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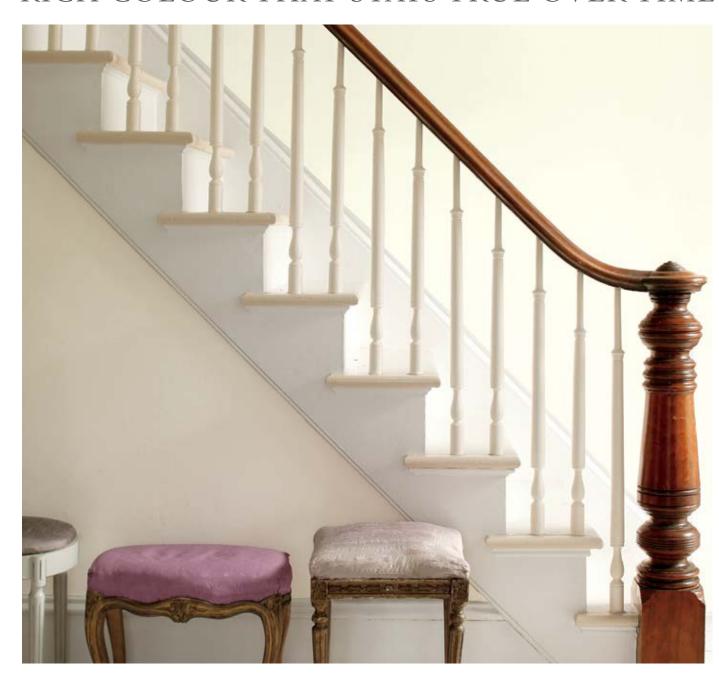
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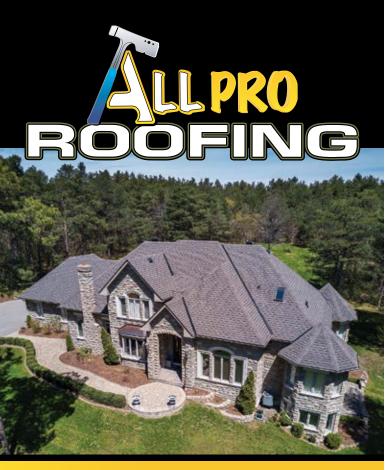
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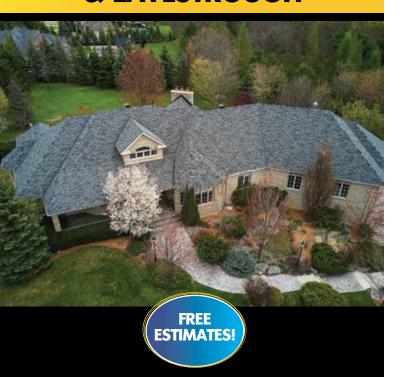
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editor's note



Where do you feel most at home?

For me, home is many places and many feelings. Most recently, home is our new local gym, Movati. If you've never been inside, it's worth a peek. It's not just a gym. It's an upscale, state-of-the-art, lifestyleoriented fitness facility. It's an experience.

We're not really the type to make New Year's resolutions, but my husband Emil and I realized that the hustle and bustle of our careers plus two busy teens often left us drained. We wanted something to trigger a healthier lifestyle, give us time to connect with one another and just make time for joy.

Thanks to OUR HOMES, I work with a lot of talented designers and feature lots of beautiful homes, so I appreciate a well-designed space. As we toured the gym, I noted all the thoughtful touches, like the fireplace in the lobby, the contemporary staircase and the muted, tranquil colour choices. It was when we visited the Zen lounge that my love for yoga, long since placed on a dusty shelf, came screaming back into focus. Like many others, we struggled and stumbled our way through that first class back on the mats, but by the end, I was hooked.

Now, we creep through the quiet streets five times a week for 6 a.m. classes. At first, it was just a great place to get an awesome workout. Slowly, as we get to know the teachers and nod to the regulars, it's become a part of our lifestyle, a second home.

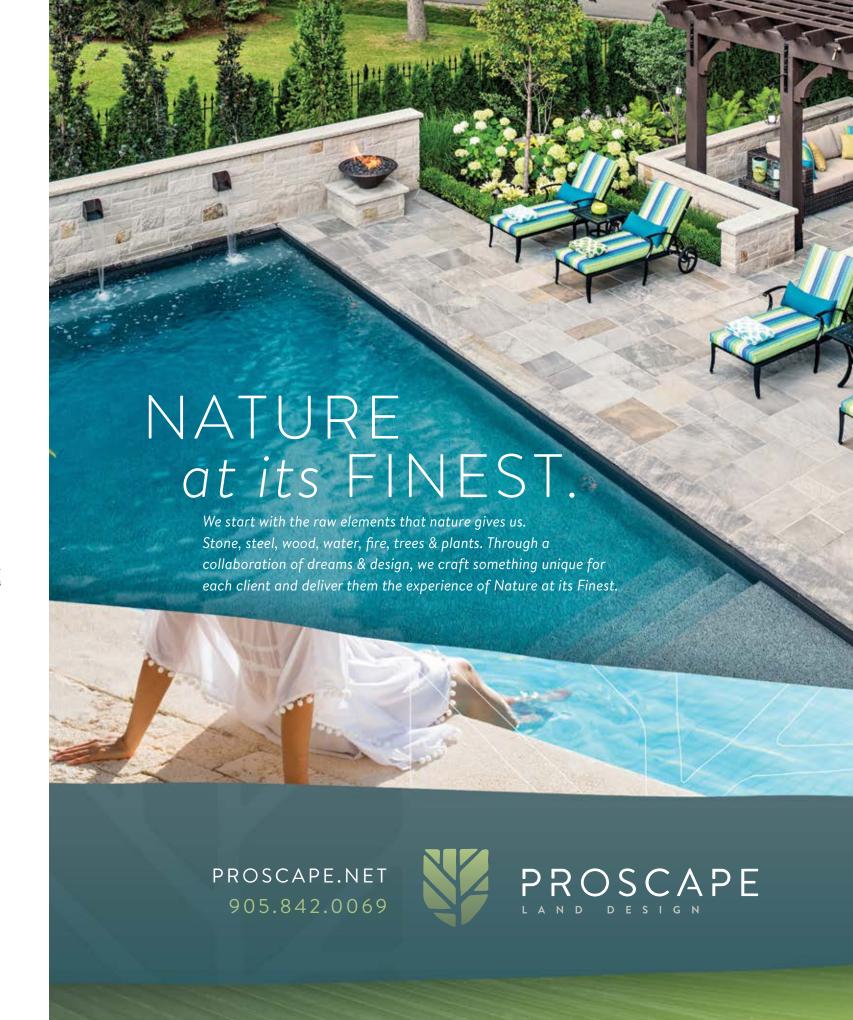
When I walk into the gym, I instantly feel calmer. It's a sacred, quiet space to relax and renew. It's a place where I can just breathe. There's joy in slowing down and finding happiness in the little things, and right now part of my home and my happiness is yoga.

Gina Makkar, Managing Editor gina.makkar@ourhomes.ca



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A light-filled home gets a total

Photography by Jason Hartog.

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advice

STAYING ORGANIZED

AND OTHER WAYS TO KEEP IT TOGETHER

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



Feeling stressed because you're surrounded by stuff? That stuff can actually make you happy, if it's efficiently and artistically displayed. And when organized properly, you can grab and go. Technology has helped reduce or eliminate the need for some stuff, like books and record albums, but we still need to store the items we do collect.

Storage, home organization or space solutions – whatever you call it – has become a science using the latest technology. For

example, hardware supplier Richelieu has teamed up with Panasonic to create revolving closet systems and shelves that pull down and return pneumatically, providing innovative ways to make our lives easier.





START RIGHT - GET ORGANIZED

Whether you're living in a tiny studio or a mansion, many of the same rules apply when it comes to getting organized:

Purge: Get rid of things you don't need or that don't give you pleasure in some way.

Learn to make sacrifices: In a small or large space, every object matters. Make choices and focus on priorities.

Inventory items that need storage and display: Determine what type of storage or shelving you need. Make this scientific by calculating how much linear space and square footage is required.

Design and plan: Plan where these items are going and then find the design solutions you need to maximize and beautify your space.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Storage is designed in three style categories:

DWR: Kai Shelving High

DWR: LineCredenza

DWR: Story

1. In sight and in mind.

Open shelving allows us to see what we own, defining our unique personalities. Freestanding or bolted to the wall, shelving is simple. The structure itself can be a design feature, elevating your simple objects into things of beauty.

2. Out of sight and out of mind.

Closets or storage rooms are enclosed empty spaces. You

can add rods or shelving to suit your requirements. People are now choosing to turn closets into dressing rooms, enclosing items in cabinetry and revealing only what's most precious and notable through glass cabinets. If you own shoes, purses, belts or ties that are beautiful and cost a pretty penny, then why not put them on display like an art object in a glass case?

