes that will stand the test of time in craftsmanship and style. Our house plans feature beautiful open concept designs with brick and stone exteriors, 9 foot main floor ceilings, Napoleon Gas fireplaces and hand crafted kitchens. Customers can choose from our large selection of high-end flooring, trim and finishings that are standard in all Walker Built Homes.

We are very excited to introduce our Walker Homes Family Collection Line of homes in the beautiful community of Port Elgin, Ontario. Single family detached homes starting from the mid 300's. The community is surrounded by walking trails and located just minutes from beautiful beaches. Port Elgin is an ideal community for your family to live and grow in.

Come visit us at our new Model Home located at 850 Sumpton Street, Port Elgin, ON, or look us up online for our current lot and house plan availability. New phase, new lots and more house plans to choose from coming Spring 2017!
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Besides manufacturing all the regular metal cladding and flashings for buildings, we also carry a full line of screws, nails, foam closures, caulking, roll door track and accessories. We are located near the town of Chesley which makes us central to Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth, and Wellington Counties. Customers have the option of picking up their orders at the shop, or having the material delivered to their home or jobsite.

We use high quality 29 gauge high tensile steel from Canadian Mills to manufacture our roofing and siding steel. We have 18 different colours available, all which have an industry leading 40-year paint warranty. All three of our patterns have 36" coverage and are cut to the exact length for your project. Please allow 3-5 business days to have your order processed.

We are a family owned and operated business in your community and source our supplies from Canadian businesses – supporting our own economy and urge you to do the same.

You can come see us Monday-Friday from 7AM-5PM or reach us by phone at 519.363.3757
(Please see ad on pg 29)



CR DESIGNS

CR Designs...Where we bring our suite of unique interior service directly to the customer, in a fun affordable manner, in the comfort and convenience of your home. We can help you source anything!

CR Designs provides a complete range of consulting services related to all of your interior needs. We can guide you through your entire project and help ease the decision-making process and your dealings with contractors, installers and suppliers.

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(Please see ad on pg 45)

people

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STORY SARAH SLOAN | PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE SMALL

These backstage stars are here to make sure your home and property run as smoothly and efficiently as possible, so that you can focus your energy elsewhere.



ROB & JOY BLACK

Blackline Power

What are the incentives for installing solar? The FIT Program (Feed-In Tariff) pays a set tariff rate for 20 years for electricity generated from renewable sources. Many of our clients are now choosing to offset their electricity usage via net metering. The prime incentive with this program is that electricity rates will only continue to rise, so savings will increase every year.

What if people have been told by Hydro One they cannot connect a system? You can still use solar to offset your electricity usage. Contact us to find out more.

Why choose Blackline Power? We are properly trained and qualified and provide excellent customer service. In the words of the owner of the system pictured here, "We wish we had considered a solar investment years ago. We installed both a MicroFIT to give us a direct financial return and a net-metered system to reduce our home energy costs." *Continued on page 70*

A modern stone house with a large black garage door and a covered entrance with a white archway. The house is surrounded by a green lawn and trees.

A smooth build from start to finish.

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MONICA MARTIN & JOANE KLINGENBERG
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Most memorable or unique paint job: It's hard to pick one over the other. We recently finished a high-end cottage, which was all ice blasted and refinished. It was a really beautiful place. All of the projects we work on are unique, and not just the homes but the landscaping too.

What is dry ice blasting and why would someone need it done? Dry ice blasting is frozen carbon dioxide that comes in a block or pellet form, which sublimates from a solid to

vapor on impact and is used to clean surfaces. There's no mess, everything evaporates, unlike sandblasting. Dry ice blasting is more environmentally friendly and leaves a smoother, more even finish.

How do you bring old, weathered or rotting wood back to life? We carry and use a line of epoxy hardeners and fillers to restore decayed and rotting wood. We also replace logs where necessary while working on our log home projects.



PHOTO: BONNIE FOX

GREG WILKINS
Wilkins Fencing & Mulch-It

Decorative features: Our fencing system is based on concrete mortised posts with wood fencing boards and concrete driveway columns with steel and wood gates. Design features people can choose from include customizing their project with lighting, types of wood, steel and wood gate designs and our latest metal panel designs.

Types of fencing: We offer residential and commercial solutions. On the residential side we focus on entranceway gate and column-post packages, driveway markers, road fences and pool fences. For commercial clients we focus on front gates and posts, utility entranceways and pathway and boundary fencing.

What is Mulch-It? Mulch-It Specialized Land Clearing and Trail Creation is a service for cleaning up properties. We offer mechanical brush clearing, bush hogging and stump grinding to create trails, tidy-up property and fence rows and clear lots. We also offer agricultural limb trimming, land and pasture reclamation and wildflower and native grass establishment and maintenance.

Continued on page 72



KIM SCHAAB

Emke Schaab ClimateCare

Tips to be water conscious: Leak check your home for dripping faucets, running toilets or a leaking water heater. Replace toilets, showerheads and faucets with low consumption units. Upgrade to a high-efficiency metered water softener or install a humidifier water saver or an AquaTrip water monitor.

What is a heat pump and why switch? It's an electric system that takes heat from the air or ground and uses it to heat your home. In cooling season, it takes the heat from your home and puts it into the air or ground. Depending on the type of system, a heat pump boosts efficiency by 200 per cent and up to 430 per cent.

How is your company tech savvy? As the HVAC industry adapts to changing tech, unique solutions are becoming available. Smart thermostats allow remote scheduling and programming from the web or phone apps. Diagnostic tools are designed to give technicians easier access to faults and info, and to energy monitoring systems.



BACK: KEN BEITZ, DUSTIN MCARTHUR, CHARLIE WALL & CHRIS MACKENZIE

FRONT: CRAIG BRANNAN & CODY MACKENZIE

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Why choose geothermal? It's an environmentally friendly, cost-effective and energy-efficient source of comfortable heating and cooling with increased dehumidification. No combustion flames or fuel.

How else can you help clients? We offer HVAC and fireplace installations, and plumbing, hydronic heating and sheet-metal fabrication. Free quotes are available plus 24-hour emergency service.

Are there any government incentives or rebates that come along with your services? Currently there are carrier and Ontario Power Authority incentives to take advantage of. Please contact our office for details. **OH**

directory

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As leaves fall gently to the ground, bring the beauty of their shapes and colours inside.

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