

DWELLING ON THE *river*

BY ANDREA TOMKINS // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUZANNE BIRD

The owners of a contemporary home with a congenial mix of modern elements and flashes of old-world stylings in Manotick know exactly where they like to spend their summers: right at home. Theirs is the kind of place where summertime living is easy.

Anne and Vince are spending their fifth summer in this spacious custom-built home on the Rideau River, but it's interesting to note that they weren't even considering a custom home until they saw the lot.

"We've always liked Manotick, and we loved the fact there was a lot of nature," says Vince. "We wanted a house on the water and when we saw this property we knew it would be like having both a house and a cottage in one."

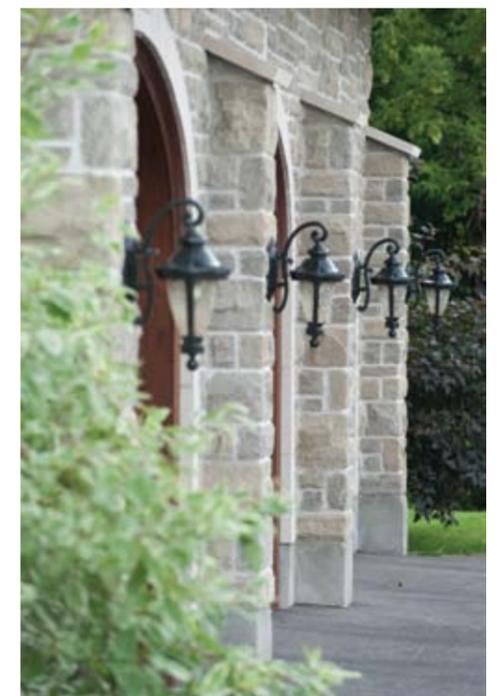
First they had to find an architectural designer. Anne and Vince quickly narrowed it down to two choices and looked at some recent homes they had designed. **André Godin (André Godin Design Inc.)** was the front-runner from the very beginning.

"He's such a patient individual, and such a creative one," says Vince. "We'd be sitting there with a wish list, throwing things at him over several meetings. He'd come down to the property and you could tell he was really interested to learn about what we wanted."

"We told him right off that we're very practical people. We didn't want a house with a lot of extra space that we're not going to use, and we wanted proper flow," says Anne. "The house had to feel cosy. I like a traditional home with walls. I didn't want open concept... and he did what we wanted."

It was André who introduced the couple to **Luciano Cuglietta**, of **LC Contracting**, their construction manager. "Luciano really made the experience a great experience," says Vince, who describes him as a perfectionist who is easy to talk to. "If it wasn't up to his standards, even if it was up to our standards, he'd say 'Sorry, we're going to fix it,'" says Vince. "He made it seamless for us." *Continued on page 25*

LEFT: Summer living is easy on the river. **BELOW:** The pool in the backyard shines in the sun. **TOP RIGHT:** This flower-packed porch is perfect for watching the world go by. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Elegant lamps light up the home.





“The fact that Luciano and André had good chemistry was a big benefit,” says Anne. “If there was a problem of any kind, Luciano would call André and they’d be here in no time to look at it.” With the team in place, the design came organically.

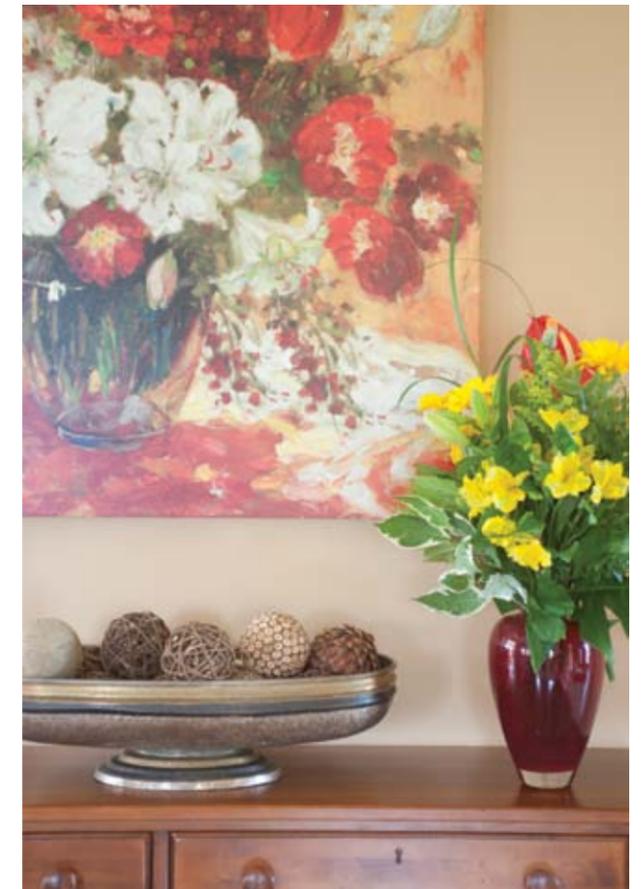
Space figured highly atop the couple’s priority list: a good-sized kitchen and dining room was a must, as well as extra closets and a properly proportioned entrance. Having a spacious tiled area (by **Euro Tile & Stone**) as guests crossed the threshold was an important element in the floor plan.