3. Combining in and out of sight.

Say we've opted for open-plan spaces instead of separate rooms for our functions. Even kitchens are now blended in, requiring special thinking on how to manage all its requirements. While one-room living reveals all, do we really want to show off everything?

Storage credenzas, shelving and wall units can act as free-standing room dividers to delineate space. One company that provides unique items is Design Within Reach (DWR). It is a go-to destination for design sophisticates. Their variety of cabinets and shelving units are real designer heirloom classics that can make space efficient and extra special.

CUSTOM VS. STANDARD

Each home is unique, not only in structure, but also in the personality and vision of its owner. While standard shelving and storage units are available at most home stores, and while you



can hack Ikea, it is best to give your storage needs the attention they deserve.

Investing in custom built-in storage solutions will enhance the value of your house, much like investing in kitchen or bathroom renovations. It is money well spent. Knowing that everything is in its place and there's a place for everything helps liberate us from our stuff. OH

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Continued on page 22

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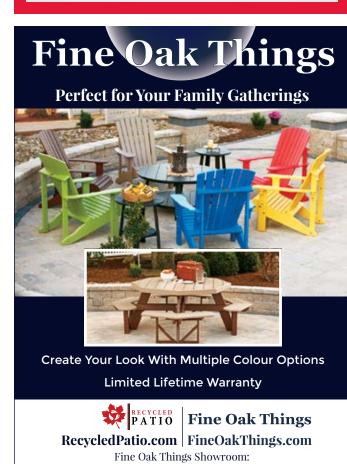
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PROUD NOMINEE OF THE 2015 OAKVILLE AWARDS FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE



The mimosa is a staple of every brunch, traditionally made with sparkling wine and orange juice. This recipe uses poached peaches for a refreshing twist.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY JENELLE MCCULLOCH

INGREDIENTS

2 cups water

1/4 cup granulated sugar 1/4 cup honey

2-3 peaches, halved and pitted

Sparkling wine

DIRECTIONS

Combine water, sugar and honey in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir until sugar and honey are dissolved.

Add peach halves and simmer for 5-10 minutes, turning until tender.

Remove peaches and reduce poaching liquid by half. Put peaches in a small, sturdy bowl and reserve liquid in a separate bowl. Cool both.

Using a muddler or the back of a spoon, press peaches against the side of the bowl. Press hard and twist. The goal is to break up the fruit, release liquid and intensify the flavour.

Add a dollop of muddled peaches to champagne glasses, then add a ½ tsp of poaching liquid to each glass.

Top with sparkling wine. он

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MATERIALS

12-by-48inch pine project board 120/220/320 grit sandpaper

Two-inch
painter's tape
Challboard

Chalkboard spray paint

Minwax Wood Finish stain of your choice (we used Early American for our project)

Staining rag

Handles of choice and fasteners (we used drawer pulls)

HOW-TO

Sand both sides of the 12-by-48-inch project board using 120-grit sandpaper.

Wipe the surface with a lint-free rag, and sand both sides again with 220-grit sandpaper. Repeat with 320-grit sandpaper.

Using a staining rag, stain both sides of the board and let dry. For a deeper colour, add a second coat of stain.

Once the board is dry, use the painter's tape to mask off the perimeter and edges of the board to create a border that will remain unpainted.

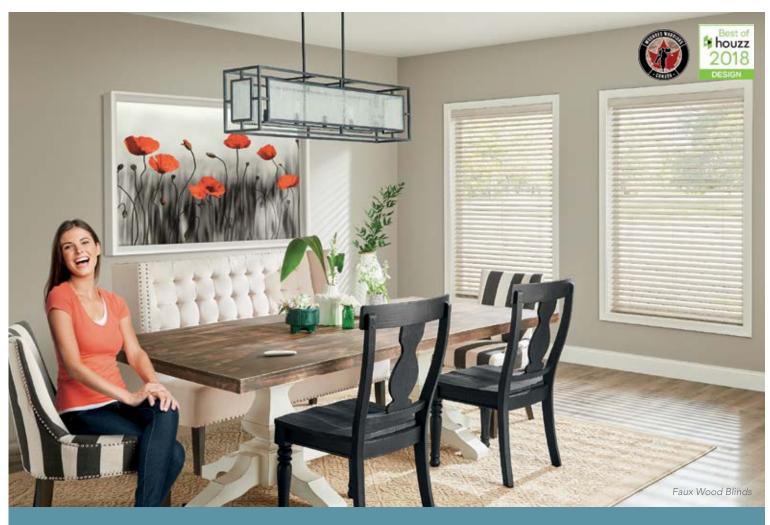
Spray with chalkboard paint in even strokes on the unmasked portion of the board. Allow the project to dry completely before carefully removing the tape.

Fasten the handles of your choice.

Add a custom message or design with chalk and use to serve.

NOTE: Do not place food directly on the chalkboard surface. We use small, decorative dishes or wax paper for food safety. OH





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GROVVING with SUCCESS



STORY MELANIE REKOLA

Growing food is one of the most popular forms of gardening practised today.

Given the ever increasing costs (and lack of nutritional content) of current grocery store produce, it makes sense. Growing food at home is actually pretty easy to do. For example, throwing a tomato plant or two in a sunny spot in your garden, and giving it an occasional watering, will likely produce a few fruits. But for your veggie garden to be truly successful in both health and bounty, a number of requirements must be met.

PLACEMENT

Food gardens need sunshine, but only about eight hours per day. East facing is ideal, followed by south and west. Veggie gardens need not be planted in rows if you prefer free-form arrangement. Add some inexpensive and edible flower seeds such as sunflower and nasturtium



to punch up the colour. Be artistic as crops will change year to year so nothing is permanent. Continued on page 30









gardening

SOIL

Just as it is with good relationships and sound construction practises, a successful vegetable garden is built upon a solid foundation – its soil! Healthy soil is composed of weathered rock, organic matter, water and air, yet it also contains the magical hidden element of beneficial organisms. Let's take a closer look.

Minerals: Roughly half of soil's composition is made of bits of broken down weathered rock – the vital minerals necessary for healthy plants. The size of these particles determines the texture of soil. Large sand particles are found in sandy soil, medium particles in silty soil and small particles in clay-based soil.

Organic Matter: These are the partially decomposed remains of plant life, soil organisms and all kinds of vegetative matter. Although organic matter makes up only five to 10 per cent of soil composition, it is essential to bind soil particles together, retain moisture, allow air flow and provide food for the all-important microorganisms. All soil types will improve with an increase in organic matter so add in compost, aged manure or seed a "cover crop" such as annual rye grass, then till it into the existing soil to decompose.

Soil Life: Beneficial bacteria, fungi, nematodes and earthworms are just a few of the important creatures found in garden soil. These tiny beings are imperative to help convert the organic matter and minerals in soil into vitamins, hormones and nutrients plants need for optimum growth. Avoid sterilized commercial soils and composts, pesticides and herbicides. Add in worm compost, home compost or leaf mould to enhance your colonies instead.



CROP ROTATION

Certain plants are heavy feeders while others actually increase soil health in the areas in which they grow. This makes crop rotation very beneficial to the home garden. For example, legumes fix nitrogen into the soil, so plant cabbage and cauliflower in an area where you previously grew beans and peas. Root crops don't like very rich soil, so plant these in areas previously inhabited by demanding cabbage and cauliflowers.

PERFECT COMPANIONS

Some plants have similar growing requirements and even grow better when planted together, making them natural allies. Other plants, like people, compete for resources. Many companion planting charts are available online so with a little research you'll find out exactly which of your plants are friends or foes.

THE HARVEST

Every great chef knows each dish is only as good as its ingredients, so harvest your bounty at its optimum flavour. Sometimes you'll have an abundance of one crop or have many crops that mature all at once. Don't let those extras rot in place! Freezing and canning are easy and you may end up with enough delicious and nutritious preserves to last you until the following July.

Most mass-grown fruits and vegetables are sprayed with dangerous herbicides and pesticides, planted in depleted soil and shipped an average of 2,500 kilometres before they reach the local grocery store. Even much of our livestock is given loads of antibiotics and an unhealthy diet that then trickles down to us when we consume them. Given the state of the average Canadian's body fat level, coupled with mass vitamin and mineral deficiencies, our bodies are simultaneously both starving and storing fat! However, when the body is nourished at a cellular level, cravings disappear, natural energy is restored and many health problems retreat. Food is the original medicine so why not give a healthful, tasty organic veggie garden a try? **o**H

Melanie Rekola is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.













LEFT: Wall mouldings by Crown Cornice Mouldings & Millwork Inc. add dimension in the formal living room. **TOP:** Edward and Livia Drennan in their beautifully landscaped backyard. **ABOVE:** A pretty walkway creates a warm welcome.

