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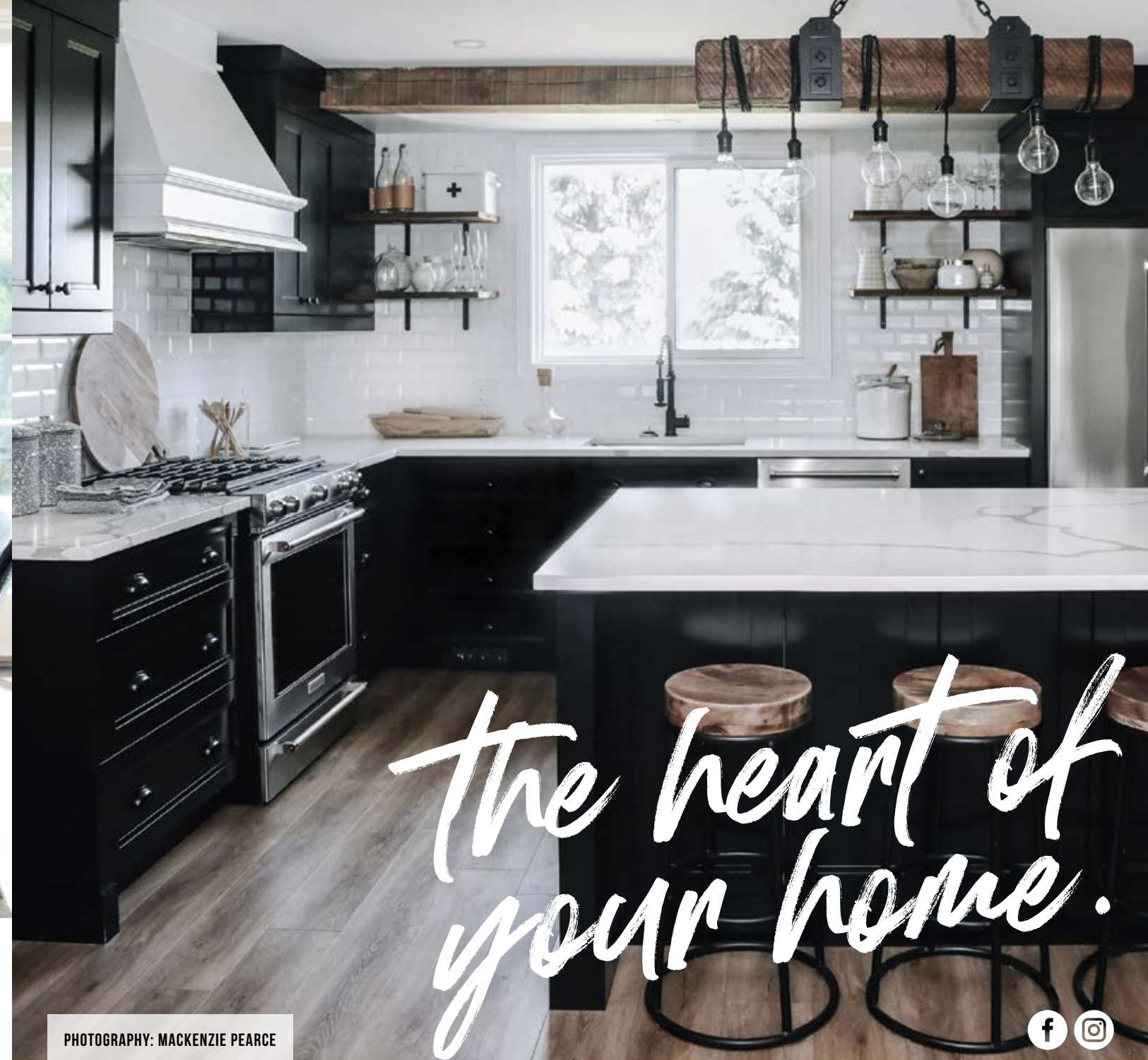
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REMEMBERING DAVE CARVER

Recently, there was sad news for London's home and design industry. Well-known and respected contractor Dave Carver, founder of Carver Sheet Metal, passed away. Dave will be greatly missed by so many in this city. Our hearts go out to Dave's family at this time.



DOWNSIZING SEEMS TO BE HIGH ON THE MINDS of many of a certain age and stage. Myself included! Four years ago we decided to sell our family home and scale back. A smaller space would mean smaller maintenance, right? Well, that would be true for the most part now. But I'm not going to fudge it, the resettlement process certainly did require a ton of upfront effort.

I know this issue's Feature homeowners would agree with me! Their story piqued my interest when Steve Sims of The Barnswallow Company introduced it to OUR HOMES. His clients looked long and hard for a place that would eventually check most of the boxes on their list. Meanwhile, they were figuring out how to divest of many of the furnishings and accessories that go with years spent in a large, formal family home while integrating some of it into their new space. When they did find a smaller home they knew they could work with, Steve stepped in to help them design and complete their renovation.

An important takeaway from this story? Be prepared. This couple worked to a plan and as a result their new home works for them.

In this issue we also show you just how far model homes have come in terms of style inspiration. You will be wowed by two special interiors in the Warbler Woods neighbourhood, the first by Sifton Properties and the second by Harasym Developments Inc.

For a little retail therapy, turn to our Style Picks, and get to know some of our home and design professionals in our People feature. Also on the local scene, have a look-see at Design House London in our Spotlight. Bricks and mortar retail never looked so good.

In addition to our local stories, this issue brings you many, many ideas for making the most of your home this summer in ways that bring you joy and refuge from the busy world out there.

Mary Hatt

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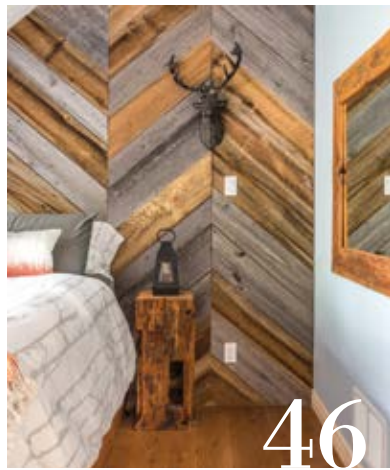
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CONTENTS

SUMMER 2019



16



46



38

ON THE COVER

The master bedroom in Sifton's Warbler Woods model *The Walnut* is all about sumptuous, unapologetic comfort! Story, page 16. Photography by Jason Hartog.

12



32

LOCAL FEATURES

- 12 Style Picks** Summer brings joy inside and outside your home.
- 16 Feature Home** Model homes ain't what they used to be! Take a look at two beauties by local builders.
- 32 Spotlight** History and retailing cross paths in a special London landmark.
- 38 Feature Home** A tired one-floor bids good riddance to the 90s in a clever makeover by one downsizing couple and their designer.
- 50 People** Local home and design pros talk about their businesses and their summer.

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 Editor's Note**
- 10 Advice** Outdoor Kitchen Know-How
- 14 Cooking At Home** Summer Pavlova
- 26 Outdoor Ideas** Pretty Planter Gardens
- 28 Design Ideas** Inspired Ceilings
- 30 Double Take** Style Your Entryway
- 34 Gardening** Landscape With Hedges
- 36 Real Estate** Buyers' Top 10
- 46 Decorating** Drywall Alternatives
- 48 Projects** Marine-Inspired Light Posts
- 57 Home Resource Directory**
- 58 Good Taste** Tasty Fireside Tipple
- 60 Finishing Touch** Hardscape Heaven



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The Ultimate OUTDOOR KITCHEN

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

Our summers may be short, but from March through July and on to November, cooking outdoors allows us to share our food experiences with family and friends while we extend our outdoor play time. More and more people are choosing to invest in their homes and backyards rather than vacation elsewhere.

Before planning and spending on an outdoor kitchen, ask yourself some simple questions:

- How much time do I want to devote to maintenance? Knowing this will save you a lot of grief and disappointment.
- What's critical-to-have, must-have and nice-to-have?

Critical to Know

- Safety first. Make sure you meet your region's building and fire codes. There's a difference between a code for building a house and a code for preventing open flames in and near a building. They are two different things.
- Protect combustible materials.

Choosing Cabinets and Materials

Cabinets and counters need to be corrosion and weather resistant, low maintenance and made with stable materials. All materials expand and contract with temperature change and moisture. Sun fades colours, and natural materials break down over time. There are three types of cabinetry-based kitchens for outdoor use: HDPE/Polymer, wood and stainless steel.

Polymer: Waterproof, sun safe, available in a variety of solid colours, lower maintenance, plastic, variable durability.

Wood: Flexible design, requires some maintenance, most affordable, not fire resistant.



