

WINTER 2017/2018

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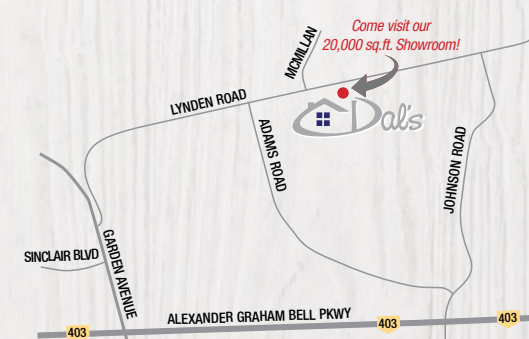


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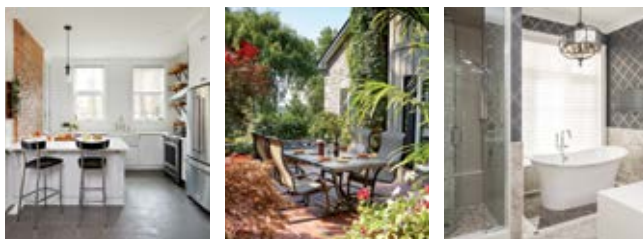
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- Booth Furniture & Interiors Ltd** 49 King St W, Dundas
- Brushed Designs** 30 Main St S, Waterford
- Buy The Yard Interiors** 73 Wilson St W Unit 19, Ancaster Town Plaza
- Dal's Home Furnishings** 420 Lynden Rd, Brantford
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HEY THERE, 2018. HOW DID YOU GET HERE SO FAST?

Stop me if you can relate, but 2017 went by incredibly quickly. A highlight, though, has been having the opportunity to work in Hamilton as the interim managing editor for OUR HOMES.

As we were putting together this final issue of 2017 during an unseasonably warm fall, I found myself having many moments where I took stock of my surroundings and felt grateful to be where I was in this city.

I distinctly recall during a photo shoot in Westdale the incredible urge I had to stop someone walking past me on the street so I could say “Do you know how lucky you are to live here?!”

Instead, I found myself gushing to our photographer, Kelly Horkoff, about Hamilton. “You live in a good city,” I told him. It was nothing he didn’t already know. So what makes a good city? The people, of course. And I met many this issue.

Take Sam Alaimo, the creative force behind the design and consulting firm Lucaria Design. We got to spend the day in his stunning home and it took everything in me to not Instagram the heck out of it. What a beauty it made for our Home and Designer feature. And what a talent in Alaimo, a life-long Hamiltonian who adores his city and helps people achieve their dream home here.

There’s also Heather Coward, who’s living her dream as the owner of LuLu & Lavigne, an eclectic shop on Locke Street. Her store is this issue’s Spotlight and Coward’s story is one of pursuing passions and finding a place in this city’s unique retail landscape.

Our Style Picks should help you feel grateful for the people in your life, old and new. Gatherings is our focus. ’Tis the season, after all, and each item will undoubtedly make you happy to be here now with those who are most important.

I look forward to many more “I love Hamilton” moments in the new year. And I wish for them to be just as plentiful for you, too, in the weeks and months ahead.

Tiffany Mayer, Acting Managing Editor  
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This Holiday season my thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made 2017 a successful one.

Wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season.

All the best in the new year and I look forward to working with you again.

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DESIGN CREATE MAINTAIN





**THIS WINTER**, we have two beautiful new homes to share with our readers. They’re built by local folks who create custom homes for themselves and their clients using many local trades. Both homes are stunning and both are very different.

The most exciting part is that Sam Alaimo of Lucaria Design has designed a door that has been entered into an international competition by Metrie, which manufactures interior doors and mouldings. We wish Sam well during the competition. I think being entered into the contest is an honour in itself. Check out all the doors in his story with the round motifs on the kitchen and bath cabinets, and throughout the home. They are stunning. Let’s all keep an eye on this special Hamiltonian.

Winter and the holiday season are almost upon us, although I must say we enjoyed a terrific fall. I would be happy just to see a sprinkling of snow for Santa and then a mild winter. Sorry to all you skiers. Regardless of the weather, it’s time for sharing and we have lots of shops in the Hamilton area where you can find something to share with your family and friends.

This coming season, my husband Tim and I will be celebrating our 30th anniversary. It’s amazing really – so many ups and downs and arounds and yet here we are. I think we will escape the winter for a special holiday in the sun. I will think of y’all enjoying your snow.

So, to all of you, enjoy your holiday and celebrations and look forward to an exciting 2018 with many journeys and accomplishments.

Happy reading and just wait and see the homes we have lined up for our Spring issue!

Enjoy your holiday season.

*Laurie*

Laurie Lotimer, Publisher  
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advice



PHOTOGRAPHY  
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**KNOW YOUR TILE**

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

Tile. This all-purpose material used on floors, walls and ceilings, in wet or dry locations, as decoration or as a versatile workhorse, is available in a variety of shapes, sizes, colours and textures. Today's manufacturers have the shocking ability to mimic concrete, brick, wood, marble, carpet, wallpaper, sand – you name it – in ways that look more real than real. The options are endless.

**Here's what you really need to know when choosing the right tile.**

## PLANNING

Research online to see the many possibilities. Know what you're looking for to make purchasing easier.

Have a floor plan. The size of the room and its intended use will dictate what's possible.

Determine your colour scheme. Bring home a sample tile to make sure it coordinates with other elements.

Explain to your contractor what size and type of tile you're using. The size and weight of the tile affects the application and labour costs.

Plan and start the tile layout from the room's centre line and work outward, balancing the pattern and minimizing odd pieces.

## MINI TO MAXI

Tiles can be as tiny as ¼-by-¼-inch or super large at five-by-10-feet.

The size and condition of a floor or wall will determine what size suits your space best. Uneven surfaces and curves have different size and installation requirements than do large, flat surfaces.

## TILE VOCABULARY

**Application:** What is the tile's intended use? High or low traffic? Floor or wall? Wet or dry? Answer these questions before making your final choice.

**Ceramic:** Stoneware body with a surface application of colour or texture. Highly decorative and mostly used for walls.

**Porcelain:** Made from fine white compressed clay, fired at a high temperature to create a dense tile, impervious to moisture. It has colour throughout the tile so that if chipped, the surface colour appears in the body of the tile.

**Glass:** Made of glass where colour lies behind or throughout the body of the tile.



**Mosaic:** Individual small tiles, purchased on mesh sheets 12-by-12-inches to 118-by-118-inches. Can be easily cut to size. Perfect for inside and outside curves.

**Large Format:** 14½-by-14½-inches or larger.

**Specifications:** Technical information including intended use, material composition, country of origin and LEED certification. Always read your specs to know what you're buying and how to maintain it.

**Matte Finish:** Non-shiny surface, easy to walk on, slip resistant.

**Polished Finish:** Shiny surface and slippery.

**Stacked Pattern:** Tiles are aligned to form a repeating grid pattern.

**Staggered Pattern:** Joints are not aligned. Each tile requires different offset spacing depending on size.

## THE FINISHING TOUCHES

**Grout:** Filler used between tiles allowing for flex. The tile setter can make minor adjustments along the way.

**Grout Size:** The space between tiles – ⅛-inch for wall tiles, ¼-inch for floor tiles. Super large tiles require larger grout lines.

**Grout Release/Sealer:** Same product, different names. Matte porcelain tiles need to be sealed to avoid the cloudy effect that occurs after wiping off the edges.

**Grout Colour:** Use as a design element. Match grout to wall colour. Use darker grout for floors. Grout tends to darken with regular foot traffic and cleaning.

**Epoxy Grout:** Guards against germs. Especially for spillage of bio fluids in kitchens and bathrooms.

## SPECIAL PIECES

Trim pieces are usually L or U shaped and cap off tile edges for a smooth, clean look, making it easier to clean. They come in a variety of finishes and colours. Most pros like to use the Schluter System, available in any large hardware store.

Super large tiles covering a large surface require expansion joints. All structures and materials expand and contract. Planning a strategic cut will make your super-size tile age gracefully with no cracking over time.