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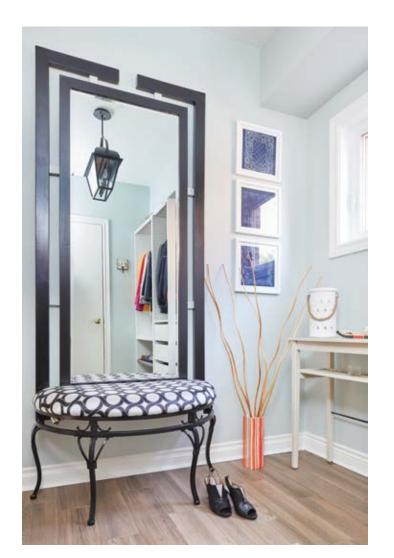
"WE JUST SAW THE HOUSE AND I KNEW

it was right," says **Livia Drennan**, principal designer at **Your Story by Design**, adding that she was attracted to the home's inviting warmth and welcoming spirit. "I just had this good feeling."

Built in 1994, the two-storey home featured traditional styling with solid bones, good curb appeal and a lovely 16-foot formal living room. It also had an east-west orientation, which was on the couple's nice-to-have list.

In 2008, when the couple began sifting through home choices, they were living in Cambridge and commuting to work. "It was our dream to be closer to work and we really liked Oakville," says Livia. She sits on the cream brocade sofa in her great room, with the sights of the backyard as the backdrop. The great room flows into a sunroom with floor-to-ceiling glass windows, a must-have on the renovation list, says Livia.

Family is important to the couple, and the walls are laden with photo collages of children and grandchildren and memories of favourite travel destinations. Continued on page 36







LEFT: Pretty and functional, the mudroom offers plenty of storage space. **TOP:** A custom desk is the centrepiece in Edward's light-filled office area. **ABOVE:** A chair that Livia and Edward recovered in Meredith Heron fabric in the great room has the beautiful backyard as a backdrop. **OPPOSITE:** The sunroom addition gives the dining space a beautiful year-round view.



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RIGHT: Warm wood is timeless in the kitchen, and the geometric island fills the space with function. BELOW: Livia incorporates vibrant colours and hints of glamour with mixed metals. OPPOSITE: The piano room is a tranquil place to relax with a book or a drink or to enjoy making music.



Edward is seated across from her in a chair Livia recovered with Meredith Heron fabric in a classic floral. She did it by herself with a little help from Edward, who enjoys helping with the designs Livia dreams up. "This is my favourite room. It's inspirational," he says. His other favourite space is his office, which was once the two-storey living room. Natural light is softened by Roman shades from **Q Design**, and creates a perfect backdrop to get work done. The décor throughout is classic and elegant, creating a cosy space with calming, neutral colours. Most of the lighting throughout is from **Lighting Centre**. It's a place that allows the visual charm and vibrant colours of the outside to take centre stage.

In 2011 Livia began her studies to become a designer, earning her diploma in 2013 – all spurred on by dipping her toes into the world of design with the renovation of the Oakville home.

She now has a second career as a designer and can barely keep up with the demand. Her blogs are attracting clicks by the thousands, and photos of her designs on Houzz.com are snapping up the likes.

Certainly the initial home was dated and in need of a design overhaul. "It was really matchy-matchy – pink walls with pink carpets in one room, blue walls with blue carpets in another and it had this bright pink front door and matching garage doors," says Livia.

Continued on page 38



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ABOVE: Graphic blue wallpaper adds verve to the powder room. **RIGHT:** A bronze 19th century statue from France belonging to Edward's great grandparents now graces their foyer.



But her inherent design acumen allowed her to see beyond all of that and focus on the home's enormous potential. "As soon as I walked into the home, I saw in my mind walls coming down to create this open concept," says Livia.

The couple opened up the kitchen and entryway, allowing all of the rooms to "talk to one another," a characteristic that Livia holds top-of-mind when designing. Livia redesigned kitchen with cabinetry and granite from Oakville Kitchen & Bath Centre and added an eight-foot geometric island and soft pendant lighting. The pièce de résistance, however, has to be the 200 sq. ft. sunroom addition that extends from the family room, carving out a spacious glassed-in great room.

Livia's décor choices are consistent with the traditional style of the elegant intimacy of the home. For the walls she chose a classic linen, a colour she says is the perfect neutral, especially when paired with the hardwood

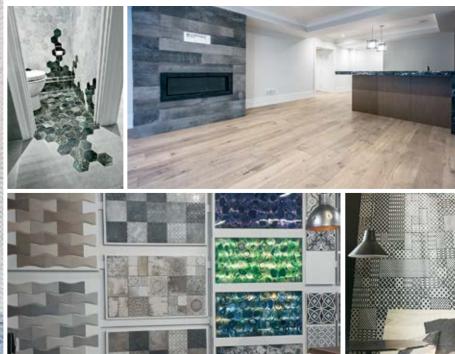




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floors and the strong character elements throughout the space. She's introduced wall and ceiling details like fluted crown mouldings, wainscotting and old-world picture panels, all thoughtfully etched and woven together to paint a calm and tranquil backdrop for the couple.

Peppered throughout are treasures passed down through the generations. An oil painting of northern Ontario by Edward's aunt hangs proudly in the front hallway, while a bronze statue sculpted in 19th century France commands prominence on the curl of the bannister colonnade, a welcoming muse.

"It belonged to my great grandparents," shares Edward. "I was mesmerized by it as a young child and wanted to install it in the same place they had."

As for Livia, she recalls life growing up in Romania – she moved to Canada 20 years ago, with her son, who at the time was a preschooler. "We always had so much colour in our homes in Romania, much more so than in Canada, and I remember having beautiful Persian carpets," she says. Two vibrant Persian carpets, one in the master bedroom and the other in the piano room, now adorn her own space. Continued on page 42





TOP LEFT: A lovely laundry room makes the chore of washing and folding easy. ABOVE: The vibrant blue of the guest room ties into the colours used throughout the home. LEFT: A smaller space is treated with a high dose of style.



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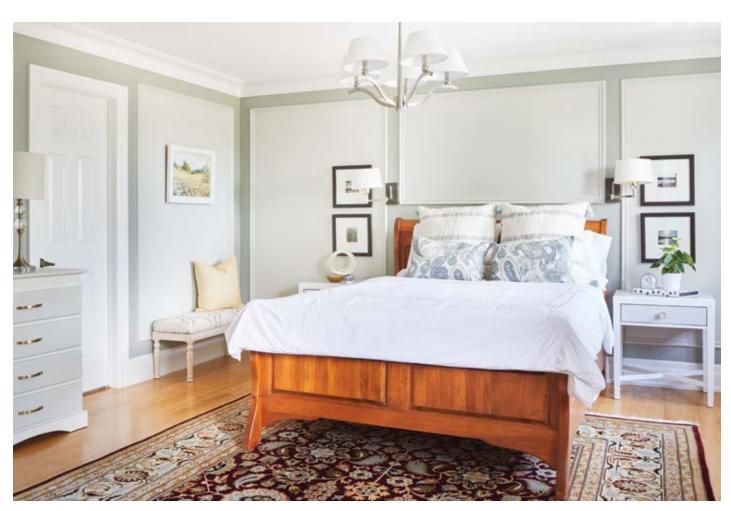


The home is infused with pops of vibrant yellow, starting with Livia's upstairs office. "I like bits of yellow in my life," she says. "It makes me feel happy. And slowly but surely I have included it as an accent in almost every room of the house."

When seeking out unique pieces and inspiration for her home, Livia says she looks "absolutely everywhere" from Restoration Hardware to antique shops, where she has found treasures just waiting to be reworked, reupholstered or refinished.

Over the years, she has watched her vision knit slowly and lovingly to fruition. "It's an ongoing work in progress, but one that has come nicely to life," she says. **o**H

FAR LEFT: Built-ins make good use of a smaller closet footprint and maximize the space. LEFT: A punch of colour dresses up the fresh white canvas of the bathroom. **BELOW:** The master bedroom blends warm woods with interesting details like wall mouldings for a beautiful retreat.



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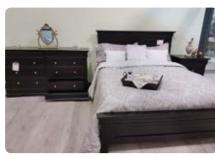
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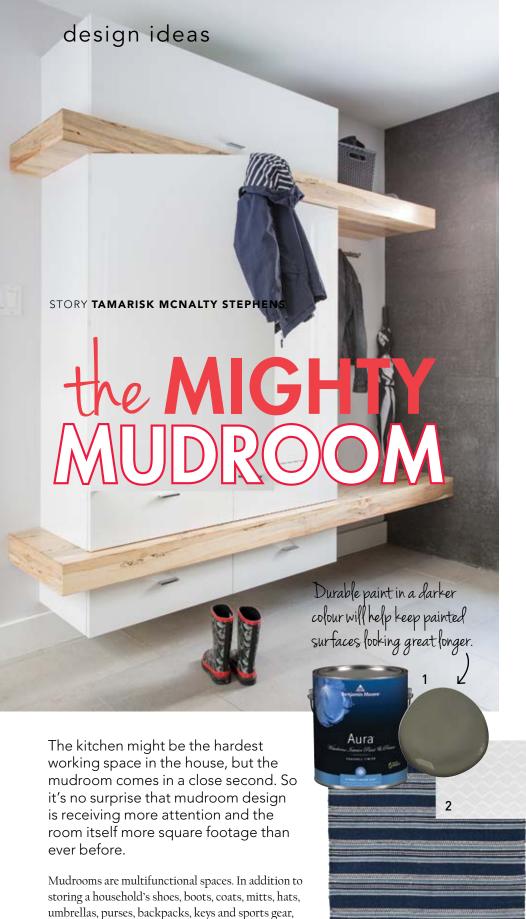
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LIVIA DRENNAN | INTERIOR DESIGN offers a variety of services, from room re-design, decorating and colour consulting, to entire home design. A member of the Decorators θ Designers Association of Canada and a True Colour ExpertTM, Livia takes pride in creating amazing spaces that WOW, by designing the best possible harmonious use of space for people to enjoy. Authenticity, beauty and trust are words she stands by.



