

ANTIQUE IS THE NEW BLACK

STORY **MORGAN BARNES**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JESSICA DEEKS**

Nearly seven years ago, avid travellers, auction enthusiasts and aficionados of beautiful antiques, Les and Emma, met in the unlikelyst of places: IKEA.

One of the many stunning rooms in this home showing a mix of antiques and unique pieces such as the handcrafted fish picked up from Les and Emma's travels.

Emma, a lawyer, was about to travel to her property in Nassau, Bahamas, when she stopped at IKEA to buy a lamp that would be portable enough for her travels. Les, who works in sales at **Euro-Tech Window Industries**, noticed Emma and struck up a conversation right there in the lighting aisle.

Two years after that first meeting, the couple began searching for properties together. Traveling back from viewings in nearby Manotick, they noticed a For Sale sign on the highway directing them to a little hideaway neighbourhood in Ottawa's south end. Boasting nearly an acre of what was once farmland, the beautiful brick house by **Olympia Homes** was just what the couple was looking for – and only a hop, skip and a jump to the Rideau River.

Excited about their new sizable property, the couple quickly discovered a love for gardening and landscape design, even doing a lot of the heavy lifting on their own. Together, they designed and constructed a stunning water feature, English garden and a magnificent stone wall with large slate-grey rocks from a quarry near Eganville, owned by **RGT Clouthier Construction Ltd.** of Pembroke. A welcoming stone and wrought-iron gate at the entrance to their property evokes a majestic English countryside feeling.

In addition to the estate-sized lot, the couple immediately fell in love with the 7,000 sq. ft. home. They delight in the home's strategic placement that captures optimal sunlight, and its high-end finishes. A six-year-old home at the time, it was move-in-ready and perfect for entertaining. Although there is only the two of them and Chester, their little dog, they have never felt like the home is too big for their family.

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TOP: Les, Emma and Chester.
ABOVE: Les loves to collect antique clocks. **LEFT:** The beautiful iron gates that surround the couple's home.

feature

“We enjoy every room and use all of them,” Les says. “We have our tea tray and it’s like an adventure. Where in the house are we going to go and enjoy?”

Indeed, their carefully chosen collection of eclectic antique finds makes the home warm, cosy and filled with personality. Les and Emma were very conscious of their mutual love for striking furniture and décor with historical substance, whilst being careful not to overdo it. They do not like clutter. Their complementary approach to interior design allows their treasures to stand out and showcase their beautiful home at the same time.

The home’s grand foyer is finished with dark Brazilian cherry flooring and a larger-than-life exquisite crystal chandelier from **The**



Electrical and Plumbing Store. Thanks again to the home’s strategic positioning, the setting sun sets off a cascade of colour in the room and down the adjacent hallway. Beneath the chandelier is a marble table with an 18th century Chinese ivory vase discovered at **Walker’s Fine Art & Estate Auctions.**

Adding to the elegance is a mahogany square grand piano from 1867, reconditioned by **Ken Parisien** and purchased at a steal from another local auction house, **MacLean & Associates Inc.** Nearby, a nine-foot 1780 British grandfather clock chimes as a painted sailing ship gently rocks on a pale-blue sea on the clock’s delicate face.

“If you love antiques or are interested in finding beautiful things, auctions and antique stores are surprisingly affordable,” says Emma. “Sometimes you will get a high-quality item for less than what you would pay at a contemporary store. Plus, you get all the beauty and history that comes with it.”

The adjoining palatial living room with its 18-foot ceilings and five white columns doubles as a sunroom thanks to a wall of high arched windows and doors that lead to a deck overlooking the property. The room’s

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TOP LEFT: The table sits in the open kitchen surrounded by natural light and views of the gardens. **ABOVE:** A 1780 British grandfather clock sits in the entranceway to the home. **LEFT:** A cherry wood kitchen complements the home.



majestic eight-and-a-half foot French mirror is a glamorous marvel from yesteryear. More than 225 years old, it was purchased from **Conversation Pieces**, an Ottawa-based store that specializes in estate clear-outs. French candelabras and a gilded marble desk clock from the 19th century sit elegantly beneath the mirror. Creamy soft leather sofas and unique travel finds like a South African slate coffee table, ebony giraffes from Kenya and a large hand-carved fish by Harry Clarke from the famous Nassau Straw Market in the Bahamas, add character, depth and personality that make the home worldly, yet distinctly Les and Emma's.

The kitchen, with its dark chocolate granite countertops, cherry cabinetry, sleek stainless-steel appliances and smoky copper tiles from Lowes, has just the right amount of modern panache. An antique French clock and other carefully chosen pieces tie it all together in the sunny eat-in kitchen with 20-foot cathedral ceilings. The room offers marvelous views of the grounds, including the gazebo from **Gazebo Creations**, custom designed

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TOP: The sitting nook in the master bedroom is a great place to enjoy a coffee and look out over the gardens. The couple's dog, Chester, enjoys a nap in his own bed in the room. **RIGHT:** The bath is complete with a jet tub.



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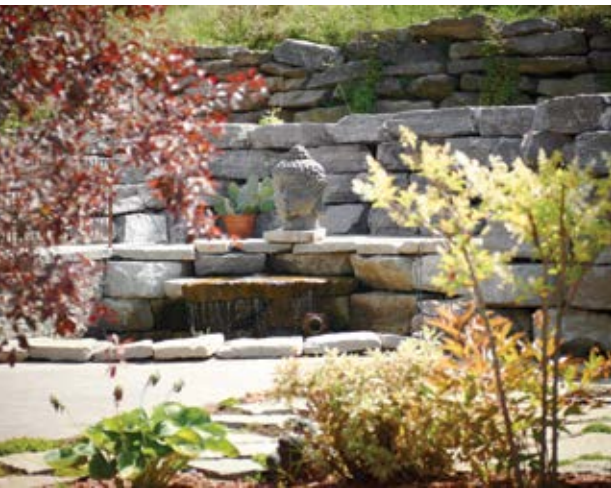
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with the home’s architecture in mind.

The formal dining room’s 12-foot dark oak table is perfect for entertaining large dinner parties with its accompanying high-backed ornate chairs; all exquisite 18th century Canadiana masterpieces found at **Kondruss Galleries**. They remind Emma of her great grandmother’s Danish furniture.

Emma credits her mother for her love of antique furniture and good sense of balance when it comes to colour and design. Inheriting and cherishing special family heirlooms and furniture from her ancestors, like her mother did, inspired Emma to continue the tradition. Emma also praises Les for his sense of design.

“The older I get the more I appreciate the workmanship that went into building something beautiful, that also lasts,” says Les. “We see antiques as having untold stories yet to be discovered and we’re having a lot of fun making those discoveries together.”

Emma describes their home as a perfect combination of light, space, flow and elegance. We couldn’t agree more. **OH**

ABOVE: The beautifully landscaped gardens are complete with an orchestra pit above the flowing waterfall. **TOP RIGHT:** The gazebo is a place to relax in the shade close to the home. **RIGHT:** The English garden coming into bloom surrounded by luscious green lawn.



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