Now that you have the right information, you'll produce the right solution for you and your special project. **OH**

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# GATHERING GREATNESS

This is the season of reconnecting and coming together. Whether it’s a big holiday party or a small gathering of friends, these style picks will ensure it’s memorable.

PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**

**1 AVENUE LIGHTING & DESIGN**  
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**2 FASCINATION FLORIST**  
**Centrepiece**  
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**3 GRAHAM & BROOKS**  
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**4 EDEN TILE-IT**  
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[tileit.ca](http://tileit.ca)

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**6 BRUSHED DESIGNS**  
**Memory Block & Glassware**  
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519.222.3505 | [brusheddesigns.ca](http://brusheddesigns.ca) **OH**



4

5

6





# PINE CONE FIRE STARTERS

PROJECT AND PHOTOS **TARA CHATTELL**

Pine cones dipped in clean-burning soy wax are an eco-friendly option to get your home fires burning. Leave them white or colour the wax and they become seasonal décor.

## TOOLS & MATERIALS

- Soy wax flakes, 2 lbs.
- Pine cones, 10-13
- Candle dye blocks, colours of your choice (optional)
- Wired candle wicking
- Wooden spoon
- Small double boiler
- Wax paper
- Tinfoil
- Knife
- Scissors

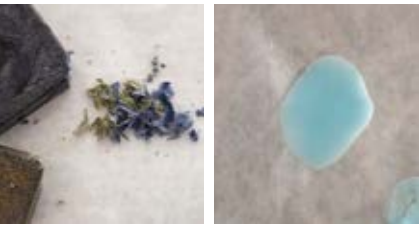
**NOTE:** Any materials used in this project should not be used again for food preparation.



## HOW-TO

**1 PREPARE WORKSPACE**  
Cover your workspace with tinfoil to protect the surface from dripping wax – dipping will get messy!  
Use wax paper to cover an area for pine cones to cool between dips.

**2 MELT WAX**  
Add water to the bottom of a double boiler and fill the top pot with wax flakes. Place on stove burner and gently heat until wax is fully melted, stirring occasionally.  
Using a knife, shave off small bits from wax dye blocks, add to your hot wax and stir until completely melted and blended.



The colour will look much lighter once cool. Test your colour by dripping wax onto wax paper and allow to cool. It doesn't take much dye to colour the wax, so add small amounts at a time until reaching the desired colour.  
Once satisfied with the colour, remove from heat and allow your wax to cool for 15-20 minutes before starting to dip.  
While wax is cooling, wrap pine cones with wicking.

**3 WICK PINE CONES**  
Cut wicking into 12-inch lengths. You may want them longer, depending on the size of your pine cones.



Fold each piece of wicking in half. Tie a small loop at the fold to use both as a wick and to hold the cones while dipping.

Place the loop on the tip of a pine cone and begin wrapping each length in opposite directions around and between the scales. Finish by tucking in the ends (use scissors to push ends in).



**4 DIP PINE CONES**  
Hold each pine cone by the wick loop and dip completely into the wax. If the pine cone is tall, turn on its side and use a wooden spoon to help fully coat the pine cone with wax. Remove the pine cone from the wax and allow excess wax to drip into the pot. Set on wax paper to cool for 10 to 15 minutes between each dip.

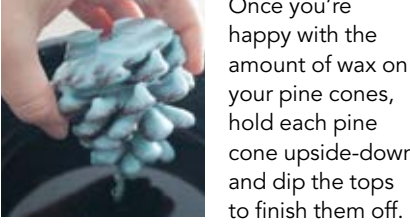


Repeat the dipping process three or four times until you're happy with the amount of wax on each pine cone.



After they dry, break off any excess wax from the bottom of your pine cone before dipping again. Recycle these pieces when you reheat your wax, which you will need to do once or twice during the process as the wax cools.

**TIP:** If the wax looks lumpy on the pine cone, fix it by heating the wax to a higher temperature and re-dipping the pine cone. You may need to give the pine cone an extra dip to rebuild the wax.



Once you're happy with the amount of wax on your pine cones, hold each pine cone upside-down and dip the tops to finish them off.  
Allow pine cones to fully cool before transferring to a display container.



## FIRE AWAY

When ready to use the fire starters, build a base of paper and dry kindling, then simply light the wick and place the pine cone under the kindling. Using two or three will start a roaring fire. Stay warm!





STORY **MELANIE REKOLA**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **TARA CHATTELL**



# have yourself a SCANDI-STYLE CHRISTMAS

Looking to simplify your holiday style? A minimalist Scandinavian style Christmas may be just the kind of uncomplicated holiday décor you are craving. Quiet your mind and transform your home into a chic winter wonderland without the Christmas chaos!

Nordic peoples know firsthand what a real winter is, making Scandi-style a natural fit for gorgeous Yuletide décor. It is rustic, minimalist and cosy all at the same time. Natural woods, a black-and-white colour scheme and handmade ornamentation provide the framework for a straightforward and inviting holiday home.

## THE TREE

Initially, during the Winter Solstice, Norse pagans would bring entire evergreen trees into their homes to celebrate and sacrifice to the god Jul (now recognized as “Yule”). These massive evergreens were called Yule trees and it was believed that the spirits of the trees would bless the home’s inhabitants and provide mystical protection from night-faring spirits during those darkest of days.

The current Scandi-style Christmas tree is humble by comparison. A modest evergreen simply placed in a woven basket or other unassuming vessel is all that’s needed! Better yet, choose a few different sized trees, then group or smatter throughout your home for extra holiday allure (and possibly some additional mystical protection). There is a freshness found in the bare, standalone branches or add in just a few simple ornaments for hints of embellishment. Below the tree, instead of a typical tree skirt, place a faux fur rug or woolen mat. Add a few more woolly throws throughout your home for further cosiness. You’ll be surprised how much warmth these can add to a space.

## THE TRIMMINGS

Anything found in the forest (and sometimes your own backyard) lends well to Nordic style. Let nature be your inspiration! An artfully placed stack of logs, a set of plain vine wreaths or a wooden bowl filled with pine cones all fit in seamlessly. A single windswept branch with a few berries placed on the fireplace mantel may be all that’s necessary as minimalist is the motto for classic Northern flavour.

## THE TEXTURES

Handmade decorations and gift-wrappings made of natural materials such as fabrics, paper and jute offer the subtle textures required for any well designed composition. Simple cutouts of stars, snowflakes and hearts are classic shapes associated with Scandinavian flair. These can be used in lieu of a table runner, as gift tags or hanging ornaments. For the more adventurous sorts, 3D snowflakes can have just as many variations as do the natural ones. Fun to create and captivating when grouped and hung from a chandelier, these can be tied to a gift or anywhere else you need a bit of joy.

## THE TABLE

A festive table comprised of a limited colour palette allows for appreciation of form and lets the all-important meal take centre stage. Layer on the whites, from linens to tableware, to achieve a gorgeous monochromatic effect. Tie a spruce twig with a simple ring of twine to create the perfect rustic napkin ring, adding a hint of holiday without going over the top. Plate garnishes made of evergreens are the perfect accessory as spruce, pine and cedar are all edible. Let your imagination run wild! Don’t neglect the kitchen either as family often flocks here. Display your baking triumphs alongside their pretty forms and the cookie cutters, too. Finish off both areas with lots and lots of plain white taper candles in various sizes for a magical celebratory feel.

Growing up, my relatives would often joke that “everyone knows Santa Claus comes from Finland.” Given my Finnish heritage I experienced this holiday style and subsequent traditions first-hand and well before its current popularity. Yet over time I still succumbed to the glittery charms of Christmas and collected a multitude of plastic ornaments and greeneries. But as so often happens, priorities change and life comes back full circle (along with some major recycling). Back to my roots, I have again found my forever holiday style of choice. **OH**

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Denim blue and white rule in both the front foyer and dining room of the home. Wallpaper in the dining room is in keeping with the Georgian-era architecture and style of this Dundas two-storey. **RIGHT:** Homeowners Steve Bruton and Linda Pembroke with their dog Poppy outside one of the original outbuildings on the property, an 1800s kitchen shed that's been converted to a sitting and reading room.