Often located adjacent to the garage, the mudroom can become the primary entrance in many homes and is a high-traffic area. It's the last place you see when you head out for the day and the first space that greets you when you return (and perhaps the first space guests will see as well). Therefore, the mudroom should be designed with the utmost utility in mind to meet the specific needs and requirements of your household. Walking in and out of a tidy, organized and functional space creates a welcoming and comforting environment that can help calm your nerves and reduce stress.

Whether you're redesigning your current space or starting from scratch, here are some considerations when designing a mudroom:

MATERIALS

As the name suggests, the space should be designed with durable materials and finishes that can withstand the dirt, mud and snow. A non-porous hard floor surface, such as porcelain or luxury vinyl tile, is easy to mop and requires minimal maintenance. Just avoid light-coloured grout.

Consider hard-wearing wall finishes (the matte paint trend is not suitable for the mudroom). Wall tile, wood panelling and many wallcoverings are resilient and easy to wipe.

Be mindful of uneven surfaces and heavy textures where dust and dirt can settle and become difficult to clean.

Radiant floor heat is worth the investment in the mudroom as it helps to keep the space warm and dry in the cool, damp months and is a welcome treat for cold toes.

Continued on page 46

This durable, washable, scrubbable rug is perfect for high-traffic areas.

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calendar, pantry, housekeeping or laundry space, and

often the spot for a family pet's crate, food and litter.



STORAGE

Consider where shoes, boots, coats and mitts will be stored both in season and off season. Do you prefer visible hooks for coats and open cubbies for boots or do you prefer them hidden behind closed doors? Incorporating a bench or form of seating is helpful for people of all ages when it comes to footwear.

Individual storage cubbies have become popular and their ease of access allows everyone to be responsible for placing their stuff in its designated location.

A combination of open and closed storage helps minimize visual clutter while providing an opportunity to express your individual style through cabinetry, hooks, hardware, bins and baskets.



EXTRAS

If you're an active individual or household, be sure to designate space to accommodate the gear for various sports and outdoor activities.

Avid gardeners can incorporate sufficient counter space to pot, prune and care for plants and start spring vegetables. A small, deep, wash-up sink can be handy to rinse fresh garden produce and to clean hardworking hands straight from the shop or barn.

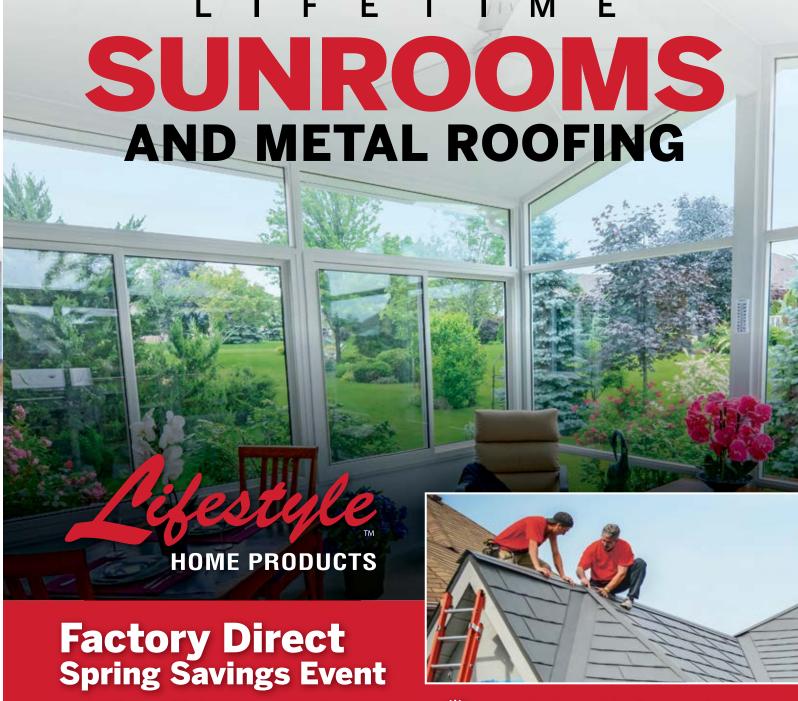
Do you struggle with muddy paws after walks with your dog? Pet showers are becoming a more popular request when sufficient space is available. They help contain the mess so it doesn't get tracked throughout your home, and can also be handy to fill the mop bucket or rinse boots.

A docking station for mobile phones can be a great addition to the space as more people try to successfully balance the demands of work and home life. The idea is to leave your phone in a specific location instead of continually by your side, which can allow you to be less distracted and more focused on the present moment.

Be sure to consider the vantage point from adjoining spaces and decide what you don't mind on display and what you'd prefer hidden from view. Pocket or barn-style doors are a good option that don't take up valuable floor space like a door swing.

Although functionality and practicality are the focus of the mudroom, it is also another space where you can express your unique style and design sensibility. Be creative and have

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GARDEN OF EDEN



THE PLACE: In 1993, Bill Gauthier purchased **Eden Tile-It** as a cash-and-carry retail store and installation department. The small family-run business has grown to two locations in Burlington and Mount Hope, with a third set to open soon in the Oakville-Burlington area. After many years of working alongside her dad, daughter Natasha Gauthier-Little now helps run the family business as they continue to expand. "We have grown to become the destination for selection and service when it comes to all aspects of flooring," says Gauthier-Little. From selection to

installation, the professionals at Eden Tile-It have been helping customers make the right flooring decisions for 25 years.

THE STYLE: The large showrooms house impressive inventory and offer plenty of options, from tile and stone to hardwood, carpet, laminate, luxury vinyl and a fully stocked line of Schluter System products. Design savvy sales staff are experts in the flooring industry and often help a project come together by understanding a customer's vision before helping them select the perfect flooring choice.



Sales staff are experts in the flooring industry and often help a project come together by understanding a customer's vision before helping them select the perfect flooring choice.

WHAT'S ON-TREND: With plenty of beautiful options on the market, Gauthier-Little says clients are starting to experiment with pattern to add an eye-catching focal point with colour and dimension. "Tiles in unique patterns with bright colours or funky shapes, hardwood and luxury vinyl in herringbone – it's all about creativity and individuality right now with these hard surfaces," she says. "With clean lines and less visual interruption, large format tiles are also in demand. Seamless showers, fireplaces and backsplashes are all the rage. No grout joints, no lines, just a clean, simple, timeless visual appeal."

FAVOURITES: Gauthier-Little loves luxury vinyl for its easy installation and maintenance. "I have two small boys and require a floor that can withstand the hockey sticks or spilled food, and for me, luxury vinyl is basically life-proof," she explains. "I am running it throughout my basement because all you have to do is throw it down and stop worrying about it. It looks like hardwood once it's down. It's warm to the touch and is super easy to wipe up spills."

Eden Tile-It staff members: Harout Bouladian, David Gauthier,

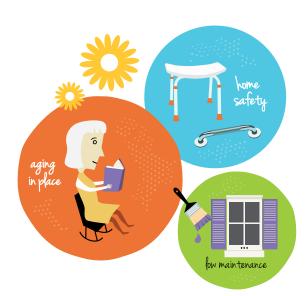
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FOR TH

STORY WALTER FRANCZYK ILLUSTRATION SHEILA BRITTON

Although most Canadians plan to grow old at home, many have given little thought to what's needed to actually age in their homes.

Some surveys suggest up to 85 per cent of Canadians intend to live at home for as long as possible. But more than one in three haven't seriously considered measures to make life at home easier and safer.

Thinking ahead is essential, says Heather Mahon, who owns and operates Heather's Home Healthcare, a medical equipment and supplies store that promotes independent living. "Today we can be really, really healthy and tomorrow that can change."

The earlier Canadians start planning, the more prepared they'll be to handle changes in their health and mobility, Service Canada advises. That planning should include current and future costs of staying at home, proximity to friends and family, transportation, and assessing safety risks at home. The agency has a wealth of information about aging in place.

SAFETY MEASURES

Homeowners can make simple improvements themselves, such as installing grab bars in the shower, bath area and around the toilet, says Mahon. "If you're going to replace furniture, my suggestion is to go to a lift chair." Push-button controls on an electrically-powered recliner are easier to use than manually-operated handles that require strength and dexterity.