PHOTO: DANVER OUTDOOR KITCHENS



Stainless Steel: Heat and fire resistant, non-corrosive, easy to clean, available in powder-coated colours.

Things to Consider

Appearance: What do I want to see when I look at my outdoor kitchen? Choose your landscaping and furniture for that perfect outdoor style.

Clean-Up: Install a sink with water. You may not want to use your indoor kitchen to clean greasy, sooty stuff. Plan ahead for plumbing.

Heating and Electrical: Layer your heat sources. Consider heat lamps, fire pits or a built-in infrared heater. Make sure you put in multiple electrical outlets that meet code. Plan ahead for electrical.

Shade: Create shade from the sun and protection from the rain with pergolas, retractable patio covers or tents.

Stay Cool: Cool yourself off with fans, misters or rugs to shield you from the hot floor and use light-coloured furniture.

Layout and Seating: Transition your rooms with removable screens, doors and walls. Offer a variety of seating – low Muskoka chairs, chaise loungers, stools and benches.

Storage Space: The ultimate amenity. Think of what else may need to be stored – equipment, furniture, sports and hobbies. You don't want to run back and forth from the house or garage, to the outdoor living area.

Small Spaces – Condo Balconies and Terraces

Electric grills make outdoor eating possible despite strict fire and safety codes. Brown Jordan has fully assembled kitchens for terraces, to be lifted by a crane, or custom units transported by a service elevator.

Nice to Have and Trending

- Specialty right-sized appliances replacing mammoth barbecue grills. These can include: Argentinian grills, smokers, side burners, pizza ovens, fridges, dishwashers, beer on tap, espresso machines, ice makers and Kamado-style grills.
- Lighting schemes, televisions and sound systems. Treat this space like another room of the house.

Value to Your Home

Outdoor kitchens seem to be replacing the pool as an add-on feature. It increases your competitive edge when selling because people will imagine themselves having great times in their new backyard.

Good design blurs the lines between the indoors and the outdoors. In what creative ways have you designed your very own private outdoor oasis? **OH**



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"What if the fullest way home is best found while looking around at other things?" That's one of the musings by artist and poet Erica Dornbusch in her new work *Paint & Prose: A Wayfinder's Meander*. Lovely images and verse are sure to inspire while making a stunning statement on your coffee table.

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PAVLOVA

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RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY
JENELLE MCCULLOCH

Pavlova

INGREDIENTS

- 4 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- ¼ cup cold water
- 1-¼ cups sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 1 Tbsp + 1 tsp cornstarch

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 300°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Draw a six-inch circle in the centre on the side of the parchment that will face down. This will be your guide when you shape the pavlova.

Combine egg whites and salt in a stand mixer and beat on medium-high until stiff peaks are formed. Be careful not to over- whip the egg whites at this stage. The egg whites will be thick and foamy and a peak will form when the beater is lifted out of the egg. Turn the mixer to low and slowly add the water and then the sugar. Turn the mixer back up to medium-high and beat until stiff peaks are again formed. The eggs will be thick and glossy. Remove bowl from mixer and fold in vanilla, vinegar and cornstarch.

Pile the meringue onto the circle on the baking sheet. With a spatula, smooth edges and top of the pavlova so it almost forms a dome. If preferred, create ridges in the side of the pavlova by swiping the sides in an upward motion.

Bake the pavlova for 30 minutes. Do not open oven! Turn oven down to 275°F and bake for another 45 minutes. Let cool completely in the oven for an hour or overnight. It is normal for the pavlova to crack and the centre to sink in.

Remove from oven when cool.



Citrus Curd

INGREDIENTS

- 4 egg yolks
- ¼ cup citrus juice of choice (lemon, blood orange, etc.)
- 1 tsp citrus zest
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 3 Tbsp unsalted butter

DIRECTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a double boiler and heat on medium-high, stirring continuously until mixture thickens and coats the back of a spoon. Strain curd through a fine

mesh sieve into a bowl. Cover the top of the curd with plastic wrap directly on the curd and chill until cooled.

GARNISHES

- Fresh whipped cream
- Berries
- Mint
- Powdered sugar

ASSEMBLE PAVLOVA

Assemble shortly before serving. Fill the centre of the pavlova with curd, whipped cream and berries. Garnish with mint and powdered sugar. **OH**

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PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

ARTFULLY *styled*



Vaulted ceilings in *The Walnut* model by Sifton add dramatic styling and a sense of openness. **OPPOSITE, LEFT:** A tall glass-panelled front door and a sliding door to the den maximize natural light in the foyer. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Minimal lines define the great room, including the sleek electric fireplace by Dimplex. A black matte Sputnik-style chandelier (Guildwood) makes an elegant finishing touch above the stairway's landing.



GABLES AND A FRONT PORCH charm the exterior of *The Walnut*, but the eight-foot, four-panel glass front door (**Dashwood Industries Inc.**) announces a more modern look and feel inside the home. The 2,728 sq. ft. model is **Sifton Properties'** Warbler Woods statement piece. It defines the company's commitment to customizing spaces to match lifestyles and taste.

With a go-ahead to change up *The Walnut's* typical layout, Sifton décor consultant **Gabi Brown**, with help from **Grant Meagher** of **Meagher's Drafting and Design Services**, went to work on thoughtful and practical tweaks in the model. "I decided to open up the great room space," Gabi says of her decision to shorten the dining room wall and reduce two eating areas in the house to one. "You really don't need two dining spaces."

She also carefully selected interior doors and trim (**North Pole Trim & Supplies Ltd.**) such as the sliding barn door to the den just inside the entryway. She then made sure that all door and window heights were higher than usual to maximize openness and natural light.

"My take on this model was to go modern, yet blend that with traditional details," she says of her starting point. *Continued on page 18*



The dining room, with a clerestory window for extra light, is comfortably accessible from the kitchen as well as the great room.



Black detailing in the kitchen is used for a crisp contrast to white and natural wood. **BELOW:** The entryway to the house from the garage, with black-and-white tiled floor (Centura), also includes a chic powder room. Kitchen and hallway fixtures from The Lighting Shoppe.



a sitting area. The sumptuous adjoining bathroom features a custom vanity by Woody's in a warm maple stain with matte gold hardware. The vanity's mid-century styling stands up to big-scale floor tiles (Centura London).
Three additional bedrooms, a bathroom and a laundry room with built-in cabinets round out the second floor's functional features. All in all, a home where blended styling will suit many lifestyles. **OH**



The kitchen – where **Woody's Premium Cabinetry** provided a stylish white-oak range hood, cabinets and open shelving – features a modern take on porcelain subway tiles (supplied by **Centura London** and installed by **Sacwal Flooring Centres**). Glossy, black marble-veined Silestone Eternal Marquina tops the kitchen peninsula, complementing soft white perimeters in Hanstone Angora (both from **Progressive Countertop**). Replacing crown moulding, Gabi opted for a small reveal at the kitchen ceiling.
“I wanted the interior to be clean and bright,” says Gabi, who was assisted on the décor portion of the project by **Georgia Murray**. The pair chose matte black and gold accented lighting fixtures from **The Lighting Shoppe** and **Guildwood Lighting & Fireside**, plumbing fixtures (**Paton Bros. Plumbing**) and door pulls (North Pole) that provide rich contrast to walls painted Silver Satin by **Benjamin Moore** and white oak flooring (Sacwal). Up-to-the-minute black

interior window frames (Dashwood) provide additional contrast.
Gabi installed a striking piece of big-scale art from **Austin & Taylor Home Furnishings Inc.** to handle the soaring wall of the great room's two-storey ceiling. The multi-colour painting was her starting point for furniture colours and accessory pieces including two sectionals (Austin & Taylor), and a coffee table by **Rustix Furniture & Design Studio**.
With its landing overlooking the great room and an oversize window allowing natural light thanks to the model's corner lot location, the white oak stairway by **London Stair & Railing Co. Ltd.** adds further architectural interest inside the home.
Upstairs Gabi created more fresh and light-filled spaces with careful attention to layering.
“I love layering,” she says of the luxurious bedding she chose in addition to placing a rug on top of a rug in the master bedroom where a pair of plush upholstered chairs creates



A cosy seating area in the master suite is a go-to for quiet time. Custom drapes by Willi Van Deven of Designers' Edge by Covers make a soft, elegant statement. **ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT:** Gabi blended different “looks” throughout the house, including mid-century styling in the master bath's custom maple vanity (Woody's). A soaker tub with gold chandelier (Guildwood) and walk-in glass shower round out luxury.