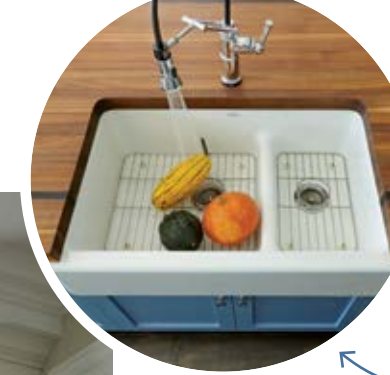


# BUILDING HISTORY

STORY **MELISSA CAMPEAU**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**  
FLOWERS **FASCINATION FLORIST**

It was late afternoon one snowy January day in Dundas in 2016. Ancaster resident Linda Pembroke was picking up her husband Steve Bruton of **Heritage Construction** when she spotted a “for sale” sign peeking out of a knee-high snowdrift on South Street. “For some reason, I just knew we had to go back and look,” Linda recalls. “It turned out to be a lot for sale, severed from the neighbouring property that’s been here since the 1800s.” *Continued on page 26*





A sectioned apron sink makes kitchen chores a breeze.

**FAR LEFT:** Blue and white provide contrast in the kitchen but the focal point is a large island with a black walnut countertop that makes entertaining easy. **LEFT:** A butler's pantry provides additional storage for china and wine. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The front foyer has several Georgian touches, including parallel windows, a crystal chandelier, and millwork on the staircase that includes a hidden door to storage. **BELOW:** The butler's pantry.



At the back of the lot, Steve and Linda discovered an outbuilding and the remnants of a pool. The building dates back to 1833. "It was most likely a kitchen prep area where people would go to pluck feathers off chickens – that kind of thing – for dinner at the main house," Linda says. Decades later, in the 1950s and 60s, the building served as an impromptu pool house for neighbourhood bathers. One exterior wall was even painted white for summer evening movie screenings.

That sense of history, combined with the town's particular charm, appealed to Linda. "Dundas has always reminded me of my very British roots," she explains. "It's like a small village outside London with its High Street. So, when I saw the lot I said to Steve, 'I know we can't see much with all this snow, but I really want to live here.'"

Once they'd purchased the land, the pair had a decision to make. "The biggest and most daunting question for us was 'what shall we build on it?'" Linda says. "We were very mindful of our environment, the older properties on the street and Dundas itself. We wanted to build something that blended in and that's why we gravitated toward the Georgian style."

That era's influence meant a return, in part, to separated main-floor

rooms rather than one open-concept floor plan. "We were mindful of having the kitchen area and the dining room quite separate, for example," says Linda.

"You talk to people about this kind of home and they say, 'Oh, I never use the dining room,' but the way this house flows, it just begs for people to be sitting in the dining room and in the living room," says Linda. "I love it, personally. It's a great space for entertaining."

There's an attention to detail, too, that reflects the period, and lends each room a sense of occasion. The panelling, chair rails, crown moulding and simple coffers all reflect the time period. All the cabinetry by **Fijn Woodworking** is custom-made for the house, designed to look like pieces of furniture, rather than just doors in the wall.

The three crystal-cut chandeliers by **Avenue Lighting & Design** each reference that Georgian era, too.

Typical of the period, the degree of detail in the home means it looks "dressed" even without furniture, and that influences design decisions. "If you tried to put too many colours and too many styles in a home like this, it just wouldn't work," Steve says. "You lose the continuity of it and it just becomes too busy."

*Continued on page 28*







Crystal chandeliers in prominent places are in keeping with the era that influences this home.

Bathrooms in the home are a blend of Georgian style, contemporary comfort and practicality. Vanities were built like washstands so instead of having typical cupboards and doors, they have legs and shelving. Apron sinks in cast iron look like they belong in an older home. But a nod to modern living means bathrooms are also outfitted with contemporary showerheads, spacious claw-foot tubs, elegant modern faucets installed by **Precision Plumbing** and tile flooring by **Barton Bath & Floor** made to look like bleached hardwood planks.

In the living room, the fireplace is a modern twist on an older home's staple. The two-way unit by **HNC Mechanical** is also indoor-outdoor, adding warmth to the living room as well as a cosy seating area on the wraparound porch constructed of cedar from **Aitchison Lumber**. Lumber for the house construction came from Turkstra Lumber.

*Continued on page 30*



So the couple chose a limited palette painted by **Brouwers Painting** and stayed consistent through the entire home with white, pale oak and denim blue.

In the kitchen, that same blue is used for the base of the island – an inviting, oversize workspace that topped Linda's must-have list for her new home. "I love to cook and to entertain," she says, "so I really wanted a big space where I could spread things out and make a wonderful mess, and people could pull up a seat with a glass of wine and just chat."

The island's 2.5-inch wooden work surface in black walnut by Knotty's Woodwork adds warmth and provides contrast with the white cabinets and blue pearl quartz countertops.

**LEFT:** A study alcove in one of the upstairs bedrooms. **TOP:** Built-in shelving, drawers and hooks in the breezeway provide plenty of storage and are a tasteful alternative to a typical closet. **ABOVE:** Antique typewriters are a must-have home office accessory. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The living room features a double-sided fireplace that keeps things warm inside the house but also casts cosiness over the backyard deck. **BOTTOM:** The main-floor bedroom has been converted to a bright and airy home office shared by the homeowners.





The breezeway – a one-storey hallway linking the garage with the main living area and housing the laundry and a powder room – is also a nod to the past with its exposed brick feature wall and black-and-white basket weave floor tile.

Eighteen months of hard work and research were worth it to recreate a little bit of history, Steve and Linda say. “We’ve been asked by visitors what part of the home we added or renovated,” Linda says. “So people really feel it looks like a building that’s always been here, and that’s the very best kind of compliment. Now that we’re finished and settled in, it looks like a home that’s full of stories and history, and that’s exactly what we’d hoped for.” **OH**

**LEFT:** A view to the master bedroom, which feels rich and warm with the addition of wallpaper. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The main-floor master bathroom has plenty of built-in cabinetry and features to make it a fully functional space. **BELOW:** Clawfoot tubs upstairs and down get top billing.



### SOURCE GUIDE

- Aitchison Lumber • Avenue Lighting & Design • Barton Bath & Floor • Benjamin Moore • Brouwers Painting • DEL Windows and Doors • Door Design Inc. • Fijn Woodworking • Grainger Glass • Heritage Construction • Kenedy Stairs Inc. • Knotty's Woodwork • Maximum Roofing • Patene Building Supplies • Paterno Nurseries • Precision Plumbing • Terra Verde Landscaping • The Tile Shoppe • Trail Renovations • Turkstra Lumber • Twelve Oaks Floors

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Heather Coward, owner

# A LOCK ON STYLE

STORY **TIFFANY MAYER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**



**THE PLACE:** Heather Coward is a fan of alliteration. The name of her Locke Street South home décor and gift store **LuLu & Lavigne Home Studio** attests to that fact. But Coward is also big on pursuing passions. That's exactly what she did when she traded a career in advertising to do something more hands-on. She gave up her desk job to take a seat in school again in the late 1990s, studying furniture and design and graduating as an upholsterer. In 2000, she opened LuLu & Lavigne in Toronto, the name a nod to two friends who also changed careers at the same time. What started as a furniture upholstering shop, though, morphed into something bigger. Coward did draperies, sold upholstery fabric and vintage furnishings "to give people something else to look at. Whatever (suggestions) I got from the public I took into account when buying for the shop," Coward says. "Customer feedback continues to drive my purchasing." In 2004, she took another leap and moved to Hamilton at the suggestion of her sister, Cathie. Three years later, she re-opened LuLu & Lavigne on Locke Street where she now focuses solely on retail. It's now the go-to spot for new and vintage home décor and kitchenware, unique gifts, and small-batch lifestyle accessories. Coward also sews some of the toss pillows she sells and does the silkscreening for her hugely popular Hamilton tea towels and canvas bags.