MAINTENANCE

John Ritchie of Ritchie Renovations suggests making the home as maintenance-free as possible. He says windows and doors that need paint every year or every other year should be replaced, if homeowners have room in their budget. Vinyl or fibreglass windows need little maintenance. Some manufacturers offer windows that clean themselves with glass coatings that react with sunlight to break down dirt and grime that's washed away by rain. "The more maintenance-free they can make their house, the better off they are," Ritchie says.

Anyone heating a home with only wood should get a furnace, Ritchie recommends. "Get a source of heat other than wood because it's a lot of work."

When it comes to interior renovations, an occupational therapist can provide detailed advice tailored to individual needs.

BATHROOMS

For Mahon, it's bathrooms that require the most attention. "Your biggest bugaboo is the bathroom," she warns. With many hard surfaces and edges that get slippery when wet, bathrooms can be a painful place for a fall. Grab bars and shower seats are key to safety. An unobstructed area, at least five feet in diameter, is needed for manoeuvring a wheelchair or walker in the bathroom. Motorized wheelchairs or scooters need more room. "Think about access," Mahon advises. "If I have to go in with a walker am I able to turn around?"

Curbless showers are terrific, she says. Although some people like to soak in a tub, as they age they're susceptible to what Mahon calls "beached whale syndrome."

"One day you're going to get caught in that tub and you're not going to be able to get out because either your arms aren't

strong enough or you can't get yourself turned around." When replacing a tub, she recommends a low-profile tub, no higher than 21 inches. "If you're doing flooring, put in a heated floor and get rid of scatter mats, they're a tripping hazard. As you age, you don't want those in there," she says.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provides detailed recommendations for renovations or new construction to make nearly every room of the house safe, accessible and comfortable. It offers suggestions for kitchens, appliances, living rooms, exterior decks, gardens and landscaping.

Revenue Canada allows homeowners age 65 or older and those with disabilities to claim up to \$10,000 for renovation expenses that make their homes accessible and safer.

In addition to accessibility, people who want to grow old at home should consider day-to-day maintenance, such as snow removal and year-to-year maintenance, says Leah Kane, a sales person with RE/MAX North Country Realty Inc. "Will the furnace need to be replaced in the next little while? Those big ticket items need to be done. Budget for those big ticket items," she urges.

DOWNSIZING

Some people are selling their family homes in large urban areas, where homes fetch high prices, and are moving to smaller communities where housing is less expensive. "That is a big chunk of our business," says Kane. "We see people migrating north because this is the lifestyle they've been envisioning for a long time. When they come up here, it's much more affordable."

One-floor living, with comfortable living arrangements, master bedroom and ground-floor laundry, is ideal, she says. "If people are transitioning from a large home into a smaller home, the benefits to doing that is their taxes will be lower. Their heating costs will be lower," Kane says. "If you need to replace a roof over a 1,000 sq. ft. home versus a 1,700 sq. ft. foot home with a second storey, it's going to be less expensive. A smaller bungalow is going to be much more affordable."

Financially, the longer people can live in their own homes, the better, she says. $\mathbf{o}\mathbf{h}$

online

For more information about aging at home visit ourhomes.ca/mag/aging

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LEFT: Like a secret garden, a wrought iron gate surrounded by lush greenery opens to the backyard oasis. BELOW: The pergola offers shade and privacy. OPPOSITE: Many zones for relaxing and entertaining give the backyard a resort-like feel.

Why pack the car, round up the kids and fight Friday night traffic on Ontario's highways when a blue water paradise is waiting at home? Enjoy two completely different takes on landscape design.

LE JARDIN À LA FRANÇAISE

"We were looking for a backyard retreat that we could enjoy at night as well as during the day and we wanted the design to complement our home's Frenchinspired architecture," says homeowner Liane Enns. "Working with the team at **ProScape Land Design Inc.** was a great experience. They created an inviting, secluded space that we use far more than we thought we would for relaxing and entertaining family and friends," says Enns. The design recently won a

Landscape Ontario Award of Excellence in the residential construction category.

As the French might say, ProScape's design is completely *au fait*. A thoroughly modern take on the formal symmetrical garden known as *le jardin à la française*. It combines symmetry, connecting paths, formal planting beds, stone walls, copper fire pits, clipped hedges and water features. To match the home's exterior, the hardscape combines Indiana limestone and sandstone.

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Firebowls add war





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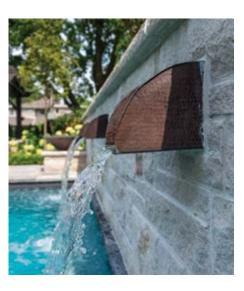
No French garden worth its salt would be without a backdrop of greenery. Groupings of tall deciduous and evergreen trees soldier the property, offering privacy from the road and the neighbours. Low boxwoods outline the pergola, its latticework entwined with leafy vines. **Tom Henderson**, owner of ProScape, says they created the space using varying shades of green, interspersed with pops of colour, like the planting of ever-blooming hydrangeas.

In typical old French style, the backyard is designed as a series of outdoor rooms connected with stone steps and pathways.

The French liked to be able to view their gardens from a raised terrace. Here, the covered porch delivers a wonderful view across the backyard. Liane and Gary opted for a wood-burning fireplace instead of gas, and enjoy the heady scent of wood smoke on cold evenings.

Continued on page 58





TOP: Vibrant pops of colour in the cushions mirror the blues and greens of the natural environment. **LEFT:** Sculpted gardens add colour and dimension. **ABOVE:** Water cascades softly into the pool from copper water scuppers.









In the pool area, a stone wall is flanked with hammeredcopper gas fire bowls on stone pedestals. It's an elegant, upscale design, particularly at night when the fire bowls light the area. Along the rear wall, copper water scuppers spill soft sheets of water into the pool.

The custom pergola is crafted from Douglas fir and accented with heavy brass hardware. Resin furniture is cushioned in shades of blue, echoing the keynotes of the sparkling blue pool, and a gas fire pit adds a warmth to cooler evenings.

ProScape collaborated with Gib-San Pools on the gunite pool. Unlike fibreglass pools, gunite is built on site, in almost any shape and doesn't require

a liner. Gunite is a steel rod framework over-sprayed with a mix of sand and cement. Wondering how the pool got its iridescent blue colour? The secret is the Pebble Tec finish.

From pool maintenance to the water features, lighting and music, the yard is fully automated and controlled by an app on the homeowner's phone.

Although still a relatively new build, the softscape is already weaving its magic, softening stone walls and paths, adding character to structures and making intimate areas a touch more intimate. Like a fine Bordeaux, this French-inspired outdoor space will only get better with age. on

Continued on page 60



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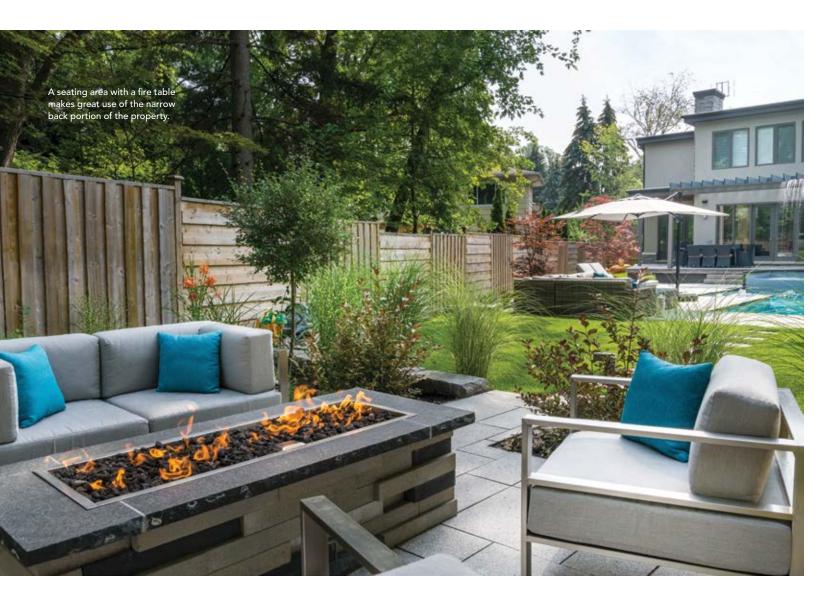


A TOUCH OF PARADISE

Of all the beautiful features and focal points in this stunning south Mississauga backyard, bringing a client's vision of a fully automated backyard retreat to life is what really excites **Brandon Cook**. His team at **Pool Doctors** is behind the design of this summer oasis. "The clients have complete control over pool and spa

functionality from a Hayward OmniLogic app on their phone or computer," he says. They can monitor and adjust water temperatures, activate the infinity edge spa and control landscape lighting from a simple, user friendly interface. Even when the family travels, they can check in on their slice of paradise back home.

The narrow shape of the property posed challenges, but homeowners Matthew and Shari Wing are thrilled with the outcome. "We wanted an original design that would make the most of the space," says Shari. A pie-shaped lot on a cul-de sac, the width shrinks as the property gets further from the house.



