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editor's note



THERE'S NOTHING LIKE weathering a long fierce winter to make us truly appreciate the gentle joys of spring – tender crocuses bursting through melting snow, robins rapturously tweeting their return, swapping practical winter woollies for fashionable spring attire. Gardening! Here at OUR HOMES, we get spring fever early. Even before there was evidence of it, we were scouring the countryside, schlepping through snowdrifts to find fresh new products that will turn your fancy to thoughts of love – for your home. One of my favourite finds is a colourful assortment of Fiesta dishware. Maybe it was looking at all that snow for so long, but suddenly my classic white dishes don't cut it anymore. I want to bring a rainbow to my table every day, and you will too, once you see them on page 32.

Perhaps the many colours of spring will inspire you to freshen your living space. May we suggest Pantone's Colour of the Year, Radiant Orchid, said to emanate great joy, love and health? Let this uplifting colour breathe new life into your home with an ultra-modern shower head, or a new area rug, both featured in our Finishing Touch, page 58.

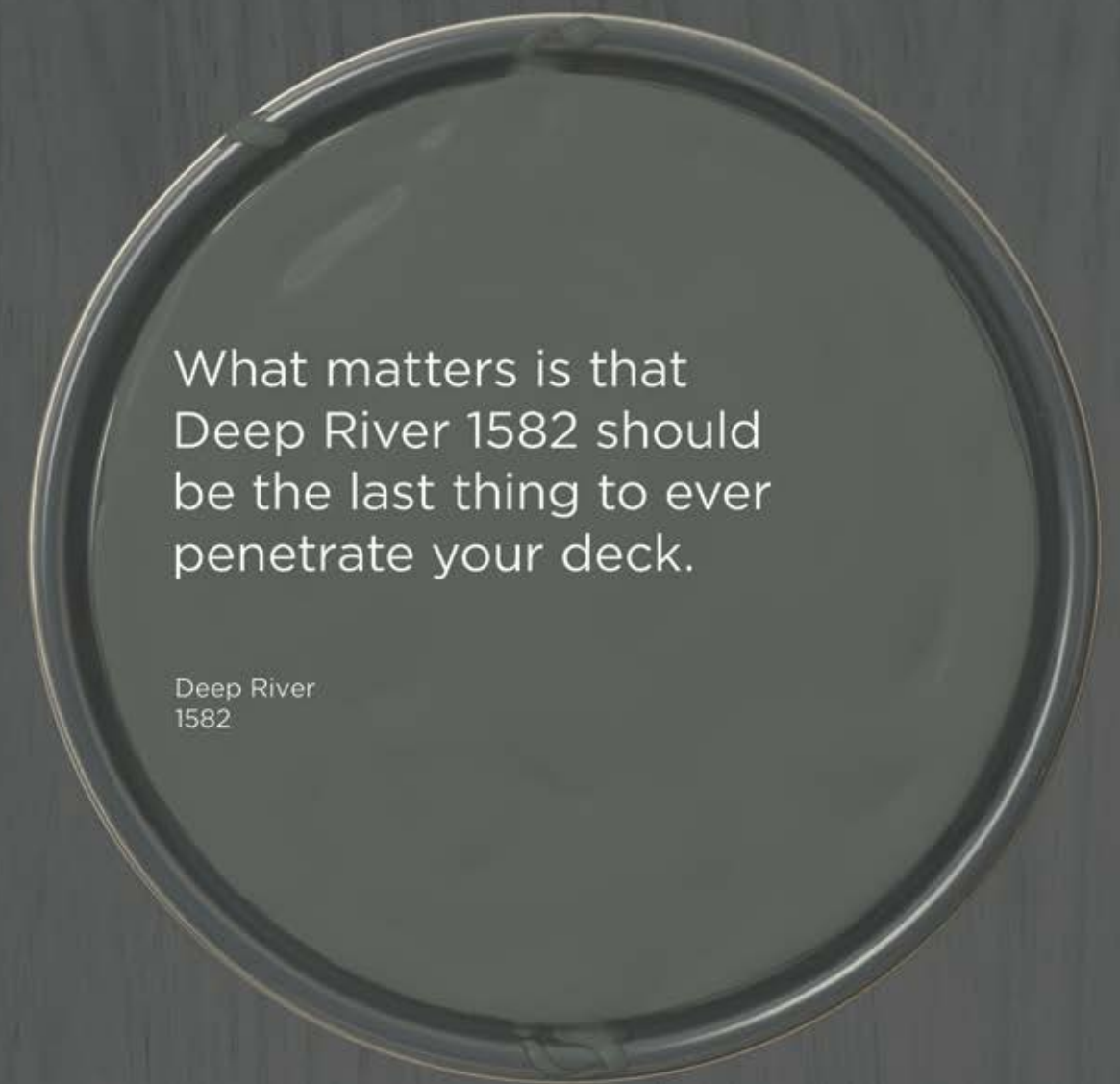
Already thinking of summer? This issue we explore pool design in our Gardening column, while Cooking At Home reveals secrets for sublime Strawberry Pie.