**THE STYLE:** "It's a pretty eclectic mix," Coward explains. Still, she leans toward traditional over modern and "certainly not minimalist." She also loves mixing wood and metal for an industrial look. Her roster of suppliers is big, with Coward buying from at least 80 at any time. "I don't go too deep into lines," she says. "I cherry pick so it goes with my aesthetic of things. I also don't want to stock things I wouldn't feel comfortable paying for."

**THE TREND:** It's all about warmth and nesting, and finding pleasure in life's simple things. Candles, home entertaining pieces, blankets and jewelry are popular right now. "I feel like a lot more people are entertaining at home and staying home, and they want to be cosied up enjoying their home."

**THE NEWS:** The store just celebrated its 10th anniversary. "We're pretty excited about that," Coward says. "It's a big milestone."

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# GET READY TO SELL

STORY **MEHREEN SHAHID**  
ILLUSTRATION **SHEILA BRITTON**

Putting your house up for sale isn't just about listing it on the market. Experts say there's more to it than that.

## GET FEEDBACK

"I think one of the first things people should do is to get a neutral opinion on their house on what is a good value to add," says Brendan Powell, broker and team leader at the BREL team, Sage Real Estate.

Getting an outsider to give feedback on what could make the house better helps homeowners decide on renovations that will be a real return on investment, he says.

"People often bring us in after renovating," says Powell. "That's usually too late because you can't do anything about it. If you spend \$100,000 on your reno, you can't add that much to the price. Just because you spent the money, it doesn't mean others will see the value, too."

## SPRUCE IT UP

Be prudent in spending money, Powell says, but do fix the nitpicky items, such as bathroom or kitchen fixtures, creaky boards or crumbling brickwork.

Quick ways of sprucing up the inside of a house include a good cleaning, decluttering and a new coat of paint, preferably neutral colours, as they allow the house to look spacious and help buyers easily imagine their items in the same space.

Also, focus on getting rid of smells to which your nose is blind, be it cooking spices or pet odours, says Powell.

## STAGE IT

If you still have no idea how to go about getting your house ready for sale, says Powell, real-estate agents can help stage or call in a professional stager for help.

Red Barrinuevo, professional home stager and interior decorator at Redesign 4 More says staging not only gives a fresh look to the house, but it also demonstrates effective use of space for buyers.

"If it's a living room, showcase it as a living room and remove other pieces that don't have to be there," he says. "For example, for a living room, all we need is a coffee table, a sofa and some chairs."

Another factor that helps determine a home's value and guides the preparation process for a house is its location, says Barrinuevo.

"If you're downtown, the buyer is probably someone working downtown and looking for a starter home. There, a small room could be staged as an office," he says, adding the quality of the furniture should reflect the value of the house. "If you're selling a house outside the city, an extra room could be showcased as a baby room."

## IMPROVE CURB APPEAL

Make sure the exterior of the house is not neglected, Barrinuevo says. "That's the first thing buyers see."

Adding a fresh coat of paint on the garage door, taking care of the front yard and putting garbage bins in the back, instead of front, are just some items on the list. It should tell the buyer the house is well-maintained.

"The outside is like a teaser. If you get off on the wrong foot at the beginning, buyers will look for more faults," he says.

## GET GREAT PHOTOS

Both Barrinuevo and Powell agree that once the inside and outside are taken care of, make sure a professional photographer takes the images shared for the listing.

"It has to be of professional quality, because this is one of the most expensive things you're going to sell," says Powell.

## CONSIDER AN INSPECTION

Where most people focus on cosmetic fixes, it's also a good idea to get a pre-sale inspection done, says Graham Clarke, president of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors.

"It allows the homeowner to be aware of what conditions or deficiencies are going to show up when the buyer brings along an inspector," he says.

This helps reduce potential renegotiation after a potential buyer brings in an inspector.

"The more information you can disclose, the smoother the transaction will be and the more realistic the expectations of the buyer," says Clarke.

Some common items homeowners can fix before listing include safety issues that may arise from electrical, water or leakage issues and neglected porches and decks.

And it helps both the homeowner and their realtor understand what the real condition is and set a more realistic price for the market, he says. **OH**



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# DESIGN DIVO

STORY **SAMANTHA CRAGGS** | PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF** | FLOWERS **FASCINATION FLORIST**

*WHEN SAM ALAIMO WAS DESIGNING HIS OWN SPACIOUS ANCASTER HOME, HE KNEW WHITE WAS A RISK.*



White, black and gold dominate throughout this custom Ancaster home that features many exquisite details. **TOP RIGHT:** Homeowners Sam and Ashley Alaimo. **RIGHT:** The entrance hall is made welcoming with cheerful accents and carries on the timeless palette of black, white and gold.







Circles are a theme throughout the home.



Done wrong, all white can look bland, unwelcoming, institutional. Done right, it looks sleek and modern, or as Sam puts it, “luxurious.”

Sam gambled on white and won, but that’s not a surprise. At 42, he’s making a name for himself as a self-taught designer. And it’s a skill that came in handy for his family’s four-bedroom, five-bathroom custom home.

“I just love houses,” says Sam, who with wife Ashley runs **Lucaria Design**. “It’s hard to keep it all inside. It’s like a medium walking into a place that’s haunted. Everything’s stuck inside, and you have to get it out.”

Sam discovered his love of design when he was 20. He grew up in Hamilton, the son of a steelworker, and at age 20 bought a rental house near Mohawk College with his two younger brothers.

With today’s real estate prices, Sam says, that never could have happened. But it was the late 1990s, and it was still possible to buy a decent house in Hamilton’s west mountain for \$135,000. The brothers pooled some money together and the income they earned from renting to students paid the mortgage.

That led to another house, and then another, and another after that. They’d re-finance one to buy the next, and use rental income to pay the mortgage. They sold off most of the homes in 2016 and early 2017, in the thick of Hamilton’s housing boom, when formerly \$135,000 homes around the college sold for more than \$350,000. *Continued on page 40*



The kitchen is one of the family’s favourite rooms in the house with its picture window offering a view to the outdoors. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The kitchen, with its large island covered in Caesarstone quartz. This room also boasts 10-foot ceilings. **BOTTOM:** A separate dining room has enough space for 10 at a live-edge table. It’s connected to the kitchen by a butler’s pantry.





The brothers flipped a few homes over the years, too, and that's when Sam really discovered his knack with interiors. He'd stage the homes when they went on the market, and everyone would ask about the woman they'd hired. Interior decorating and design is seen as a female-dominated profession, Sam says, and people are constantly surprised that he's male.

He began to read books, learn on the internet, and stay up on trends. He built a custom house in Dundas, and with Sam's design work, it gained so much attention that he was asked if it could be used in film shoots.

"From there forward, I thought, 'I'll give this a go,'" he says. "Eventually I told my wife, 'Let's do this full time.'"

Sam's current home is on a quiet residential drive near Ancaster's bustling Wilson Street. They bought the property last year, demolished the one-and-a-half storey house already on it, and built their own. They moved into it in May.

The new home is 4,050 square feet with two storeys plus a finished lower level, and stunning facade by **Euro Stucco Design & Construction**. Sam wanted white for a modern and luxurious feel, but he knew it was important to break up the visuals.

The millwork is key. It forms shapes throughout the house, bordering walls and guiding visitors up stairwells. Sam designed it and hired **David Banko of Monticello Carpentry** to build and install it. It took three months, he says, and his family got impatient. "My wife just wanted to get it done so we could move in."

He has wall niches in the upstairs hallway, and a Romeo and Juliet balcony overlooking the front door. When he comes home, he says, he often sees his children – Lucas, 4, and Aria, 2 – peering over it.

There are circles everywhere, from the wall mirrors to the design on the closet doors in the main bedroom. (Sam designed most of the doors, too, some of which were manufactured by Metrie and entered into the company's North American-wide design contest.) The shapes add visual breaks to the white walls, painted by **Summer Sun Painting**, as do the numerous shelves with framed photos of the family.