Mike and Milena Harasym of Harasym Developments Inc.

like to apply the adage, two heads are better than one. Together, this building power couple promises stylish architectural components and functional interior design. Their plans never fail to check all the boxes: plenty of storage, scads of built-ins and layouts that make practical sense for today's family.



TOP LEFT: The dining room's wallpaper mural seems a nod to nearby wildlife in the Warbler Woods. **LEFT:** The carefully curated fireplace surround is the family room's focal point, featuring millwork by North Pole Trim & Supplies Ltd., wall in Newburyport Blue (Benjamin Moore) and a painting by Milena Harasym. Sofa, loveseat and custom glass-topped coffee table by Austin & Taylor. **ABOVE:** Artist and decorator Jane Kewin, left, worked with Milena and Mike Harasym.



The 3,400 sq. ft. *Rochelle* model home in Warbler Woods has an open plan that starts with a practical side entry from the double garage to a well-kitted mudroom and adjoining two-piece bathroom. Along the back of the house, the light-filled kitchen (windows by **Dashwood Industries Inc.**), dining room and great room roll effortlessly into each other. And, when family members want to get away from it all, there is a small living room and den at the front of the house plus a master suite sitting area upstairs.

The Harasym's opted to locate the *Rochelle*'s laundry room on the upper floor where a busy family generates most of its wash. And each of the three secondary bedrooms features an en suite, a touch of functional luxury.

The *Rochelle* was designed with entertaining in mind. The front door opens to a light-filled foyer running the length of the house past the striking black-spindled stairway (**Roes Stair Corp.**). Off the back portion of the foyer is the dining room, detailed with a striking Audrey Abstract wallpaper mural, tiered ceiling and elegant chandelier by **The Lighting Shoppe**. Here, dinner can be served after drinks have been enjoyed around the fireplace in the great room or two islands in the kitchen, a one-of-a-kind space featuring wrap-around cabinetry by **Woody's Premium Cabinetry**. *Continued on page 22*

ABOVE AND LEFT: The kitchen's showstopping feature is deep blue cabinetry by Woody's (in Evening Dove by Benjamin Moore). Milena kept things bright and open with contrasting uppers in Silver Elm Wood Recon Veneer and smoked glass fronts, and white quartz countertops from Progressive Countertop. Black light fixtures (The Lighting Shoppe) add bold beauty.

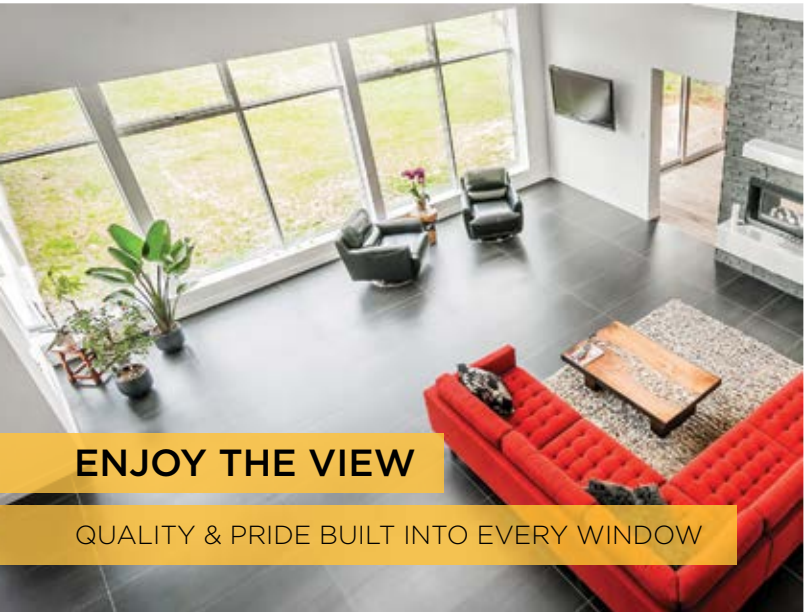


The kitchen colour palette was a starting point for Milena and artist and decorator **Jane Kewin**, who joined the Harasym on this special project. “The rest just came from there,” Jane says. “We wanted a cohesive home where every room spoke a common language.” Throughout the *Rochelle*, pleasing and practical design elements bring spaces to life. Milena and Jane created layers of richness in details such as linen-blend drapes and blinds in a variety of complementary patterns by **Creative Fabrications**, whimsical wallpapers and bold, beautiful colour.

Continued on page 24



LEFT: Glass-panelled double doors (North Pole) open to a small office that is bright and fresh thanks to white wall panelling (North Pole) and contrasting walls in Newburyport Blue (Benjamin Moore). **ABOVE:** A fanciful choice for wallpaper in the powder room. **BELOW:** Soft blues and taupe in the living room include walls in Beacon Gray (Benjamin Moore).



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The master suite offers tranquility with walls in Lily White (Benjamin Moore) and soft furnishings in complementary pale shades.

Mike likes to add his own special touches to a home, making sure it includes the hot buttons many mindful buyers are looking for. These include energy efficiency features that go well beyond what's required, like the *Rochelle's* Lifebreath heat recovery ventilator to filter the air and a full radon gas protection system below the basement slab. There are also the latest techie trends, like the home's WiFi refrigerator. With it, your smartphone will let you know your milk has reached its best-before date!

Milena sums up the *Rochelle's* double-duty living spaces. "They are perfect for family time, and ideal while cooking when entertaining a group of friends." She adds, "There is plenty of space to spread out, or cosy up." **OH**

BELOW LEFT: Roes Stair Corp. built the side stairway, where bold striped drapes take advantage of the light-filled landing. Low sheen maple flooring (Huron Flooring Ltd.) adds warmth throughout the home.



The master bathroom features tiling from Centura London and London Flooring Canada. Woody's built the vanity and Progressive supplied the dramatic countertop. Painting by Amanda Harasym.

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RAISE YOUR garden

STORY GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH

Raised planters are popping up in backyards everywhere, for good reason. Raised gardens can be as big, or small, as you want. Plants are easier to take care of and organize. They can help keep out critters and they're great for beginners. You can make your own raised planters or buy one in any size, shape or material. We've selected some good ones to consider.

GARDEN BED TIPS

- 1 Vegetables and herbs need lots of sunlight to thrive. The best place to position your raised bed is on the south side of your home.
- 2 Line your garden bed with landscape fabric to make the bottom more durable. Fill with rich organic garden soil.
- 3 Tomatoes, peppers, beans, squash, melons, cucumbers and eggplant, need at least six hours of direct sun a day for good yields.
- 4 Other veggies that thrive in raised beds: root vegetables, leafy greens, onions and potatoes. Don't forget to plant your herbs too! **OH**

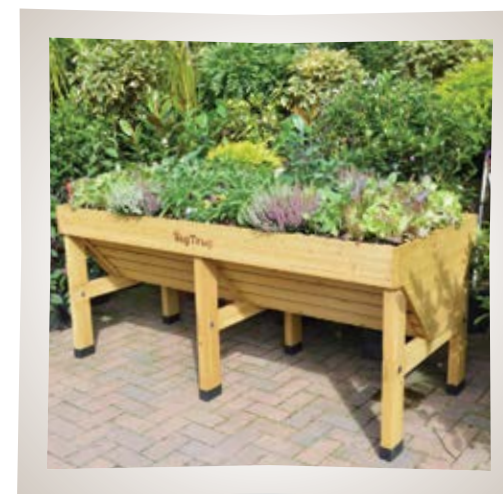
ABOVE: This large garden bed by Cedarcraft lies flat on the ground and is easy to assemble.
BELOW: Make your own veggie ladder. Find out how at: ourhomes.ca/mag/planterladder



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG



Double duty: potting benches become bar carts for easy outdoor entertaining.



LEFT: Every gardener needs a bench. This folding table from Cedarcraft is versatile.
MIDDLE LEFT: This herb garden by VegTrug has individual sections for planting a variety of herbs.
BOTTOM LEFT: This medium VegTrug may be all you need this summer.



Let the kids grow their favourite veggies with the VegTrug Kids planter and Workbench planter.

Ontario-based Livestock Equipment Canada makes this 4x4 galvanized steel raised bed and six-foot long galvanized steel tub that are perfect for growing.



CEILING DRAMA

STORY
SARA MARTIN

Look up. Is a popcorn ceiling staring back at you? If so, it might be time for a change. Here's some inspiration for that overlooked "fifth wall" in every room.

1

WOOD

Reclaimed barn boards add rustic, textured character and provide an interesting colour palette to draw from. Plywood is another choice and when sealed with a gloss varnish, adds warmth and simplicity to a space.



PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY



PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

2

BEADBOARD

No longer just for the cottage, use it on any ceiling. In a peaked ceiling, try running the boards vertically towards the peak, it will draw the eye upwards. A real time saver if placed right over a popcorn ceiling.



PHOTO: KELLY HORKOFF

3

COFFERED
DIMENSIONAL

You need ceiling height to get the full effect of this style of finish, as the elements can overwhelm a nine-foot ceiling. This design adds formality and looks best in a living or dining room.



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

7

INDUSTRIAL

The unfinished, finished look is not for everyone. Exposed duct work and wiring can be a turn off to some, while others are excited by the conversion of industrial spaces into housing.



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

4

METAL

Metal ceiling tiles were introduced in the 1800s as an affordable alternative to detailed plasterwork. Today, reproductions are plastic and come in a variety of patterns. Of course, if you can find the antique tiles, their patina and dented appearance will add incredible character.



PHOTO: GORDON KING

5

LIGHTING

LED lights come in many options these days. Pot lights are smaller and directional and bulbs come in cool and warm light. LED strips or tape come in several lengths and colours and are waterproof.



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

6

PAINT

In some ways, paint is one of the easiest ways to finish a ceiling, but try to move away from white. Stencils, stripes, faux finishes and glazes will add that extra touch or just use a high-gloss paint in a rich dark colour.

8

MOULDING

With a seemingly endless choice of mouldings available, creating a design pattern on the ceiling is only limited by your imagination. Foam or plastic ceiling medallions can start the design and highlight a hanging fixture.



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG

9

BEAMS

If beams are existing and need an update they can be re-clad. You can paint or stain existing beams. Faux wood beams can also be added. **OH**



PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

double take

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PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE

ARCHITECTURAL *inspiration*



THE SPACE: Rebecca Courey thinks the time is just right for a new furniture and design store, especially since **Design House London** occupies one of the city's landmark buildings, the former Gardner Galleries on York Street. "The building inspired me to create this amazing space," Rebecca says of the historic location and its magnificent architectural presence. "It is a dream come true." In 2017 Rebecca and Ken Demelo bought the century-plus building, then set to work on extensive renovations. The work took just a year to complete though the experience felt like 10, recalls Rebecca with a chuckle. New HVAC, plumbing and electrical went on behind the scenes while sandblasting yellow brick walls, reviving original woodwork and retaining a portion of the original Anaglypta-clad ceiling have added character to new elements of the building's light-filled interior spaces. There now are two spacious floors displaying furniture vignettes, accessories and



Front: Nicole Leak, Rebecca Courey. Back: Suzanne Steele, Vanessa Hicks, Lindsay Bennett, Destiny Schipper.



fabric samples. There is also a design services floor and a loft-like special events floor.

IN ESSENCE: Rebecca has ample retail experience and has worked as a designer for some time. In fact, full-service interior design services are a big part of the story at Design House London. That's why she describes the new showroom as a "business within a business." The store is open to the general public, offering a range of accessories and giftware in addition to major furniture pieces, and it also provides a way for Design House clients to see, touch and feel furnishings and fabrics during the design process. The opportunity "to touch and feel" is precisely why Rebecca says bricks-and-mortar retail spaces are a timely antidote to the craze for online home and design retail sites. She says Design House will inspire visitors and clients to properly curate their homes to their personal tastes. This is a layered process, she explains, adding, "Anyone can build a box, but not anyone can create an experience."

TRENDING: Mixing patterns and textures in all areas. Wall detailing like shiplap and applied mouldings.

FAVOURITES: "We have an obsession with finishing touches like cushions, vases and table centrepieces," says Rebecca.

FUN FACT: Winner of an Architectural Conservancy Ontario London Branch award.

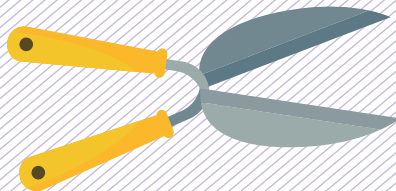
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STORY **MELANIE REKOLA**



Clipped and formal hedgerows have charmed society for centuries. Used to create living privacy walls, boundaries and attractive garden borders, hedges have many practical uses and also add value to any property.



hedge

YOUR INVESTMENT

The use of hedges dates back to 4000 BC in ancient Egypt where the first boxwoods were clipped for ornamental purposes. Amazingly, this style has some serious staying power as they are still being used present day. As mentioned, hedges can serve multiple purposes: they can conceal unsightly views, create privacy from nosy neighbours and significantly cut down on noise pollution. Hedging can make a patio space warm and cosy by acting as a windbreak and it can cut down on snow accumulation by acting as a snow fence. It can delineate property lines and formalize gardens that contain more unruly plant life by creating a tidy edge.

Hedges can be planted in a range of types and sizes depending on the required result. Select the plant that meets your needs.

THYME: One of the shortest hedge plants available and sometimes called edges instead of hedges, these borders look especially smart in formal herb gardens when acting as dividing lines between other, wilder looking herb species.

BOXWOOD: The “little black dress” of the garden world (meaning everyone should have one), boxwood is the perfect small to medium size hedge. Its pretty evergreen leaves take very well to pruning. Korean Littleleaf Boxwood (*Buxus microphylla* var *koreana*) is one of the heartiest, just be sure to plant it in an area that isn’t exposed to high winds or road salt.

YEW: Yews make gorgeous hedges but range wildly in height from two-and-a-half-feet to over 50 feet so read the plant



labels carefully. As with most evergreens, it can be susceptible to wind burn and needs to be protected from strong winter winds.

CEDAR: Probably the hedging you are most familiar with, cedar is an ideal choice where a tall, slim, year-round privacy screen is needed. White cedar, black cedar, even emerald cedar will work well. Rest assured, cedar trees don’t specifically attract mosquitoes though any moist and shady spot will! Prune annually in mid-July for best results.

HEMLOCK: Although Canadian hemlock grow as large trees in the wild, they are sometimes sold in shrub form for use as hedges. Prune hemlock hedging twice per year, from late June to late August, for the first three years to encourage dense growth. After three years, prune once in late June, just don’t cut the leader until it’s at the desired height.

NORTHERN PRIVET: A lovely fast-growing deciduous hedge of about six feet in height. It has small bright green leaves and enjoys getting trims.

ALPINE CURRENT: A very hearty mid-sized deciduous shrub with interesting leaf shape. It also tolerates high winds, cold and road salt well.

PYRAMIDAL ENGLISH OAK, HORNBEAM, DAWYCK BEECH: Perhaps not the typical scenario that most people think of for hedging, but really, any narrow deciduous tree can be planted tightly in a row to style a tall hedge. These work well where a tall screen is needed but spacing is tight. They can look very stately.

LILAC, DOGWOOD, ROSE OF SHARON, SPIREA, BURNING BUSH, HYDRANGEA, WEIGELA: Many garden variety deciduous shrubs can be trained as hedges, just be sure to prune yearly to achieve the desired height and width. It’s also imperative that if you’d like your hedge to flower, prune at the correct time of year so that you aren’t removing the flower buds prematurely. A good rule of thumb is prune late-flowering shrubs in early spring and spring-flowering shrubs after flowering.

The amount of space you have and how dense you’d like your screen will determine the number of rows you plant. For large spaces, consider planting a double row to make a hedge fill in twice as fast. Spacing between rows is based on crown width, but at a minimum try to avoid root crowding by setting at least



12- to 24-inches apart, measuring from the centre of the plant. Spacing will depend on the type of shrub or tree chosen, how close you’d like them at maturity, and your patience level. Keep in mind, when planting in rows close together, trees and shrubs will not spread out as wide as if they were a single species in a landscape.

Start training your hedge after it is established and growing vigorously. Generally this takes one to two years after planting. To train, trim top and sides as required for the species, removing about one-half the length of new shoots. Ideal hedge shapes are wider at the base than the top to allow sunlight to reach the lower leaves.

It can take a few years after planting for a new hedge to take shape and start looking great. Be patient, they are worth the investment! **OH**



STORY **GEORGETTE MCCULLOCH**



** kitchen island*

PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

A recent survey of Canadians who purchased a newly built home shows walk-in closets topped their list of must-have features. Surprising? Not really says Tim Bailey, division president of Avid Ratings Canada Ltd., a customer satisfaction company that works with Canadian homebuilders to determine what buyers want in a new build.

"The 2018 Canadian Homebuyer Preference Study revealed three themes," Tim says, storage solutions, energy efficiency and kitchen design.

New home buyers across the country are asked to answer 190 questions based on a recent new home purchase. It's the largest survey of its kind in Canada. The result is a comprehensive report by region, buyer type and demographics that Canadian homebuilders can use to plan new housing projects based on consumer wants and needs.