This is the perfect time to connect with nature, observe its harmony, balance and perfection, and to remember that, as part of nature, you are just as fabulous. So release your cares to the expansive blue sky, kick off your shoes and let the grass tickle your toes, and celebrate that spring is finally here! See you this summer!

Alexandria Barker

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Jay Robinson.



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advice

HARDWARE

It is so easy to take life's essential items for granted. When a job is done well, we don't ask questions. In design however, it is crucial to constantly assess how something could function better and look better.

Take hardware for example. We don't question a functioning cabinet or room door. The hardware simply becomes obsolete. Clearly this is a good thing in one sense because it's doing its job. It's functioning. Its look or form however, may be another story.

Hardware is like jewelry, or the finishing touch. Whether you want to be Armani or Kelly Wearstler, the look changes entirely based on the approach. Here are a few options – from minimalist to decorative – that will finish your doors in style and also function beautifully.

FULLY INTEGRATED

This approach requires no hardware leaving your cabinetry clean + simple. A cabinetmaker uses the door itself to create the hardware. Here are two approaches:

One method is to carve a finger pull into the backside of the door (1) leaving the front of the door undisturbed. Bulthaup, a high-end cabinetmaker out of Germany, has mastered this minimalist aesthetic. If done properly, this look will highlight the lines of the cabinetry without drawing attention to any unnecessary extras.

Alternatively, (2) cut out part of the door face, enough to put your fingers through to pull the door open. This provides a design detail, remains functional; yet maintains an uncomplicated aesthetic. This approach creates a low-key look with a bit more detail.

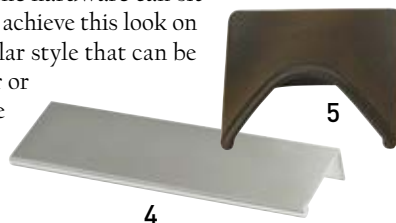


PARTIALLY INTEGRATED

Partially integrated means that in order to accommodate the hardware, the door must be notched out. This hardware needs to be applied by a professional. Take this piece (3) by architect Tom Kundig as an example. It is beautifully crafted and adds a hint of interest. On a simple wooden pocket door, this pull adds the perfect amount of detail.

On cabinetry, try a finger pull with a sleek, stainless steel finish (4). The door or drawer

is routed out at the back so the hardware can sit flush with the cabinet frame. To achieve this look on a budget, you can source a similar style that can be mounted to the side of the door or drawer without the need to carve into the cabinetry. However, ensure you have enough clearance so the hardware doesn't rub against the next door over or the underside of the countertop.



Designer
Stephanie Redmond
shares her ideas.

APPLIED

The options are endless (5) but there are two approaches: functional versus decorative. You can keep it simple or make a statement. Leather, glass, lucite, wood, brass... you name it, it's out there. The key is to choose something that is the correct scale, functions well, and that you won't tire of. Good quality hardware can add up, so purchase a sample and bring it home to look at.



THE BORING BITS

It's worth mentioning that some of the most important pieces are often working behind the scenes. Take your interior house doors. If you are trying to achieve a more minimal look, then a typical swing door may not be your style.

For a more contemporary approach, look at using a pivot hinge (6). These anchor to the floor and ceiling leaving the sides free of any unsightly hinges. With this

look, your door can also be ceiling height, giving your room a sense of scale.

Another option is a barn slider (7). These hang on a rail system and slide on wheels or a rail at the base to prevent any side-to-side swing. The hardware is available in a multitude of styles, visible or hidden. Have a look at the Warehouse style from Rustica Hardware for an industrial look. You won't get a tight fit so best to use this style on a mudroom or a hallway separation.