*Continued on page 42*

**RIGHT:** The master bedroom. **BELOW:** A view to a stunning walk-in closet with ample storage and thoughtful design features, including glass doors with the circle motif found elsewhere in the home. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The master bathroom is an oasis of relaxation that features a double shower with speakers. Glass doors by Thanks Glass. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Millwork by David Banko of Monticello Carpentry throughout the home took months to complete but was worth the wait. Staircase by Orbit Stairs. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Another view of the master bathroom, which also features a powder table.



## SAM'S DESIGN TIPS

### HAVE LOTS OF PLANTS

They add warmth to a home, Sam Alaimo says. He has fiddle leaf fig and majesty palm in his home.

### CHOOSE TIMELESS TRENDS

Interior design trends change often, Sam says. Right now, frescos are popular, as are cement tiles. It's okay to indulge in trends, he says, as long as they won't look dated years down the road. An example: he has black and white hexagonal tiles from Factory Tile Depot in one of his bathrooms, which will hold up for the next few years.

### USE MIRRORS TO ADD SPACE

Sam's home is filled with mirrors, including a large one on the dining room wall, and mirrors by **Thanks Glass** on either side of the living room fireplace. They make a room look more spacious, he says, and when done right, add a luxe look.

### DON'T BE OBSESSED WITH MATCHING

Some people tend to focus too much on colour, Sam says. They choose a shade of green, for example, and focus on having everything match it. Good design, he says, is as much about how textures and geometric patterns flow together as it is about colour.





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Sam isn't afraid to indulge either. The shower in the master bathroom has two waterproof speakers tucked discreetly into the walls by **Russell Works Security**. He listens to jazz in there.

"I can't take a shower without music," he says.

The family has two favourite spaces. One is the large kitchen designed by Sam and fabricated by **Baresa Kitchens**. It has 10-foot ceilings and a large island with a Caesarstone quartz counter installed. There, they look out picture windows by **Pollard Windows & Doors** at the backyard and often see deer. The other favourite spot is the covered porch at the back of the house.

There's a fireplace out there with LED lights that illuminate at night. The family barbecues, entertains friends and watches

TV on the porch. When it rains, the kids can still play outside.

"There are many times when I fall asleep out here," he says. "I just sit out here and have a coffee and read a book."

Sam's goal now is to grow his interiors business, branding himself as someone whose specialty is helping people build their custom homes and doing the design. Sam says he can guide the process from permits to completion. He'd also like to do more commercial design.

"I like to walk into somewhere and turn it completely into a spot that anybody would enjoy," he says.

"When people walk in here, they'll talk to my wife. They'll say, 'Great design. I can't believe you did all this stuff.' And she'll point to me and say, 'It was him.'" **OH**

**ABOVE LEFT:** A view to the home office and some of the stunning millwork that adds decadence to the space. **TOP RIGHT:** The covered porch in the backyard is another family favourite for its versatility. **ABOVE:** A child's bedroom combines beauty and fun.

### LOCAL SOURCE GUIDE

- Alamo Plumbing & Drain Specialists
- Baresa Kitchens • Euro Stucco Design & Construction • Greater Niagara Sheet Metal & HVAC • Hamilton Builders' Supply • Lucaria Design • Monticello Carpentry • Orbit Stairs • Pell Insulation Drywall • Pollard Windows & Doors • Russell Works Security • Summer Sun Painting • Thanks Glass • Turkstra Lumber • Venture Electric



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# GINGERBREAD LOAF

with BROWN BUTTER  
ORANGE GLAZE

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY **JENELLE MCCULLOCH**

SPICE UP YOUR NEXT GATHERING WITH THIS WINTER LOAF. WARMING SPICES ARE BAKED INTO THE CAKE AND TOPPED WITH A ZESTY BROWN BUTTER GLAZE.

## LOAF

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 2/3 cup milk, warmed
- 1 tsp baking soda

### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 300°F and line a loaf pan with parchment paper.
- In a medium bowl combine flour, nutmeg, cinnamon and ground ginger and mix well.
- In a small saucepan over low heat, combine butter, brown sugar and molasses until melted. Add to flour mixture and combine until smooth.
- Beat the egg and stir into the batter.
- Combine warm milk and baking soda together and mix into batter until smooth.
- Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 60-70 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.
- Let cool completely before adding glaze.

## GLAZE

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup icing sugar
- ¼ tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbsp brown butter
- 1-2 Tbsp milk
- Zest of one orange

### DIRECTIONS

- To prepare brown butter, place butter in a saucepan over medium heat and cook until fragrant and golden brown. Remove from heat.
- Combine icing sugar, vanilla, brown butter, 1 Tbsp of milk and orange zest in a medium bowl and mix.
- The glaze needs to be thick and opaque but still pourable. If needed, add more milk to reach desired thickness
- Pour glaze evenly down the centre of cool loaf and let fall down the sides. **OH**

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PROJECT AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
TARA CHATTELL

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REUSABLE CONTAINERS



Not particularly crafty? No problem! Make the container part of the gift by choosing something fun and functional, like a small colander or pretty dish. To finish it off, wrap with cellophane and ribbon.

PUNCHED PAPER BAGS



Fold and add a cute clip.



Punch pattern along top.

Reverse side folds



Refold sides inward.

STITCHED PAPER PLATES



Punch holes along edges.



Use a stencil and paint to add pattern.

Stitch together with ribbon.

PAPER WRAPPED



Chip container



Double-sided tape

PAPER CONES



Double-sided tape



Punch two holes.

Attach ribbon



Fold top and tie together.

FOLDED PAPER CUPS



Slice off rim



Evenly-spaced 1-inch slits



Fold down

thrifty ways  
TO GIFT  
YOUR TREATS



A Bohemian-style dining room. On the left, a fireplace with a black metal surround contains a fire. Above the fireplace is a large, light-colored wooden mantel. On the mantel, a framed map is displayed. To the right of the mantel, a white wooden bookshelf is filled with books. A large, brown wicker lamp hangs from the ceiling. In the foreground, a dark wooden dining table is set with white plates, glasses of red wine, and a basket of bread. A black metal bench is tucked under the table. A circular inset in the top right corner shows a close-up of a chair with a patterned seat cushion. The floor is made of light-colored wood. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

double take

Books on display help create a worldly look with a colourful pop.

Bohemian  
GATHERING

Recreate this look in your own home.

PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

Recreate this look in your own home.



1

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A modern kitchen with white cabinets, a stainless steel refrigerator, a black stove, a white countertop, and a white island. The kitchen features a white subway tile backsplash and a stainless steel range hood. A white island with a thick countertop is in the foreground. The floor is dark wood.

48 | ourhomes WINTER 2017/2018



good taste

# ESPRESSO MARTINI

The perfect pick-me-up evening drink, this classic is straight to the point, made with brewed espresso and a hint of chocolate.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
JENELLE MCCULLOCH

## INGREDIENTS

2 ounces espresso, cooled  
1 ounce vodka  
½ ounce crème de cacao liquor  
2-3 dashes chocolate Aztec bitters

## DIRECTIONS

- Chill martini glass with ice, removing the ice before adding cocktail.
- Fill a cocktail shaker with ice and add ingredients.
- Shake until chilled and strain into chilled martini glass. **OH**

online

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# PICTURE FRAME



# WREATHS

Try a new angle on the traditional holiday wreath this year with a repurposed picture frame.

PROJECT **SARA MARTIN**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **TARA CHATTELL**

### MATERIALS

- Picture frames (new or used)
- Primer
- High gloss spray paint (colour of your choice)
- Sandpaper (fine grit)
- Hot glue gun
- High test fishing line, 50 lb weight



### EMBELLISHMENTS

- Pine cones (we used seven)
- Cluster of jingle bells
- Ribbon, two styles
- Plastic Christmas balls (we used seven)
- Styrofoam bird
- Fresh pine

### HOW-TO

Remove glass from frame along with any staples, nails, screws or wire from the back. Lightly sand the frame, apply primer to one side and allow to dry. Turn over and prime the other side and allow to dry.

In a well-ventilated area, on a drop cloth, spray one side of each frame with two coats of gloss paint, allowing to dry between coats. Repeat on reverse side of frame.

Your frame is now ready to be embellished.