"We wanted an original design that would make the most of the space."



LEFT: Daughter Olivia and family fur baby Schneider soak up the sun on lazy summer days. **BELOW:** A Muskoka-style patio off the house provides a shady place for dining. **BOTTOM:** The softscape adds dimension and colour, and was designed with low maintenance in mind.





With an overwhelming array of pool styles available, they chose an irregular shape custom-designed by Pool Doctors to fit the property. "Our biggest surprise is how the narrowest part of the property turned out," Shari says. "Brandon's team created a lounging area with landscaped garden

and a granite-top gas fire pit. The design actually exceeded our expectations. It's made the space a really relaxing place to unwind in the evenings. Our backyard now has all the amenities needed for an oasis, without leaving the city, much like being at the cottage." Continued on page 62





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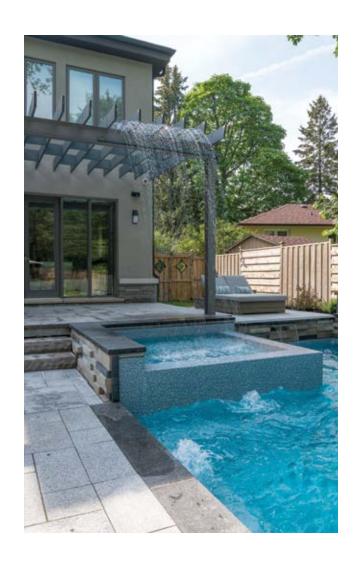
backyard tour





The four-season spa is located close to the house, so the Wing family can use it even when the snow falls. The steps into the pool and the hot tub bench seating are padded for maximum comfort, and step treads are textured for a non-slip surface.

One of the elements that gives this backyard its resort feel is the vinyl pool's infinity edge. Five sheer-descent waterfalls deliver wide, clear arcs of water that extend from a modern, natural-stone capped water feature that runs the length of the pool. Colour changing LED bubblers produce water plumes that extend 18 inches above the water surface. A large rain shower designed and installed by Jon De Vera, Pool Doctors' head installation manager, is positioned high over the spa for a sparkling, moving water accent by day and a dramatic changing LED light show at night. Continued on page 64





MINERAL STREET IRON EMBERS

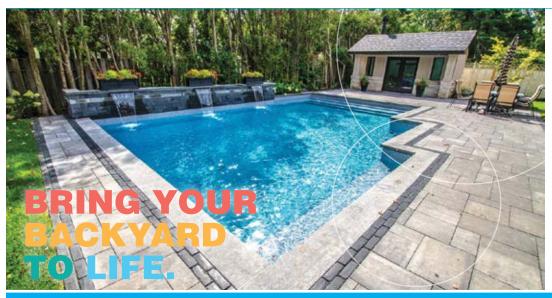
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ABOVE: Shari and Olivia can spend quality time on hot summer days. **TOP RIGHT:** A cabana-style area is well-situated by the pool. **RIGHT:** Schneider loves pool-side relaxing with the rest of the family.

short in Ontario, so time-consuming maintenance didn't appeal to Matthew and Shari, particularly with young children. "We didn't want a concrete jungle, so we kept some grass at the back, separating the pool area from the lounge area," says Shari. The hardscape on the patio is armour stone, and the coping on pool sides is a combination of staggered natural stone and black-and-white granite. Low-maintenance grasses spill onto the walkway, softening hard edges. Shiny black river rock in the lounge area conceals a clever hydroponic irrigation system that allows plants to thrive without the traditional weekly watering. Each plant, including the large Japanese maples, has its own dripline irrigation.

Achieving order and symmetry isn't easy when working with an irregular-shaped yard. But in this case, soft and hardscapes deliver a modern zen-like aesthetic that gives Matthew and Shari exactly what they wanted – a backyard oasis that is low on maintenance and high on pleasure. **OH**









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SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS

PHOTOGRAPHY

JASON HARTOG

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Tell us about your store: Located at the corner of Appleby Line and Fairview Street, NEO 1 Paint & Decor is a one-stop shop for your home décor needs − from premium Benjamin Moore paint to wallpaper and blinds. We pride ourselves on providing our customers with excellent service, whether it's through in-home colour and design consults or providing expert advice about our various products and services.

What is the first step toward great design? Developing a plan and effective communication are critical to the design process. A clear idea,

understanding your clients' needs and expectations

to make sure the end result is superb. Michelle Adams, our designer, has over two decades of experience, consistently providing excellent results for clients.

How do you work with clients to help achieve their vision? We like to ask clients as many questions as possible about their style, their current lighting and find out what pieces of furniture are staying or going to ensure we capture and enhance their overall look. Working with our clients, we use imagery from magazines and websites to help achieve their dream space.

Continued on page 70

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SAMANTHA COPPOLINO & TRISHA ROSS Trisha Ross Interiors

What does Trisha Ross Interiors offer clients? We provide full interior design services, from full renovations to updates, furnishings and décor. In partnership with General Contracting by The Bradburn Group, we engage primarily in residential renovations, ranging from main floor makeovers, new kitchens, new bathrooms, open-concept construction, room additions, flooring and more.

How do you approach each new **project?** Each new project is custom quoted. We consider the characteristics of each home, and ensure the personal aesthetic and unique style of each homeowner is reflected in the design of the home. The process starts with a concept board, and then builds out into drawings, finishes and custom touches. As a design team, we work with the construction project manager to achieve beautiful results on time and as set forth in the approved design concept.

What advice do you have for clients?

Make a list of your "must haves" and your desired outcomes before you start a renovation or redesign project. This list will keep you from straying too far from your objectives during the renovation. Have a clear budget and consult with a designer and contractor in the planning stages to better prepare for a successful renovation.

Continued on page 72





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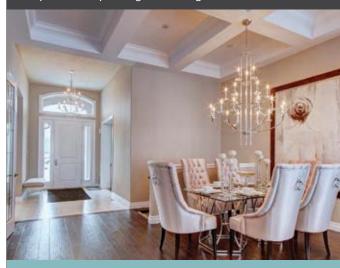
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JASON FABBIAN OWNER & PRESIDENT Gemini Homes, Guelph

Tell us about your vision for the Biltmore Factory Towns project in Guelph: As a local Guelph builder, Gemini Homes wanted to ensure the Biltmore Towns offer buyers a unique and sustainable living option close to the downtown core. The classic brick architecture visible throughout the downtown core inspired the unique design of the Biltmore Towns. They feature all the modern conveniences of 2018, with the style and character of a historic retrofit factory. The Biltmore Towns have been designed to Net Zero Ready standards. Using these building practices and specifications, Gemini will offer homeowners a more comfortable living experience while giving them the opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint.

Tell us about your partners: Gemini Homes is partnered with the Holmes Approved Homes program. These quality assurance inspections, along with the Net Zero Ready program, ensure that the Biltmore Towns will be constructed to far surpass building code and Tarion guidelines.

Continued on page 74

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What is the first step toward great design? Great design tells the homeowner's story. Our designer, Katherine Dykstra, prides herself on building collaborative relationships with each of her clients, whether it's as simple as choosing a new paint colour or redesigning an existing space. Their happiness is at the forefront of everything she does.

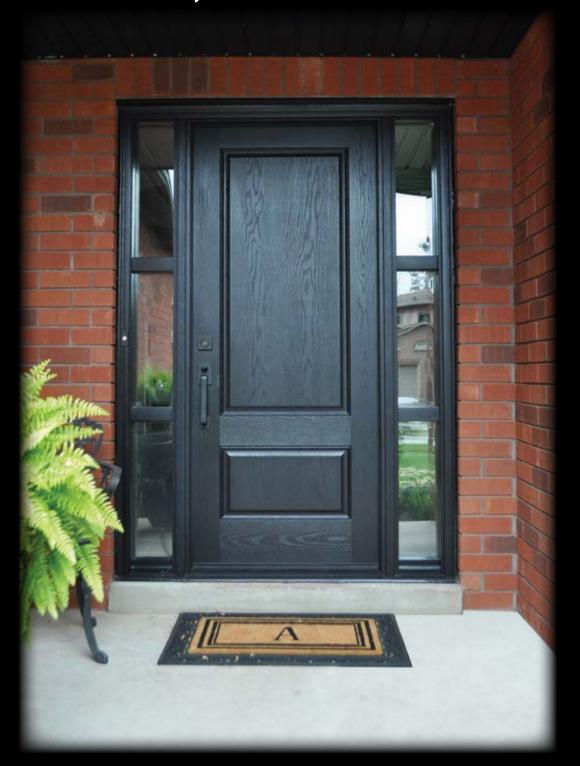
How do you work with clients to help achieve their vision? We listen to our clients' expectations and gather as much information as possible to develop a roadmap. Creating an inspiration board of images is also a great way for us to understand our clients' style and helps inform our decisions to ensure we achieve their dream space. OH



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LEFT: A blend of soothing neutrals and textures exude timeless elegance. **BELOW:** A bench makes good use of the space in the entry. **OPPOSITE:** Natural stone and wood give the family room an upscale yet rustic vibe.