** large windows*

PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

WHAT HOMEBUYERS want



** open concept*

PHOTO: JASON HARTOG



** walk-in closet*

PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

Avid Ratings is currently compiling results for 2019 but Tim doesn't anticipate dramatic changes. There's only been moderate changes in the four years Avid Ratings has been conducting the survey.

Consumers clearly want energy efficiency, Tim says. "But they also want granite and quartz and all the fine features so it's really about trying to strike a balance between what buyers can afford to spend. Energy efficiency is a hot button for consumers, especially with the carbon tax and rising utility costs. Buying a home is one thing but then carrying the cost of that home is another thing."

Homebuyers also want storage, lots of it. "We're a four-season country," Tim explains using his family as an example. "We're a *Brady Bunch* family with four kids and storage is critical. We have off-season gear, four seasons of clothing and four seasons of sporting goods."

People also want open-concept kitchens with an island. "Quartz countertops and smart home technology score high on the survey as well," Tim says. Other wants include a single-detached home, double-car garages, brick exteriors, tankless water heaters, LED lighting and a main-floor master suite.

What's surprising is the renaissance of the formal dining room. According to the survey, formal dining rooms have increased in importance since year one of the study.

What isn't a priority for new home buyers is outdoor spaces. Tim figures it's because landscaping isn't an immediate concern, it's not part of the purchase and new home buyers have to save and budget for outside projects that happen a couple of years down the road.

The 2018 study found the largest cohort of today's Canadian homebuyer is the growing family with kids followed by single couples with no kids. Millennials have edged out Gen Xers as the largest group of homebuyers.

How does the survey translate for resale homes? Tim believes new homes inspire renovations to older homes and stimulate the resale market. **OH**

TOP 10

"MUST HAVE" NEW HOME FEATURES

1. Walk-in closets
2. High-efficiency windows
3. Energy-efficient appliances
4. Overall energy-efficient home
5. Kitchen island
6. Linen closet
7. Open-concept kitchens
8. Large windows
9. Heat-recovery/energy-recovery air exchange
10. Certification by a designated program (ENERGY STAR, Built Green, EnerGuide, etc.)



PHOTO: BONNIE FOX

STORY **NICOLE LAIDLER** | PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

DECLUTTERING MAY SPARK JOY, BUT DOWNSIZING FROM A TRADITIONAL FAMILY HOME IS A STEP THAT SHOULDN'T BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, ONE LONDON COUPLE DECIDED THAT WHILE THEY DID INDEED WANT TO SCALE DOWN, MOVING TO A CONDO WAS NOT FOR THEM. INSTEAD, THEY HAVE OPTED TO ENJOY THE NEXT STAGE OF LIFE IN A TASTEFULLY RENOVATED BUNGALOW. Continued on page 40

DOWNSIZING *DONE RIGHT*

Custom details prevail throughout the home, like column built-ins on either side of the fireplace for books and collectibles. Previously separated from each other by a wall, the kitchen, living room and dining area now forms an open heart of the home where guests gather around the peninsula counter and move easily from inside to out. A bright window for the owners' orchids was a must. The painting above the fireplace is *Head in the Sand* by Michael Everett, one of the owners' many local pieces.



ABOVE: Opening up the foyer was key to the home's transformation, brightening a formerly dim entryway. **RIGHT:** Weathered wood pieces add arty detail to the powder room. Walls are Gothic Arch (Benjamin Moore). **FAR RIGHT:** The small but airy office provides getaway space in the compact house.



"We're both retired and felt that we no longer wanted to maintain a large house and property," the homeowner says. Spaces to relax individually within a new home and easy access to a backyard and garden were at the top of their checklist nonetheless.

After 35 years in the same neighbourhood, the couple didn't want to lose their sense of community by moving to a different part of town. They wanted the convenience of one-floor living in a space that was open and filled with light. They also wanted to incorporate their art and collectibles into the new space.

It took almost five years to find a house that fit the bill.

The 1,520 sq. ft. house they chose had great bones, but its layout and décor were stuck in the 1990s. The couple moved into the partially finished basement while architectural designer **Steve Sims of The Barnswallow Company** and designer **Carol Panczyk of Inside Inc.** helped them realize their vision upstairs.

"This was an unusual project," says Steve. "We were able to make some relatively simple changes that really transformed the space."

Grecian columns and french doors were the first things to go. Instead of a formal dining room, the couple now enjoy meals around their antique kitchen table overlooking the backyard.



A gallery-style arrangement of local art adds interest to the dining area overlooking the backyard.

LEFT: There are two sitting areas in the living room. The owners were happy to use furniture from their previous home. Walls are Dune White (Benjamin Moore). The home's new flooring required the removal of a railing at the top of the basement stairs. Traditional wooden spindles were replaced with contemporary glass panels from Roes Stair Corp. **BELOW:** Steve Sims of The Barnswallow Company. Behind him, another built-in stacked shelving unit, housing a collection of rustic wood bowls.



Working with **Melchers Construction Limited**, the couple ripped out sheet flooring and wall-to-wall carpeting and replaced it with five-inch white oak engineered hardwood throughout from **Halls Flooring Services**. The light colour and matte finish allow a collection of old family rugs to take centre stage.

Steve made two other subtle changes that delivered big impact. First, he removed a closet from the front office to create room for a front door with a transom and sidelights (**Dashwood Industries Inc.**). "It brings in so much natural light," the homeowner says. "And it was important for me to be able to see right through the house."

Then Steve extended the living room wall to create a small vestibule leading into the master bedroom. "We only added nine inches, but it creates a feeling of privacy," he says.

Continued on page 42



ABOVE: White walls show off art, *Crow in a Box* by Michael Everett, and a distressed wood work bench. **TOP RIGHT:** A new deck overlooking extensive gardens takes the place of a former covered sunroom that was blocking natural light. **RIGHT:** In the galley-style kitchen, the bright white tile backsplash and shaker-style cabinets are in crisp contrast to white oak flooring and colourful rugs.



Removing, then reimagining, the wall separating the living room and kitchen was a larger undertaking that delivered equally stunning results.

The original living room featured built-in bookshelves and a gas insert fireplace with a ceramic tile surround. The room was completely cut off from the kitchen. Today, the couple can relax in front of a sleek glass fireplace from **My Fireplace**, surrounded by contemporary open shelving where treasured collectibles are displayed.

The space flows into the kitchen thanks to a large island topped with Caesarstone from **Bernardo Group Ltd.** It is a natural gathering spot for friends and family, the homeowner says, and provides plenty of counter space for a busy cook.

The kitchen, designed by **Jeff Fisher** of **Fisher Design & Drafting Services**, is sleek and uncluttered. Shaker-style cabinets in muted tones of Gothic Arch (Benjamin Moore) and Windfresh White (Sherwin Williams) provide ample storage, while stainless steel appliances from **Appliance Canada** maintain the modern aesthetic.

The homeowner is particularly fond of the oversize tile backsplash, sourced at the **London Design Gallery by Great Floors** and installed by **Gallerno Marble & Tile**. “It has a nice hand-made textural matte finish,” she notes.

Double doors (Dashwood) lead outside to a spacious deck that was built on the foundation of a previous sunroom. “It had a roof, which actually prevented light from coming into the house,” the homeowner explains.

The home’s master bathroom also needed a complete rethink. *Continued on page 44*



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The master bath may be compact but there was no skimping on luxurious touches like the double vanity, soaker tub and walk-in glass shower. Walls are Classic Gray (Benjamin Moore). **BELOW:** The master bedroom, which overlooks the sunny backyard, is big enough for a cosy reading area. The bathroom redesign left room for a new walk-in closet off the bedroom (Custom Closet Solutions).



Gone are the corner jacuzzi and old-fashioned shower stall, replaced by a Zitta freestanding tub (**Aqualuxe Bath Showroom**) and walk-in glass shower (**B&G Glass & Mirror Service**). Aqualuxe also supplied the vanity and fixtures. “It’s still not a huge bathroom, but the space works much better,” says the homeowner.

While some people relish the opportunity to make a clean sweep, this owner says, “We were determined to avoid having to buy all new furniture in order to make the new smaller space feel like our own.”

Instead, they designed their new home with existing pieces in mind, including a favourite sofa set, reupholstered by **Munn Weston Upholstery**.

“We parted with a lot of furniture,” the homeowner notes, recalling the effort to pare down from four bedrooms to one and from formal living and dining rooms to a single open living space. “A lot of thought went into deciding what we were going to bring into this house.”