### 1. PINE CONES AND BELLS

Pick two different textures of ribbon and tie into a shoelace bow. Leave tails that are as long as half the frame. Set aside. Cut two-foot lengths of fishing line for each pine cone, and tie and knot each strand around the bottom of each cone. Cut a three-foot strand of fishing line and tie to jingle bells. Place bells on the floor and arrange pine cones in a staggered fashion above bells. Tie all strands of fishing line in a knot at the top of the last pine cone.

Set the dry frame against a wall.

Hang bells and pine cones in the frame to the length that you would like and tie to top of frame. Using fishing line, attach bows to the top of the frame.



### 2. CHRISTMAS BALLS

Repeat steps from previous wreath, using Christmas balls instead of pine cones.

### 3. BIRD AND FRESH PINE

Using fishing line, hang fresh pine from the top of the frame. Secure bird and bow to frame with a hot glue gun.

### TO HANG

Tie a strand of fishing line to the top of the frame and secure to a door-wreath hanger or a small nail. **OH**







# 5 O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE

We find out how the pros unwind after a day at the office.

STORY **TIFFANY MAYER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**



**KEITH SHANNON  
& MICHELLE BIRO, OWNERS  
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**What's the big trend in flooring right now?** Carpet is becoming more popular than ever, with stain-proof fibres and durable blends. Soft patterns and sculptured looks provide design inspiration without being overpowering while tone-on-tone plush carpets give a rich look and feel.

**What's your favourite way to spend your time off in Hamilton?** We're homebodies who love to renovate and take on new projects. If we aren't spending time at home with our dog, we're heading north to our cottage in Muskoka. Escaping city life allows us to spend time with family, de-stress and enjoy Ontario's beautiful lake views.

**SULLIVAN TAYLOR, BRITTANY  
VOTTERO, WILLOW TAYLOR, PIA  
VOTTERO, SHANNON HOWDEN  
& REBECCA CARCAMO**  
*Hamilton Decorating Centre*

**Pia, tell us what you do:** My husband Jason and I run the company. Jason is regularly on the road building our commercial/industrial coatings business, such as lacquers and epoxies and all the tools for them. I help people decorate their homes with colour or Hunter Douglas window coverings. It's a real pleasure helping people find what they need. Our children are also active in the business. Our daughter Brittany manages our Hamilton store, our other daughter, Kerri-Ann Taylor, runs our Beamsville store, and our son Adam is the go-to guy in our lacquer department.

**The Decorating Centre has been a longtime business in Niagara. Tell us why you decided to recently open in Hamilton:** With our faith in God, our three children and awesome staff, it's given us the motivation to continue to expand. Hamilton seemed like the natural next move. Coming soon will be a store in Stoney Creek, which we hope to open by 2018.

**What's your favourite way to unwind after work?** I love to unwind by walking my dog surrounded by trees and nature, or going for a ride on the motorcycle with my husband.

*Continued on page 56*





**PAUL & DEBBIE HORN**  
*Archie Horn & Son Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning*  
**HENRI GELMS**  
*Danasy Landscaping & Maintenance*  
**CAROL FINES**  
*CarolCan*  
*Business Executive Organization, Hamilton*

**What is the Business Executive Organization?** It's mostly composed of business owners who want to increase their business with like-minded professionals. We share new ideas, exchange smart strategies and drive business growth through referrals. We do this through weekly breakfast meetings, helpful resource presentations, member-hosted orientations and numerous social activities.

**What are the perks of getting involved with BEO?** When you have likeminded professionals referring each other you can be assured that your client is looked after well. When you refer someone, you want that someone to have the same honesty and integrity that you have. We become friends that seek to help one another.

**How do most like to kick back after a day at work?** Oh, this is good. Some enjoy sailing or going out for dinner, playing sports, camping or going to the cottage. Some of us with small children read bedtime stories to our kids and halfway through we fall asleep and our kids say "Dad, don't fall asleep."

**JENNIFER DANIEL**  
*REAL ESTATE SALES REPRESENTATIVE*  
*Judy Marsales Real Estate Brokerage, Hamilton*

**Tell us what you do:** I sell houses and I love my job! I get to help people find their dream homes or help people sell the homes they have loved and cared for. Whether it's first-time buyers or empty-nesters, it's always a unique and exciting time.

**Why did you get into real estate?** I got into real estate because I had a previous eight years in sales and wanted to move into a business that I could make my own. I've moved more than 22 times in my life and lived in four different countries. After spending the last 10 years in Westdale, I can finally say I have found my home.

**What's your favourite way to unwind after work?** Nothing better than nine holes of twilight golf with my son and boyfriend at Dundas Valley Golf and Curling Club. Golf has been a part of my life and a way of life since I was six. Give me a shout if you want to play a round or if you have any real estate questions. **OH**



SEE OUR DIRECTORY FOR ALL CONTACT INFORMATION.



# liveable COLOUR



Whether you're looking to bring a leafy green to your home for warm, year-round vibes, or you prefer a different accent hue, these tips for adding liveable colour can help you have fun with your palette – inspired by this cheerful Toronto Interior Design Group project.



STORY  
**YANIC SIMARD**  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
**VALERIE WILCOX**

## GET COMFORTABLE WITH COLOUR

For this project, we wanted to create a look that respected the heritage details of the home, but didn't feel too safe. This meant adding some colour and taking a few strategic design risks, one of which was a cool sectional sofa. The modular style meant being able to use a contrasting upholstery for a few sections, and a neutral fabric for the rest. It also leaves the option open for switching up the look later by rearranging the pieces or changing just a few covers.

**Pro Tip:** Green is near-neutral enough to withstand changing trends and mix with new accent colours in the future. This colour family in particular is a smart choice for accents you can live with for years to come.

## USE A NEW NEUTRAL

Enriching your colour scheme doesn't always have to mean tossing in a new bold hue: adding a new neutral to your scheme will make the palette feel more diverse in a subtle way. Here, a cool mid-tone grey for the fireplace brick plays against the warm wood floors. This stone shade also helps soften the appearance of the black fireplace surround, plus, it's repeated in a cosy blanket, tying the entire palette further together.

BENJAMIN MOORE:  
Chelsea Gray (HC-168)

*Continued on page 60*

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THROW YOUR PALETTE TOGETHER

Does the unique sofa seem like too much commitment? This is where accent pillows and throws come in. Not only are these changeable pieces a smart way to add colour without a big investment, but they can also tame a bold palette and connect non-matching areas. By piling the sofa with multi-tonal green and neutral pillows, the colours of the sofa sections become repeated and tied together. A striped blanket is then used to bring this accent hue to a neighbouring seating area for a sense of harmony.

*Get the look:* Use pillows and throws in related but subtly differing shades, and in a rich array of fabrics and textures, to integrate your accent hues throughout the space in a sophisticated way.

1. **BARCLAY BUTERA:** Greer Linen Insert with Grommets

2. **CELERIE KEMBLE:** Sail Celadon with Ball Trim

3. **BRUNELLI:** 3. Dorothy in Aqua

4. Fred in Cream

5. Pompon

6. Gwyneth in Blue Duck

7. **SURYA:** Troy Throw in Mint, Cream and Teal

FRESHEN UP YOUR WINDOW TRIM

Using a fresh minty accent hue for your window trim truly brings the outdoors in. First, it adds a pop of greenery in an unexpected way, but in a small enough dose that it's not overwhelming, or hard to repaint if you want a new look down the road. Second, it beautifully frames the view outside. We finished the look with elegant in-window shades rather than draperies, to suit the architectural appeal and leave the elegant trim exposed.



**SAFAVIEH:** Carlotta Arm Chair in Grieger

**TON CANADA:** Merano Armchair in Beech with Black Stain

**MOE'S:** Adele Coffee Table

MIX WOODS LIKE A NATURAL

Think all of the woods in one room have to match? Mixing wood tones is like mixing other neutrals – the subtle differences can actually enhance each other and your palette. However, there are rules that will help avoid clashes. In general, it's safe to stick to just cool (ashy/grey) woods, or warm (yellow/red/brown) tones, so they don't conflict. It also helps to use somewhat similar grains. In this room, all of the woods have small subtle grains rather than bold exotic ones.

