

A magnificent dual circular staircase and domed ceiling amazes visitors as they are welcomed at the front entrance. **OPPOSITE:** The grandeur continues to the backyard where a sprawling terrace and rambling gardens provide an outdoor sanctuary.



## A MODERN SPIN ON OLD-WORLD *elegance*

BY NANCY FORNASIERO  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON HARTOG

From the moment the dramatic, wrought iron gates widen to welcome you onto the property, there's no doubt you've arrived somewhere special.

*Continued on page 22*





**BELOW:** Intricate mouldings, a ceiling medallion and a candelabra-style light fixture add to the formal feel of the dining room. A stunning arrangement of white hydrangeas from Brant Florist provides a fresh and lovely centrepiece.

**RIGHT:** Oversized sofas and a large rug create a cosy great room just off the kitchen. **OPPOSITE:** Dramatic architectural details continue with the mouldings and cabinetry in the large culinary kitchen. Ornate embellishments add to the traditional atmosphere.

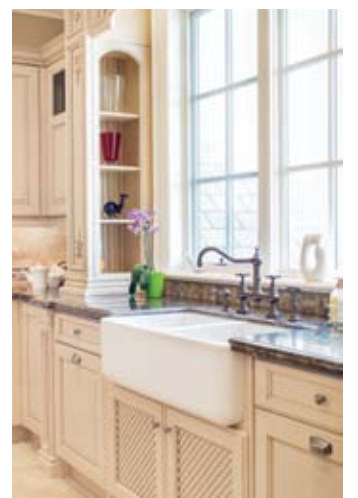


Its first impression suggests a stately European country house passed down through generations with stone façades, classically symmetrical proportions and elegant gardens. Upon closer inspection, the home reveals its true character. Despite its old-world aesthetic, the recently built beauty is a functional and modern family home.

At 13,000 sq. ft., this luxury home was conceived with enough space to accommodate everything the imaginative homeowner desired. The one-of-a-kind abode boasts extras such as an opulent two-storey foyer, gracious guest suites, a butler's pantry, home gym and massive stone terrace on the rear façade. The lower level is an entertainer's delight, complete with a recreation room, pub and – the pièce de résistance – an indoor 45-foot pool and hot tub.

A well-travelled aficionado of European style, the discriminating homeowner had a particular vision of what his home should feel like. He credits custom home designer **David Small** of **David Small Designs** with parlaying his traditional tastes and eclectic wish list into an actual plan. "David listened well and the resulting design reflects that."

David stressed that the spectacular outcome was due to a team approach, one that involved not only his own contributions and the client's input, but also the skills of fourth-generation builder **Jay Robinson** of **Jay Robinson Custom Homes Inc.** Steven Nechacov of Showcase Interiors Inc. is acknowledged for his significant role in the design and development of many of the key spaces of the home.



One of those key spaces is definitely the foyer, which David accurately refers to as "jaw-dropping" and the owner names a favourite feature. "This is one of those homes," remarks David, "where you drive up, you see the formality, you see the grandeur, you open the front door and you're not let down."

A glance upward reveals a soaring 18-foot ceiling punctuated by a grand chandelier. A glance downward reveals polished Crema Marfil flooring accented by a marble mosaic inlay border. A spiraling dual staircase boasts handcrafted wrought-iron railings custom-made by Maks Iron Works. The design motif repeats on the exterior gates. An imported stair runner, composed of a silk tapestry border on a background of the finest English wool, leads the eye up to the mezzanine. All the details – original artwork, carefully-sourced materials, toasty heated floors – announce "welcome to an extraordinary place."

As expected, nothing is overlooked in the gourmet kitchen, designed by Showcase Interiors. The focal point is a 19-foot-long island. Hand-carved, glass-fronted cabinetry separates it from the breakfast area and family room, allowing light to filter through while creating a necessary barrier. The dining room is adorned with intricate plaster mouldings – including a huge baroque medallion on the ceiling.

When conceptualizing his dream home, it was important to the homeowner that there was a formality to everything and, most importantly, continuity. Not a fan of homes with "dual-personalities"

(like traditional exteriors with modern interiors), he challenged David to create something with "formal, stately architecture that was to go top-to-bottom, and inside out."

Ironically, although they did achieve style continuity, the house nonetheless has a dual personality. Discreetly tucked behind wall panels, above coved ceilings, and beneath stone floors are cameras, speakers, wiring for lighting and climate control, and a myriad of other technological marvels that allow this seemingly traditional home to function in the most modern of ways. Burlington's **Clinton Howell** of **H2 Systems Inc.** installed over 20,000 ft. of cable to power the state-of-the-art home theatre, automation and integration systems.

The luxurious master suite is an ideal example of high-tech-meets-neoclassical-style. French doors overlook manicured gardens, an exquisite barreled ceiling is embellished with moulding, and millwork decorates a two-sided fireplace that also warms the adjoining en suite. At the same time, the room boasts surround-sound, a lighting system, touchscreen security and heated floors. The icing on the cake is the wardrobe suite outfitted in solid wood cabinetry. It features a vestibule, his-and-hers areas and a tiny but well-equipped kitchenette.

On the lower level of the home, David is especially proud of the pool enclosure. "That whole wing at the back of the house is something that you wouldn't be expecting to see." It's also a favourite of the man of the house who enjoys sneaking down for a swim before the sun or the family

*Continued on page 24*



**RIGHT:** A year-round escape is tucked away in the lower level of the house. Rustic stone, wall-to-wall windows and beams along the ceiling lend to the feeling of a tropical oasis. French doors lead to a lush backyard terrace. **BELOW LEFT:** His-and-hers vanities and a built-in armoire blend seamlessly like fine pieces of furniture. **BELOW RIGHT:** The master en suite provides plenty of wow-factor. A soaker tub surrounded by pillars and a domed ceiling adorned with mouldings create a grand escape.

is up. “It’s great when all the other lights are turned off and only the pool is lit. The effect is so cool. I feel I am in a bit of an oasis.”

If you’re thinking there’s no new detail this discerning gentleman can dream up for his home, you’d be wrong. He recently commissioned **Mary Ellen Farrow** of **Abbozzo Gallery** to create a one-of-a-kind garden sculpture. He’s also refurbishing the dining room. Is he tiring of all the design decisions? “No! This process was not at all stressful. I’d love to do it again. I don’t plan to move... don’t get me wrong! But I would be happy to do a project like this again.”

Despite the success here, David Small Designs has focused lately on homes with contemporary lines. When asked if he is over designing traditional homes, David emphatically disagrees. “I love that this house is different. Diversity and creativity are the things we celebrate, and I want our portfolio to show the full gamut of what we can do.” After touring this Burlington Bluffs marvel, it’s clear that whether modern, traditional, or a mix of both, David can breathe life to anyone’s idea of a dream home. **OH**



**Anderson's**  
your design partner

*Say goodbye to boring beige!*



Furniture • Carpet • Rugs • Drapery • Reupholster • Farrow & Ball Paint • Wallpaper  
686 Guelph Line, Burlington • 905-639-0666 • andersoncarpetandhome.com

Visit our blog for more outstanding pieces