Their careful editing process plus Steve’s key changes to the home’s layout add up to a win-win: downsized living that still feels like home. **OH**

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decorating

TREAT YOUR

WALLS

STORY TAMARISK MCNALTY STEPHENS

Painted drywall is the traditional interior wall finish in new home builds and renovations. However, there are countless alternative materials and finishes for walls that can create a significant visual impact while also defining your style. Here are seven wall treatments and the areas of your home you might want to splurge on for the best investment.



PHOTO: MAX WEDGE

1. WALLPAPERS OR WALLCOVERINGS

Material: Rolls or sheets of grasscloth, paper, cellulose or vinyl. Whether foil, flocked, embossed, block printed or textured paper, there is an endless selection of patterns and colours.

Installation: It is generally recommended to hire a professional, but if you're up for a challenge, do-it-yourself types often hang their own paper. Ensure you do the proper prep work – plot out the install, level everything, smooth the surface, have all the tools required and know whether you have a pre-pasted wallpaper or if you require an adhesive. Always check the pattern repeat, as it will affect the coverage provided per roll.

Pros: Natural fibres breathe and add an element of Mother Nature to the space, while vinyl is highly durable, stain and moisture resistant, colourfast and scrubbable. You can completely change the overall look and feel of a space with a wallcovering.

Cons: Natural fibres are more delicate, less scrubbable and more susceptible to sun fading. Vinyl cannot breathe. If selling is in your immediate future, perhaps give wallpaper a pass as some potential buyers can be hesitant.

Application: An entire room or a simple accent wall. Powder rooms are a great place to try out a bold print.

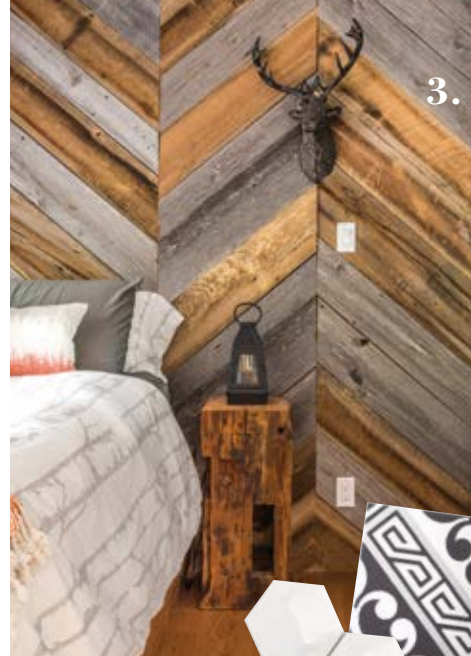


PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY

2. TILE

Material: Porcelain, ceramic, slate, limestone, glass, mosaics, cement encaustic or marble.

Installation: Professional installation is generally recommended. Labour cost will vary depending upon size and style of tile and design of pattern and layout.

Pros: Easy to wipe up and clean, durable finish, waterproof when installed correctly.

Cons: Cleaning grout lines. Natural stones require a sealant to be applied a couple of times per year, or more frequently depending upon use and exposure.

Application: Great for bathrooms, powder rooms, kitchen backsplashes or fireplaces.

3. BARN BOARD

Material: Weathered boards, generally but not exclusively sourced from a barn.

Installation: Can be a DIY project with the proper tools.

Pros: Texture, visual interest, improved durability of walls in high-traffic areas. Provides a natural, rustic aesthetic. Commonly planks are installed horizontally but can be used to create various patterns such as herringbone.

Cons: Can collect dust.

Application: Great for accent walls, mudrooms or laundry rooms.

4. SHIPLAP

Material: Typically either long planks of MDF or a paint-grade poplar, installed horizontally. Traditional shiplap has a special rabbet or notch cut on the long edges of the boards to aid in spacing.

Installation: Can be a DIY project with the proper tools.

Pros: Texture, visual interest, improved durability of walls in high traffic areas. Typically white, but shiplap can be painted any colour you desire. Gives a farmhouse or coastal vibe.

Cons: Can collect dust.

Application: Great for accent walls, mudrooms or laundry rooms.



PHOTO: JASON HARTOG



5. WAINSCOTTING OR APPLIED TRIM

Material: Tongue-and-groove wainscoting, bead board, board-and-batten and traditional applied-panel details are available in wood or MDF.

Installation: A trim carpenter is generally recommended however, depending upon the complexity of the installation, an avid DIYer can attempt with the proper tools.

Pros: Instant character and charm to a room, adds an element of elegance, great texture for visual interest and is more durable than drywall.

Cons: Can collect dust, can be costly depending upon species of wood selected and installation method for desired aesthetic.

Application: Dining rooms, dens, bedrooms or hallways.

Natural or manufactured stone can provide a good return on investment.

6. STONE OR BRICK VENEER

Material: Natural or manufactured stone and brick, generally sold in pieces by square foot or in sheets.

Installation: For masonry work, hiring a stonemason is recommended. Labour cost will vary depending upon the stone and method of installation. Sheet veneers can generally be managed by the average DIYer.

Pros: Strong visual impact. Can provide good return on investment. Non-combustible and available in a wide variety of styles and colours.

Cons: Can collect dust. Manufactured stone veneer products are formed and often a repeating pattern will emerge. With a natural material every piece comes from the earth and has its own uniqueness but requires cutting and fitting.

Application: Focal walls or fireplaces.



PHOTO: SANDY MACKAY



PHOTO: KELLY HORKOFF

7. PLASTER

Material: Clay, lime, Venetian, gypsum or tadelakt plaster each has its own pros and cons.

Installation: Professional trowel installation recommended. Pre-planning is required to ensure proper backing is installed as some plasters require wire mesh or blue board, while clay plaster requires a primer with added sand for adhesion.

Pros: Beautiful, timeworn aesthetic adds a depth and luminosity to walls that is impossible to achieve with paint and drywall. Plasters are generally more durable than drywall. Generally sanding is not required and therefore dust is limited at time of install. All-natural materials and low VOCs.

Cons: Costly and time-consuming to install.

Application: A splurge for rooms you'd really like to highlight. For tadelakt, use it in areas that require waterproofing (showers or perhaps a kitchen or bath backsplash). **OH**



» SOURCE IT

THE NEW, NEAT, UNIQUE, AND FABULOUS IN LONDON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Cut post into three lengths measuring 38, 32 and 26 inches each. Your lumber yard can make cuts for a small charge.
- 2 Using a drill paddle, drill a hole 2-inches deep in the top centre of each post for the solar light stem.
- 3 Paint posts and let dry thoroughly.
- 4 Arrange and attach posts together with brackets and screws – L brackets for inside corners, flat brackets on the back side.
- 5 Attach rope around the middle of the post bundle. Tuck ends in behind wrapped rope and nail end in place. Using finishing nails, tack rope into post in random areas to hold in place.
- 6 Cut solar light stems to 2 inches or desired length. Insert light stems in posts, attach solar lights to stems. Enjoy. **OH**



CELEBRATE LIFE AT HOME WITH OUR HOMES

OUR HOMES magazine is your local home resource guide. Our readers love our magazine because we show and tell you about beautiful and unique local homes, retailers and products. Plus, we promote local service providers and help you find professional trades. Whatever you need to build, renovate or decorate, you will find in our much-loved magazine.

OUR HOMES magazines saturate 14 local markets in Ontario and connect to over 5 million readers annually with our advertisers through premium, consistent, local content and beautiful photography. Our readership and distribution numbers are audited. Our advertisers reach our highly sought out, high-income demographic through targeted distribution in each region and throughout Ontario.

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AH Design Kitchen and Bath Cabinetry angiesworld72@yahoo.ca **PC275 Realty** **519.494.9967** angela.baker@pc275.com *not intended to solicit clients under contract* (Please see ad on pg 15)

Light up the summer night with easy-to-make solar light posts. Store-bought solar lights, commonly used on pathways or flower beds, become task lights in a cluster. Use on the deck, around the pool or at the lake.

MATERIALS

- 1 6x6-inch post, 8-foot length
- 3 Solar lights with stems
- 4 L brackets
- 2 Flat brackets
- 24 1-½-inch woodscrews
- 15 feet of rope (pick your desired thickness)
- 1-¼-inch finishing nails
- Paint or whitewash

TOOLS

- Saw
- Drill
- Drill paddle (of the same diameter size as the light stem)
- Screwdriver
- Finishing nails
- Hammer
- Paintbrush or roller



PROJECT **DAWN MCCONNELL**
PHOTOGRAPHY **TARA CHATTELL**



Get Acquainted

OUR HOMES enjoys getting to know the people we work with. We'd like to share a bit about them with you.

PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE NOBLE



ON THE JOB

Indispensable: Our team of dedicated employees. **Favourite Moments:** Seeing a homeowner's face light up with a space they never thought possible. **Advice:** Be open to new visions for your home.

AFTER HOURS

Ideal Get-Away: Hiking with family in the great outdoors. **Special Pastime:** Gardening, then enjoying a job well done. **Summer Go-To:** The back deck, or our greenhouse retreat when the bugs are out!

ARNE MADSEN & PEDER MADSEN

CCR Build + Remodel

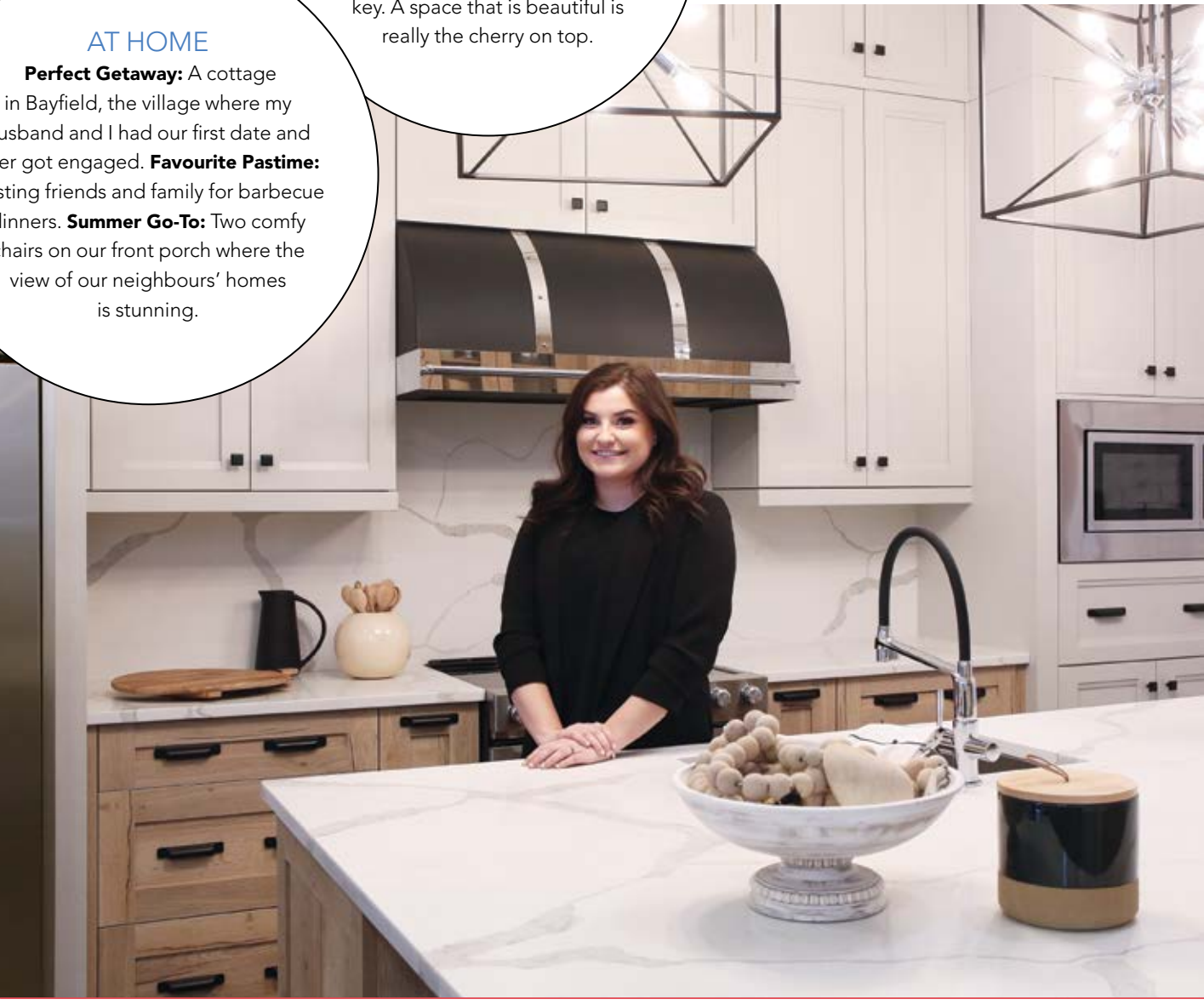
We focus on collaborating with homeowners to create spaces that enhance the feeling of home. We start by listening to what your needs are, then we find creative ways to bring ideas together that will improve the form and function of your home.

AT WORK

Special Needs: Coffee, lots and lots of coffee! **Best Part Of The Job:** Seeing a client's reaction to their transformed kitchen. **Advice:** Aesthetics are great but function is key. A space that is beautiful is really the cherry on top.

AT HOME

Perfect Getaway: A cottage in Bayfield, the village where my husband and I had our first date and later got engaged. **Favourite Pastime:** Hosting friends and family for barbecue dinners. **Summer Go-To:** Two comfy chairs on our front porch where the view of our neighbours' homes is stunning.



SHANNON FREEBORN

Freeborn + Co. Kitchen and Design Boutique

We are a full-service design boutique specializing in cabinetry. From concept to completion, we pay careful attention to detail. We work closely with you, hopefully creating a fun and stress-free experience. We will have lots of laughs, a trusting relationship, even a few celebratory glasses of wine once the job is done.

Continued on page 52



LISA LESLIE, AINSLEY ARNOLD & DEE MATIJEVIC

Covers Canada London North

We pride ourselves on being the leader in custom drapery, blinds, shades, shutters and bedding. Our design experts work one-on-one with clients to create spaces that suit each individual's taste. When paired with our professional installers, we are your go-to design team in the Forest City.

AFTER HOURS
Ideal Get-Away: A cabin on the lake, or any of Ontario's beautiful beaches. Summer Pastimes: Water sports, bonfires, spending time with family and friends. Summer Go-To: Lisa's pool.

ON THE JOB
Must-Haves: Our measuring tapes and Benjamin Moore paint decks. We Love: Rave reviews. Seeing photos of a completed job and happy clients are what it's all about! Advice: Take fabric samples home to view in your lighting both day and night as colours can look different than in the store. Pick your paint last, to go with your fabric choice.

DAVID & TILDA KING

Ovenclean

We are a unique on-site service that uses environmentally-friendly products and processes. In about two hours, we'll bring back the sparkle to your oven, barbecue and other appliances. Ovenclean is perfect for spillovers, annual cleans, home staging or when moving.

ON THE JOB
Special Tool Of The Trade: A great knee pad. We spend a lot of time on our knees tackling ovens and barbecues. Best Part Of The Job: Our clients. Over five years, we've gathered a loyal following of regulars. Advice: Flip your BBQ racks over, brushing and using both sides to help prevent carbon build-up.



AFTER HOURS
Ideal Get-Away: Hilton Head, or anywhere with long sandy beaches for walking and good restaurants for evening. Favourite Pastime: Flying radio-controlled planes with the Forest City Flyers. Summer Go-To: The deck, with a good book and a cool glass of wine.

people



ON THE JOB

Can't Do Without: Making sure our clients are 100 per cent satisfied from the moment we enter their home to the moment we leave. **What We Love:** Working together to achieve goals and to continue striving for the family business. **Advice:** Choose quality products and services that best fit your needs.

AFTER HOURS

Fun Get-Away: Big camping trips with the family. **R & R:** Golf! **Summer Go-To:** Outside, watching the kids play.

SAMANTHA GROOT & LAURA CARVER, with BABY KAYLEE

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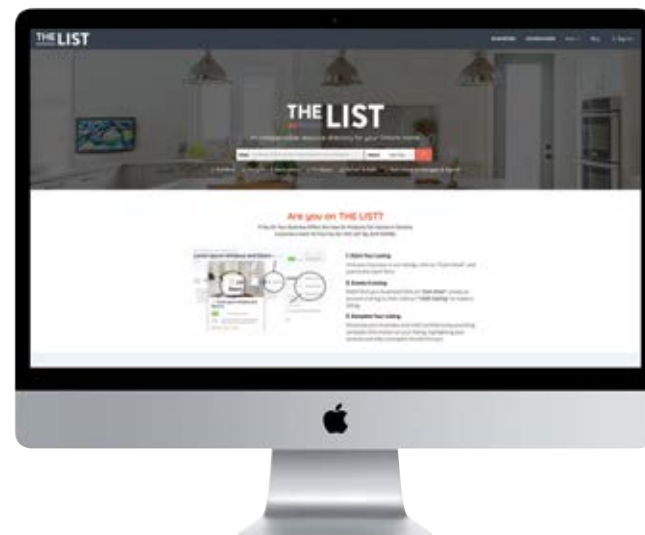


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- ✓ Boost your SEO
- ✓ Increase traffic to your website

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OUR HOMES attracts the area's finest businesses to advertise in our pages, and utilize our unparalleled distribution and coffee-table appeal to market their products and services. We're making it easier for you, our readers, to become educated as you plan your home- and real estate-related purchasing decisions. View these business ads online at ourhomes.ca/london. The listings below are organized alphabetically by industry.