“In our old place we would be literally dancing around the front door and the closet, to let people in and let people out,” explains Vince. “We wanted to have a comfortable space, so when people come in they could take off their coats and boots and there would be lots of room.”

The couple felt it was important to use space efficiently. They radically decreased the originally planned size of the dining room because they felt it was too big. They removed another entire room from the main floor design.

“We had a living room in the original plans, but we took it off because we thought we probably weren’t going to use it,” says Vince. “If it’s going to collect dust, why have it?” *Continued on page 26*

LEFT: Anne says that the chandelier in the dining room was the hardest thing to find for the home (Living Lighting). **BELOW:** The large open kitchen has gorgeous hardwood flooring from Barwood Flooring and sleek appliances from Corbeil Appliances. **RIGHT:** Small touches of colour brighten the home.



feature

The kitchen is a great example of how well the space was designed. "It's a big room, but it doesn't feel like we're in a big room," says Anne.

The couple take almost all their meals at the kitchen island, sometimes with a glass of wine in hand. The space is intimate, thanks in part to a bit of inspiration during the framing stage. A last-minute change to extend one of the walls in the kitchen resulted in extra privacy. It also meant they wouldn't have to see the kitchen counter from the front door. And they got an extra cabinet for wine glasses out of it too.

André, who designed the kitchen closely with the couple, took care to help them achieve a warm and comfortable space that features pops of colour amid traditional lighting and classic two-tone cabinetry by **BCR Woodworking**. Granite counters by **Ideal Ottawa Granite Inc.** complete the picture and give the room a sophisticated edge.

Given the proximity to the river, the home is perfectly set up to enjoy the warmer weather. A porch behind the family room was originally going to be just a covered pad, but Anne's sister suggested they have it screened. "Now it's one of our favourite rooms in the summertime," says Vince. It's a peaceful bug-free zone, and a pleasant place to be, even under a blanket on chilly evenings.

It's easy to see why it's one of their favourite places. Three acres of lawn and an expansive view of the river create a very restful scene that gives the couple a chance to charge up their batteries. *Continued on page 28*



ABOVE: The family can sit and enjoy a dinner while taking in views of the peaceful garden. **LEFT:** Summer evenings are enjoyed with meals around the garden table. **OPPOSITE:** The screened porch is now the couple's favourite room in the home.



feature



In the summer they often enjoy breakfast on the balcony outside the master bedroom overlooking the backyard. Sophisticated sliding doors and windows by **Théo Mineault Inc.** open to the stars at night. And always, there's the river in the background.

"This is the best view of the river right here," says Vince. "On a nice summer night sometimes I'll just come out here for a breath of fresh air and to decompress," says Vince. "...and look at the moon," adds Anne.

Their other magical place to enjoy Ottawa's treasured summer days is the gazebo. They're still thinking about what this space is going to be, but it's ideally situated to become any number of things. Overlooking the pool, it may eventually be the location of a hot tub or an outdoor kitchen (natural gas is roughed in) or maybe a shady oasis in which to sit back and read a book. Whatever ends up happening, they're definitely going to enjoy a lovely view of their swimming pool, with the river running peacefully behind it. **OH**

TOP LEFT AND TOP RIGHT: The master bedroom boasts a magnificent balcony that provides the best view of the river. **LEFT:** A peaceful bathroom suite. **ABOVE:** The outside of the home shines with masonry from Merkley Supply Ltd.



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