*Get the look:* Mix a pale rattan accent chair, rich-stained or lacquered bentwood side chairs and a natural-edge coffee table for a perfectly eclectic trio that extends from light to dark. **OH**



*Get the look:* We used Benjamin Moore's Salisbury Green (HC-139) for the windows (drawn from the mint upholstery on the sofa), but for the nearby entry door trim we matched it to the walls to keep the vestibule simple and breezy.

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# play spaces WITH STYLE

UBABUB:  
Booksee Shelf

**THE FREEDOM TO PLAY, CREATE AND EXPLORE IS INTEGRAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN.**

At home, whether you have the square footage to dedicate an entire room to play or have carved out space in your main living area, it can be a challenge to maintain your overall design aesthetic when your space can begin to look like a toy factory in a matter of minutes. The following tips will help create a family-friendly play space without cramping your style.

**1** Make it easy for your kids to access their toys, books and supplies as this fosters independence and means that if they can get it out, they can also put it away. Choose pieces that fit the overall style of your home and are decorative yet functional (while keeping in mind how they could be repurposed as your children grow). Open storage such as shelves, hooks, baskets and bins, and closed storage such as ottomans, built-ins, consoles and dressers are a great combination. Having adequate storage ensures there is a home for everything and makes for quick cleanup at the end of a play.

» **1. THE LAND OF NOD:** Wheelhouse Bookcase **2. NURSERY WORKS:** Tree Bookcase **3. PEHR:** Navy Stripe and Navy Speck Drums **4. TULIP:** Rio Double Dresser **5. THE LAND OF NOD:** Black & White Upholstered Storage Bench



**2** In order to keep an open-concept space aligned with your overall design aesthetic, veer away from overt themes and bright, bold primary colours as kids' favourite characters and colours can change from month to month. Keep the walls, floors and furnishings in calming neutrals and integrate small doses of soft, muted colours. Fusion Mineral Paint's Tones for Tots come in a range of colours and feature an environmentally and health conscious formulation without sacrificing quality and durability. Generic wall murals are a great way to spark imagination while injecting personality and style to a space.

» **1. MURALS WALLPAPER:** Dragonfly Illustration Wallpaper Mural & Scientific Chalkboard Effect Wall Mural **2. FUSION MINERAL PAINT:** Tones For Tots in Little Lamb, Little Whale & Little Speckled Frog **3. INDIGO:** CCR Walpops Learn To Write Chalkboard



**3** Choose materials, fabrics and finishes that are durable yet comfortable and family-friendly. Avoid glass coffee tables, sharp corners and furniture and flooring with small crevices that can trap dirt and crumbs. Wipeable seating options such as leather and vinyl – work horse upholstery that wears well over time – and patterned fabrics that help conceal soils are great options. Also, ensure that pillow and chair covers are removeable for easy cleaning. As kids spend hours playing on the floor, selecting a material such as luxury vinyl tiles or planks is a good idea as they are waterproof and virtually indestructible (and are being manufactured to look increasingly realistic with some great installation patterns available). Add comfort and style by layering with a fun area rug (indoor/outdoor rugs are a great option), but avoid shags as they can trap allergens and are difficult to keep clean (and hidden Lego is bound to find the bottom of your foot!). Interlocking cushioned floor tiles are also now being manufactured in aesthetically pleasing patterns that can be a great addition to your home décor.

» **1. NURSERY WORKS:** Sleepytime Rocker **2. PEHR:** Rainbow Stripe Rug **3. LITTLE NOMAD:** Roam Free Play Mat in Dusk **4. THE LAND OF NOD:** Heritage Rug



A height adjustable activity table allows for longer use.



Kids love cosy places to retreat to for quiet time.

**4** Choose items that are fun, whimsical and engage the imagination. Kids love hanging chairs and mini tents because it is a place they can retreat to for play, stories and some quiet time. Lighting in various shapes can add to the design of your home while also engaging the minds of little ones. Designated activity areas for creating arts and crafts allow children to express themselves and a gallery wall is an easy way to display and rotate the pieces while providing a one-of-a-kind design statement.

» **1. THE LAND OF NOD:** Gallery Wall Clips **2. LA SIESTA:** Joki Planet Koala **3. HINKLEY LIGHTING:** Tryst Chandelier **4. POTTERY BARN KIDS:** Tan With Charcoal Trim Teepee **5. THE LAND OF NOD:** Complete Adjustable Grey Activity Table Set **6. POTTERY BARN KIDS:** Faux Fur Anywhere Beanbag **OH**





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For some, doing renovations or building a new home can be an overwhelming experience, but at Elm Ridge Lighting we offer free one-on-one consultations to help make it more enjoyable. Bring us your plans and we will work with you room by room to select the appropriate lighting suited for your needs.

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*(Please see ad on pg 45)*



## REAL ESTATE FACT OR FICTION

2017 has been described as a 'volatile' year for real estate. Starting with a shortage of inventory in the spring, to government implementation of higher interest rates, the 'Fair Housing Act', and new mortgage qualifying rules. No wonder consumers are getting confused. Buyers and sellers are reacting to the heated debates, and misinformation.

The truth is, as the real estate market cools down from the spring, now is what we call a balanced marketplace, which means there is the right amount of inventory to meet demand.

People must accept the fact that the price increases we saw in the spring were not the norm, and so we are seeing the price adjustment now.

In my opinion, the potential for homes to hold their value is very strong. Although, I do think we will see more negotiations happening again.

But consumers should make sure they have the right information when they think about buying or selling real estate.

It doesn't have to be overwhelming. I am here to help answer any questions you may have, give you current information, to make sure you are equipped when you are ready to make a move.

My focus is to look out for your best interests as my client, and I am committed to working diligently until your goals are met.

Give me a call today.

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**Sales Representative**  
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*(Please see ad on pg 35)*



## WRAP UP YOUR HOME RENOS USING THE NIX MINI COLOR SENSOR

The all new **Nix Mini Color Sensor** is here to help you deck your halls with the perfect paint colour!

The Nix Mini is an excellent tool for any homeowner or designer looking to get quick and accurate paint matches. Simply scan any surface with the Nix Mini, and you'll get instant in-app matches to over 28,000 paint colours from brands including Sherwin Williams, Benjamin Moore, Dulux, and more!

Looking to explore new colour options? The Nix Mini can help you discover colour harmonies and even cross-reference colours between brands. Found a colour that you love? Save it in the Nix Paints app.

Colour can change the way we interact with a space. Selecting the right colour by eye can be challenging, especially with varying light. The Nix Mini blocks out all ambient light and provides its own light source, meaning you'll get a precise colour match the first time.

**Grab the colours of the season using the Nix Mini. Visit nixmini.com to learn more or call Nix Sensor Ltd. at 905.581.6363**  
*(Please see ad on pg 49)*



## INTERIORS BY BETTER SHADE

Located on Glendale Ave, right between the two malls (The Pen Centre and The Niagara Outlet Collection), you will find **Interiors By Better Shade**. Interiors By Better Shade is a fourth generation, family owned and operated furniture and window coverings store that has been serving the Niagara Region and surrounding areas for over 60 years.

Most people know us for our beautiful custom window coverings, but we are eagerly trying to get the word out that we also sell **quality Canadian-made furniture**, and offer the **best prices for furniture, this side of Toronto!**

Not only do we have a wide selection of styles to choose from in our two-storey showroom, but we also offer excellent and personable customer service for our clients! We know choosing furniture can be a tad confusing at times. Not to worry, our knowledgeable design consultants make it easy, helping you choose comfort first and then style.

We also showcase Ontario's **LARGEST** selection of Palliser recliners! Available in a variety of designs and functions including power or manual, Rockers, Swivel Gliders, Wallhuggers, Zero Gravity Chairs, Power Lift Chairs, and Power Recliners with Power Headrest!

For quality modern interiors, furniture and window treatments for so many years...Interiors By Better Shade. Come and see for yourself, why we're Better!  
**469 Glendale Ave, St. Catharines**  
**905.227.4555**  
**interiorsbybetershade.com**  
*(Please see ad on pg 23)*



## HALSON DECOR

Design trends are changing daily which can be overwhelming.