APPLIANCES

London Major Appliances, 55

FIREPLACES & STOVES/ACCESSORIES

Elmira Stove Works, 10
Guildwood Lighting & Fireside, 7

LIGHTING

Guildwood Lighting & Fireside, 7

ART/ARTISANS/ART GALLERIES/ STUDIOS/WORKSHOPS

The Art Exchange, 4
Westland Gallery, 4

FOOD & DRINK/RESTAURANTS/ CATERING/DELI

Steel Grill Catering, 15

NEW HOME COMMUNITIES

Sifton Properties Ltd., 64
Vranic Homes Inc., 61

AWNINGS/TENTS/SHELTERS

London Awnings, 11

FURNITURE & HOME DÉCOR/ ACCENTS/GIFTS/COLLECTIBLES

Design House London, 45

OVEN & BBQ CLEANING

Ovenclean, 15

BEDS & BEDDING/MATTRESSES/ SLEEP PRODUCTS

Covers Canada, 45

HEATING & COOLING

Carver Sheet Metal, 5

PAINTING & DECORATING

Benjamin Moore, 2
Clancy's Rainbow, 2
Home Hardware, 63

BUILDERS

CCR Building & Remodeling, 9
Harasym Developments, 25
Melchers Construction Limited, 43
Sifton Properties Ltd., 64
Vranic Homes Inc., 61

HOME IMPROVEMENTS/ RENOVATIONS

AH Design, 15, 49
CCR Building & Remodeling, 9
Home Hardware, 63

REAL ESTATE

PC275 Realty Inc. – Angela Baker, 15, 49

BUILDING/LANDSCAPE SUPPLIES

Copp's Buildall, 10

IN-FLOOR HEATING

iFH Designs & Installations Inc., 31

STAIRS/RAILINGS

London Stair & Railing Co. Ltd., 11
Roes Stair Corp., 25

CABINETS & MILLWORK/ CARPENTRY/FINE WOODWORKING/ CUSTOM FURNITURE

Freeborn + Company, 3

INTERIOR DECORATING/INTERIOR DESIGN/HOME STAGING

Design House London, 45
Freeborn + Company, 3
Jane Kewin, 25
Sylvie's Interior Design, 31

TRIM/MOULDING/CASING

Copp's Buildall, 10

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Covers Canada, 45

COUNTERTOPS

Sloan Stone Design, 25

KITCHEN & BATH

Aqualuxe Bath Showroom, 45
CCR Building & Remodeling, 9
Copp's Buildall, 10
Freeborn + Company, 3
The Ensuite Bath & Kitchen Showroom
(a Division of Emco), 23

WINDOWS & DOORS

Copp's Buildall, 10
Golden Windows, 23

CUSTOM FRAMING

The Art Exchange, 4

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good taste

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You don't need
an open flame
to create this
campfire-inspired
summer cocktail.

INGREDIENTS

Chocolate chips
Graham crackers
Amaretto
Bourbon
Stout of choice
Roasted marshmallows

DIRECTIONS

To prepare rim, melt chocolate chips (in the microwave, on the stove or over the campfire). Crush graham crackers on a plate. Spread the melted chocolate along rim and dip into graham crackers to coat. Fill glass with ice and add ½ ounce each of Amaretto and bourbon. Top with stout and garnish with a roasted marshmallow. **OH**

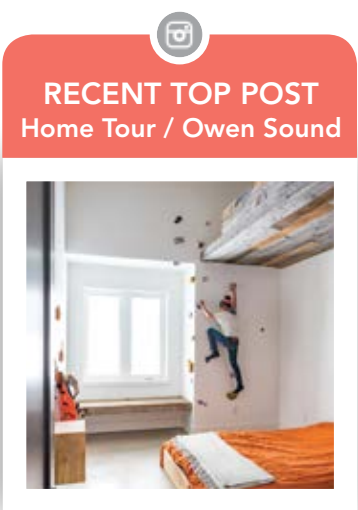
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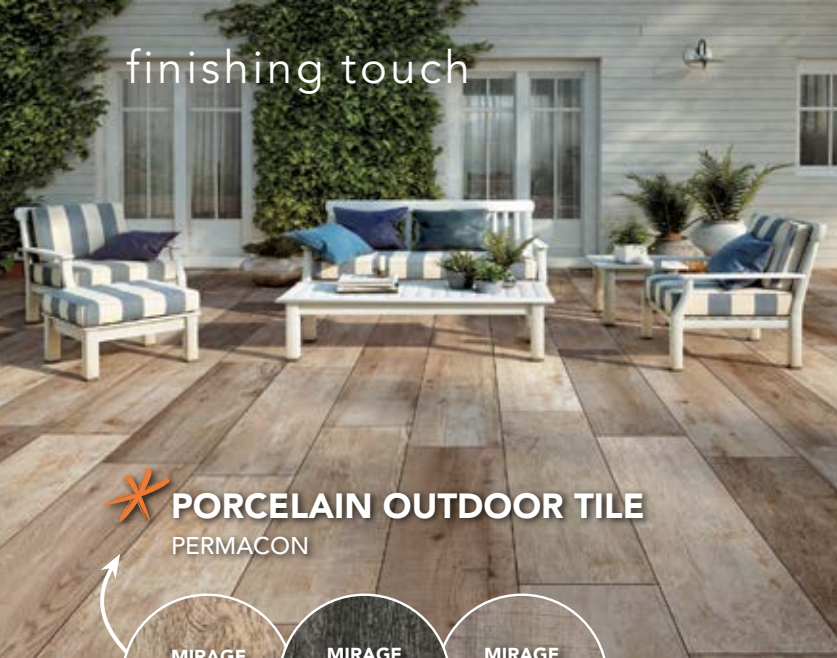
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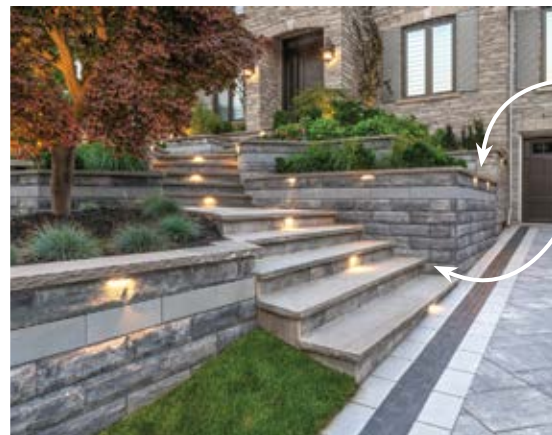
MIRAGE
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CHARCOAL



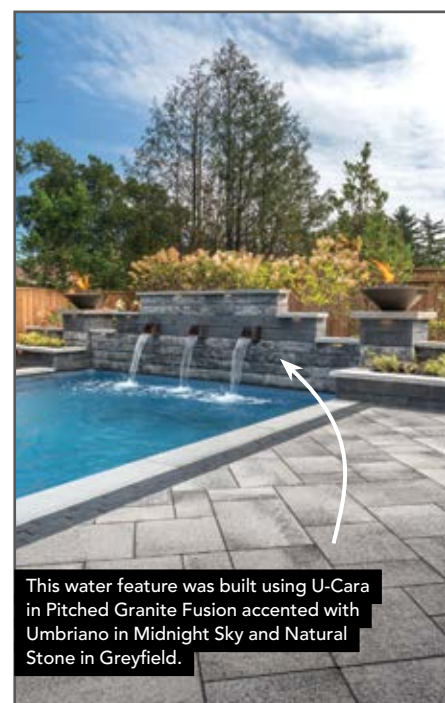
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beautiful HARDSCAPES

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This water feature was built using U-Cara in Pitched Granite Fusion accented with Umbriano in Midnight Sky and Natural Stone in Greyfield.



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UNILOCK

TOP LOWER PAVER: Elegance Richcliff pavers in Dawn Mist with a Courtstone accent Basalt.
GRILL ISLAND, WALL & WATER FEATURE: Brussels Dimensional Stone in Limestone with Natural Stone coping in Black River.



SMOOTH
OPAL



PITCHED
GRANITE
FUSION



GREYFIELD



BLACK
RIVER



LIMESTONE

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