"WE SPENT SEVEN
WONDERFUL YEARS
IN BEAUTIFUL BRITISH
COLUMBIA BUT
DECIDED IT WAS TIME
TO RETURN HOME
WHERE ALL OF OUR
FAMILY RESIDES,"
SHARES LESLIE,
CHATTING ABOUT HER
NEW, CUSTOM BUILT
HOME IN BURLINGTON.

Before moving to Vancouver, Leslie, husband Dave and their daughters Lauren, 16, and Kaitlyn, 15, lived in Oakville, but decided to make Burlington their home this time around. "We love exploring the many parks, trails, restaurants and festivals that happen throughout the year in our new home town," she says.

Instead of purchasing an existing home, Leslie and Dave decided to buy new from builder **Pine Glen Homes Inc.** "While visiting some homes on the market, we noticed a lot for sale with the opportunity to build a custom home. We felt the lot was fantastic as it backed onto green space and was close to many amenities, including schools," says Leslie.

Designer **Kate Davidson** of **Kate + Co. Design Inc.** guided them through their custom project from the ground up. "We worked with the family and the builder from the starting phase, establishing the layout and selecting the exterior materials as well, all the way to selecting the finishes and paint colours," says Davidson.

"We wanted to incorporate some of the design elements from our home in British Columbia, including large peaked windows, a combination of stone and siding on the exterior, with an elegant yet rustic feel on the inside," says Leslie. "A bright, open-concept kitchen was very important to us but a formal living room was not, so we opted not to include one in our floor plan." Continued on page 79

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feature







From the outset, it was clear the family preferred an open-concept home. "They asked us to create a sense of openness and wanted a light and airy family living space" says Davidson. "It's really about the function when designing a family friendly home. We went back and forth on the overall size of the house and rooms, making sure every room in the end would be used and served a function." Completed last summer, the 4,000-sq. ft. two-storey home features a palette of whites, greys and earth tones and wide-plank, white oak floors throughout most of the house.

"They wanted a classic style of home; they didn't want to do anything too bold or trendy. They were conscious of selecting less trendy colours and patterns and leaned towards the more timeless finishes we proposed," says Davidson.

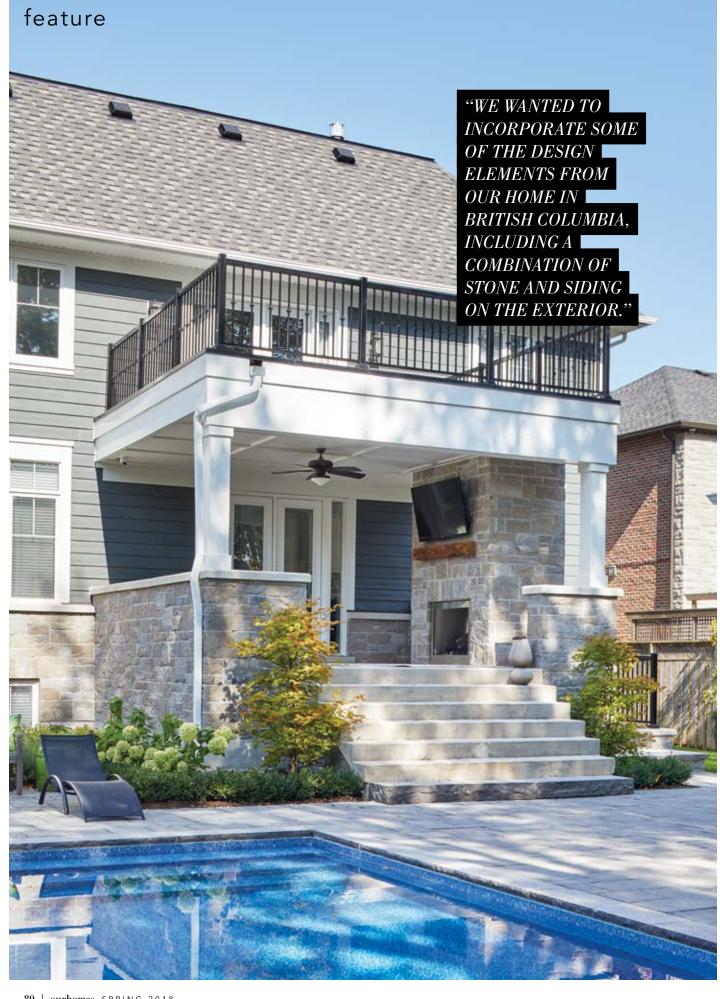
The kitchen features a marble herringbone backsplash that adds subtle contrast to the white countertop. Nickel hardware adds polish to the modified shaker cabinets by **Frendel Kitchens Ltd.** The large centre island is stained a contrasting grey. "I always recommend incorporating drawers in the island to add more storage and functionality," adds Davidson.

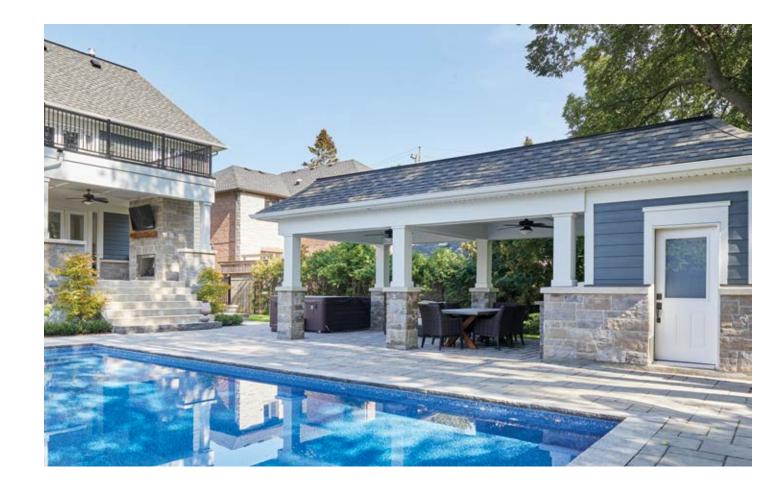
The dining room steps out of the neutral zone with an eggshell blue wall and black metal light fixture. "The family didn't bring much furniture over from Vancouver, except the dining table," says Davidson. "They had this big harvest table they had made in Vancouver, black with a wood top, which is why we added black to the lighting fixture."

Continued on page 82



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TOP: The homeowner wanted outdoor living and dining spaces, which were achieved with the creation of the outdoor loggia and cabana. **LEFT:** The cabana conveniently includes a spot for showering and changing. **ABOVE:** Stepping out from the kitchen leads to a covered outdoor area with a stone fireplace, TV and seating area. **OPPOSITE:** Elements from the family's home in British Columbia were incorporated in the design.

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feature







The family room, situated across the hall from the kitchen, features a stone fireplace flanked by beautiful yet functional built-ins and soaring, double height ceilings. Located at the front of the home, the office is accented with warmer tones, the dark grey fireplace adorned with a quartz surround.

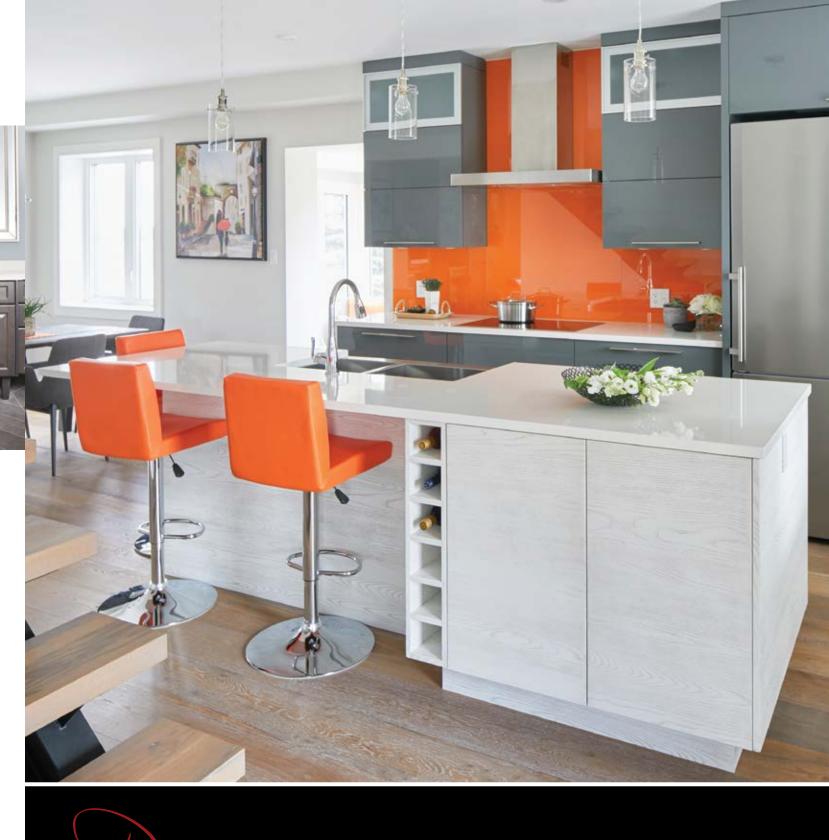
Located beside the garage, the mudroom features a chevron pattern porcelain tile selected for its durability. "We selected the tile as it offered textural interest and warmth to the space and is forgiving for heavy traffic dirt," says Davidson.