**Halsen Decor**, your Hamilton Mountain Benjamin Moore dealer, is here to help you achieve your vision in your preferred style. "Where quality comes first and service comes naturally!"

Our staff are here to assist with all paint and design projects. Offering a variety of expertise to draw from with our in-store designers, you'll receive the best colour, décor inspiration, and advice for your ongoing project.

Looking for window treatments to update your home? We specialize in custom blinds, shutters and an increasing selection of in-stock drapery, ranging from light filtering sheers, to energy efficient room darkening panels in a variety of colours and patterns.

Come and see what's new in wallpaper; Geometric, Industrial, Rustic, or Whimsical Mural enthusiasts will love our variety. We have an organized selection and will assist in the hunt for your perfect paper.

Halsen Decor is now offering Chalk Paint workshops on how to apply and finish your piece. The course will include a chalk painting kit to bring home.

Our staff is looking forward to meeting new and familiar faces and helping you through all the projects you desire in the quest to make your home perfect.

**1-1521 Upper Ottawa St**  
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*(Please see ad on pg 5)*

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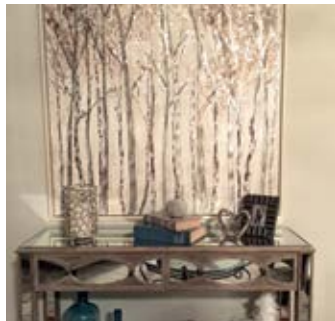
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## ARCON WALL DECOR

Established in 1984, **Arcon** has been serving the Hamilton and Niagara area with exquisite wall décor solutions for every design esthetic.

Being a family owned and operated business, we offer an array of unique custom framing ideas along with an extensive selection of art, mirrors and oversize wall clocks, for every home, office or business.

Here at Arcon, we have grown to be one of the largest leading picture and frame manufacturers in our area, and we pride ourselves in supplying the highest quality of materials and finishes for every client.

For over 30 years we have worked with interior designers, builders and local businesses to achieve their own unique design objectives, and we aim to accommodate everyone's budget.

All our frame work is completed in our 7000 square ft warehouse by our own design team, together in offering full consultation and delivery, our installation service specialists understand how to maximize and utilize wall décor to achieve the desired vision for any space.

From simple pieces to whole room and multiroom installations, you can expect the same professional excellence we at Arcon strive for.

**7-410 Lewis Rd, Stoney Creek  
905.643.8938**

[arconframes.com](http://arconframes.com)

*(Please see ad on pg 15)*



## PENWOOD FURNITURE

**Penwood Furniture** is a locally owned and family run retail furniture store, specializing in hand crafted solid wood furniture. Established in 1993, and built on customer satisfaction, Penwood has offered the surrounding communities the very best in Canadian made home furnishings and the very best in customer service. Our furniture is custom built, piece by piece, on over 30 different local Mennonite farms in Southern Ontario between St. Jacobs and Elmira, Ontario.

Every piece of furniture is unique and the finest materials are applied to each build. Maple, Wormy Maple, quarter sawn Oak, Regular Oak, Pine, Premium Cherry and Speckled Cherry are a few of the available woods we design our furniture in. Every piece of lumber is hand selected from a Canadian mill and kiln dried for quality and consistency. Careful construction includes dovetailed drawers and hand sanded surfaces to an impeccable standard. One of 25+ different stains is applied in several stages with attentive hand sanding in between each finishing layer. Surfaces textures can be smooth, hand-planed, random planed, hand scraped, weathered or rough cut adding even more versatility to your custom piece. In addition, all dimensions, design guidelines or templates can be adjusted, making your furniture, truly, one of a kind!

**Come take a visit in our newly renovated Morriston showroom at 34 Queen St, or our new Ancaster store at 1242 Gardner Rd W, Unit 5, or Oakville in March 2018!**

[penwoodfurniture.com](http://penwoodfurniture.com)

*(Please see ad on pg 15)*



## HAMILTON'S FINEST IN COLLISION REPAIRS

The Mercanti family has been one of Hamilton's most trusted collision and glass repair experts since 1961. It was in 1994, when the Mercanti family, brothers Tony, Sam and Remo, along with their Gage location manager, Rob Garofalo, turned their two Hamilton repair facilities into the very first **CARSTAR** franchises in Canada.

Over the past 20 years, the business has evolved and technology has advanced. Tony, Sam and Remo Mercanti, current owners of CARSTAR Hamilton Rymal, have been committed to staying ahead of the curve and driving industry standards. Being a preferred collision repair facility for local dealers, demonstrates how professional the work is at these locations.

Adhering to OEM manufacturer standards are what makes superior collision repairs. Understanding this, both stores have made it a priority to ensure their locations have the seal of approval from auto manufacturers. Currently, the facilities are certified by Chrysler, Fiat, Dodge, Toyota, Honda and Nissan, with the goal for Audi and Volkswagen certification by the end of the year and Ford in early 2018.

Emphasis on training, being prepared for all types of repairs, even aluminum ones, using the latest technology for better services like colour matching and prioritizing customer service, are what drives these locations. They are true to their family's values, and above all else, aim to safely and quickly get customers back on the road.

[carstar.ca](http://carstar.ca)

*(Please see ad on pg 5)*



## OTTAWA ST BIA (EST 1985)

Ottawa Street is Hamilton's destination for inspiration and reflects the eclectic spirit of our City. Running from Main Street to Barton, it's just minutes from the highway and a great place to stop on your way through town.

Ottawa Street has been in the heart of Hamilton's textile district since the 1920's, and is one of Hamilton's most beloved and recognized shopping districts; it's also recently become a destination for antique hunters and foodies alike.

Our retail mix is dynamic, unique and eclectic, much like the spirit of Hamilton. With over 100 shops, restaurants and services, including a year-round Farmer's Market, there's something for everyone on Ottawa Street.

The **Ottawa Street BIA** plays a major role in the maintenance, beautification and promotion of the street. We put on a series of community driven events throughout the year to celebrate the street and its merchants. *We invite you to join us this summer on July 8, 15, 22 & 29 for Saturdays in July.* Discover Ottawa Street's history, merchants and community through lively mini-events each Saturday.

**Ottawa Street Business Improvement Area  
204 Ottawa St N, Hamilton  
905.544.5822**

[info@ShopOttawaStreet.com](mailto:info@ShopOttawaStreet.com)

[ShopOttawaSteeet.com](http://ShopOttawaSteeet.com)

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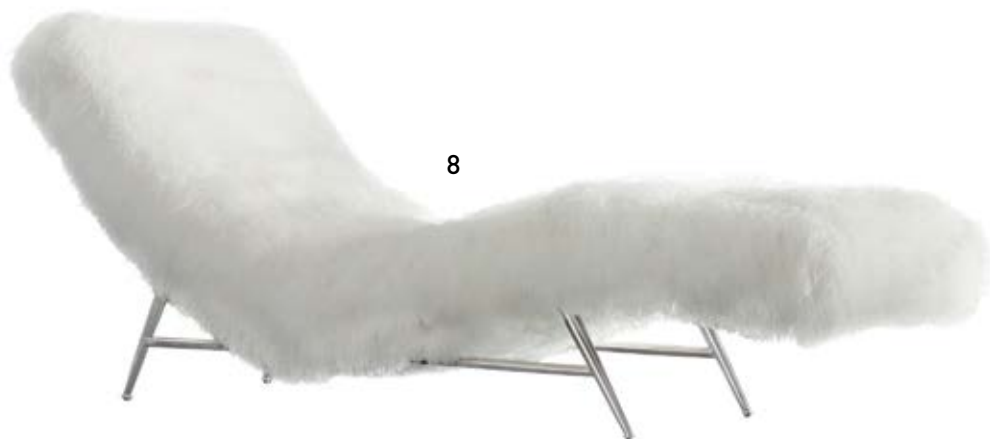
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10. BLU DOT: Neat Ottoman  
11. BYRD & BELLE: Hexagon Wool Felt Coasters; Wool Felt iPad Sleeve  
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