In the upper level, double doors open to a private balcony in the master bedroom. A fireplace warms the space on cooler evenings. "You don't need to have a huge bedroom area when you have a goodsize walk-in closet and bathroom in your master," says Davidson, who points to the bedroom's cove ceiling as another subtle, interesting detail.

Davidson often includes millwork to add interest and dimension to the spaces she designs. "It adds to your budget but it adds a nice touch and character to an otherwise plain space."

Family interests influenced the design, explains Davidson. "The family likes to watch movies and play games, so the basement has a theatre room and a games room," she says, noting the built-in bar in the theatre room. Continued on page 84

TOP LEFT: Deeper hues create a more masculine office setting. **TOP RIGHT:** Furniture-grade cabinetry creates a timeless aesthetic in this bathroom. LEFT: Soothing hues and mixed metals create a zen-like bathroom retreat.





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feature



LEFT: The master retreat is set for all seasons, from a toasty fire in cooler temperatures to coffee on the deck in warmer seasons. **BELOW:** A modern soaker tub adds dimension to the en suite. BOTTOM LEFT: Shaker-style espresso cabinets add contrast in the master en suite. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Mayfair Statuario tile on the walls and floors provides continuity in the en suite.



"I am so happy that we decided to move forward with a custom home," says Leslie. "The builder made the entire process a wonderful experience. As we had never taken on such a huge project before, having the design expertise of Kate Davidson was invaluable to us; we are thrilled to have had her creativity and experience by our side," says Leslie.

"My favourite room is definitely our kitchen followed very closely by our master bedroom and en suite," she says. "The large Caesarstone island in the kitchen is not only a beautiful feature but is also extremely functional and easy to maintain. And the master bedroom and en suite offer a peaceful and cosy escape at the end of each day." A home sweet homecoming indeed. **o**H





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STORY YANIC SIMARD



Looking to renovate a room or two? Want to refresh your space before a big event? No

matter the size or style of project you're planning, this guide will help you know how long you really need to achieve your home makeover – and trust me, it's nothing like what you've seen on television.

RESEARCH PHASE: 1-5 MONTHS

Knowing your goals and limits will help you set realistic goals and avoid major hiccups that can derail your timeline. 5

DESIGN PHASE: 2-12 MONTHS

A seemingly simple project can involve five times as many decisions as you might think, so give ample time to get the details right.

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CONSTRUCTION/ DELIVERY PHASE:

2-9 MONTHS

Even the best plans can be interrupted by sudden surprises. Plan for this phase to take longer than just the expected working time of the physical labour.

Start by gathering lots of ideas. Save images from magazines and blogs – the more you collect, the easier it will be to figure out what elements you are drawn to again and again, and which are fleeting trends. Give this 1-2 months at the very least to find ideas that stand the test of time.

Gather lots of ideas to help determine what you are drawn to most.

Television often portrays renovations as costing much less than they do, so it's important to determine what you want to spend and what your dream design will cost. Starting with a realistic and honest budget (with padding for emergencies) will help you and your designer avoid big surprises later that can end up halting your plans.

Make sure to check with local building codes, inspectors, condo or neighbourhood boards (and the like) to make sure your dreams are possible. This can take just 1 week to 3 months, depending on your site conditions, so it's smart to start early.



Renovating a kitchen or bathroom? Besides selecting the basics like paint colours, you'll need to choose the grout colour, tile pattern, orientation of cabinet handles, paint finish, placement of light fixtures, style of faucet, counter edge profile... the list goes on, and can seem overwhelming when rushed. Give at least 6 weeks to 2 months for one room, and at least 4 to 6 months for a large multiroom project. Choosing many elements that work together can take a lot of searching and re-evaluating, and it's much easier to change your mind before construction or delivery

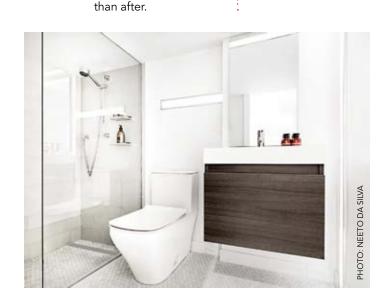
available instantly, especially around busy seasons like spring. If you want to work with the best materials and trades, add at least 1 to 2 months extra, with custom products or anything shipping from overseas taking 2 to 6 months. Don't get stuck picking from what's available last-minute for a design that will last for years!

Don't forget that

not all products or

tradespeople can be

Allow plenty of time to avoid rushed decisions.



Expect even minor construction to take at least 1 month to prepare, conduct and touch up, with 2 to 6 months for larger projects. Then add a time buffer of 1 to 3 months before any sort of event when you want the work completed, to account for surprises.

In this detached basement bathroom renovation, for example, we had very low ceilings (just under six feet) and only a single sconce above the vanity mirror, not providing nearly enough light for the entire space. We had planned to increase the ceiling height and add recessed lighting. During demolition we discovered venting all through the above area and no room for pot lights. We required a bit of time to come up with an alternative plan, which was this stunning, sleek custom LED feature running from floor to ceiling and overhead. It created ample illumination and is beautiful. The solution also allowed us to hang our new mirror very close to the ceiling, creating the illusion of even more height in the room, and allowing the LED strip to reflect. Fortunately, with buffer time in place, we had the plan reworked for the better, and the beautiful results were worth the extra wait!



If you've been doing the math, you'll see that even small projects can easily take almost half a year, which is far from the three days you see on television. However, you get what you put into your design, and taking the proper time leads to timeless results – all while avoiding a lot of stress and the potential for costly mistakes along the way. Working with a reputable firm can expedite this process and keep you on time and on budget. **OH**

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directory

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BLACKBERRY SHORTCAKE

with BOURBON CARAMEL

Go above and beyond with this modern upgrade to an old classic: the shortcake. Light sponge cake is layered with mascarpone whipped cream and topped with decadent blackberries with a hint of bourbon.



RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY JENELLE MCCULLOCH

Sponge Cake

For this super simple sponge cake you will need two 6-inch round baking pans.

INGREDIENTS

5 large eggs at room temperature 1 cup + 1 Tbsp cake flour, sifted ½ cup + 1 Tbsp granulated sugar pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 340°F. Butter and flour sides and bottoms of baking pans. Cut out two 6-inch rounds of parchment paper and line the bottom of each pan. Set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine eggs, sugar and salt. With the whisk attachment, beat on medium/ medium-high speed for 15-20 minutes until pale and fluffy. The mixture will be firm and will form soft peaks when ready. In batches, slowly sift in flour and carefully fold the mixture by hand to combine. Be careful not to overwork and deflate the batter.

When combined, divide the mixture evenly in the two prepared pans and bake for 25-30 minutes. Be careful not to open the oven as the cakes may deflate. The cakes are done when an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Turn off oven. Leave cakes to cool inside the oven for 5-10 minutes with the door propped open. Remove from oven and let cool for another 10 minutes before removing from pans and inverting them onto a rack to fully cool.

Blackberries in Bourbon

INGREDIENTS

2 cups fresh blackberries

- 1 Tbsp bourbon
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup

DIRECTIONS

Combine ingredients in a saucepan. Heat over medium until blackberries begin to render their juices. Chill until ready to use.



Bourbon Caramel

INGREDIENTS

1 cup sugar

½ cup water

½ cup heavy cream

1 Tbsp butter

1 Tbsp bourbon

Pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

In a saucepan over medium heat combine sugar and water. Do not stir, but let sugar dissolve and come to a simmer. Simmer until syrup is a golden, amber

colour. Swirl the mixture in the pan if necessary to ensure all of the sugar is dissolved and caramelized.

Remove from heat and whisk in heavy cream. Lower heat to medium-low and return pan to burner. Continue to stir the caramel for another 2-3 minutes.

Remove from heat, add butter and stir. Add the bourbon and salt, stirring again.

Transfer to a heat-safe container to cool. The caramel will thicken as it cools.

Mascarpone Whipped Cream

INGREDIENTS

½ cup mascarpone cheese

½ cup superfine sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 cup whipping cream

DIRECTIONS

Combine mascarpone cheese, sugar and vanilla in a small bowl.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, whip whipping cream until light and fluffy.

Slowly add cheese mixture to whipped cream while the mixer is still running. Mix until combined.

TO ASSEMBLE THE CAKE

Layer sponge cake with whipped mascarpone and top with blackberries. Drizzle with bourbon caramel to finish. Serve cake soon after assembly for best results and cut with a serrated knife – the cake is very delicate. on

Get more recipes at ourhomes.ca/mag/cook



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