Hardware is often the last thing we think of – the after-thought that we run out and purchase at the last minute when doors or cabinetry are complete. Next time you're planning a project, look at the hardware first. It will open your mind to a whole other world of design options! **OH**



1. CABINETRY: Bulthaup 2. HANDLE DETAIL: Kingerlee 3. PEEK SLIDING DOOR PULL: Olson Kundig Architects 4. DRAWER PULL: Berenson Bravo 5. DRAWER PULL: Richelieu Hardware 6. PIVOT DOOR: Pivot Door Company. 7. BARN SLIDER: Rustica Hardware

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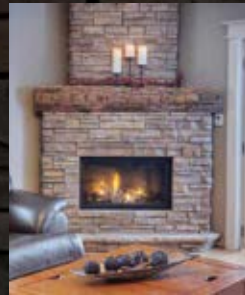
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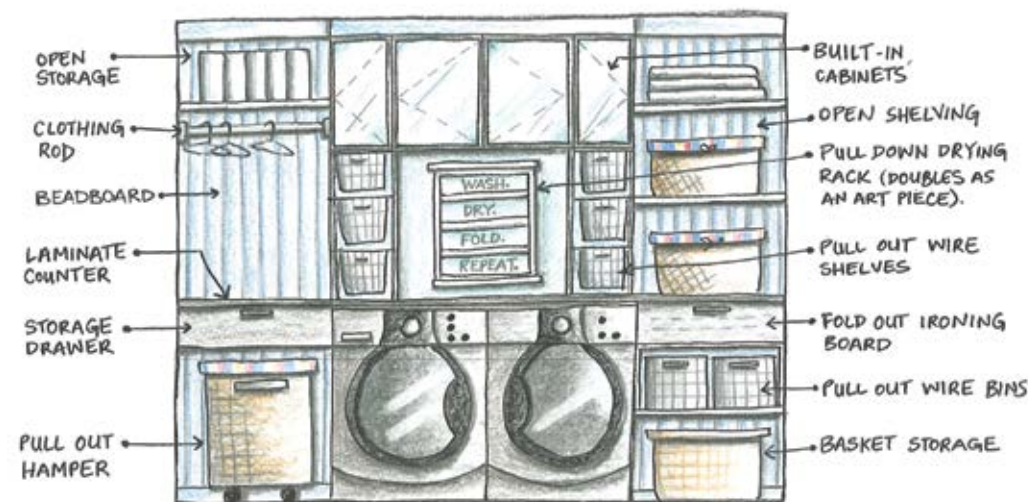
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how to MAXIMIZE SPACE IN A SMALL LAUNDRY ROOM

STORY & ILLUSTRATION BY CINDY BROWN



Our homes are a reflection of ourselves, and many of us work hard to keep them beautiful. Through colour, materials and proper planning, we strive to create a stylish and pleasing environment in which to live. Much of our attention is focused on our living spaces and it's time we start thinking about the more utilitarian spaces like the laundry room. Given the amount of time they are used, they seldom receive the attention they deserve and they often become separated from the life of a home. If your laundry room is small, you may find that it does not function the way you would like. It may feel cramped and unorganized, attracting an embarrassing mess. But with a little time and creativity, you can design a stylish and functional laundry room that will help make laundry day your favourite day of the week!

If you find that your laundry room lacks the square footage you dream of, take a look at the space you have and see it for all of its possibilities. By choosing a front loading washer and dryer, you will be able to utilize an extra surface that every laundry room dreams of. The smooth flat tops they provide are useful for laundry basket storage or as a place to fold and organize. Step it up a notch and install a durable water-resistant countertop over the machines. An inexpensive laminate will provide a smooth and easy-to-clean surface for your laundry needs. If your space is limited, a stacked washer and dryer set will leave room for other necessities. A customized slide-out shelf installed between the machines will provide that extra surface you otherwise would not have.

Chances are the washer and dryer will take up most of your floor space, so, when thinking about storage and organization, think vertical. By maximizing vertical space, you can amplify a small laundry room's storage capacity. As demonstrated in the drawing above, shelves and cubbies stylishly contain laundry supplies while built-in cabinets keep

seldom-used items and less-than-attractive necessities (such as cleaning supplies) out of sight. To brighten up the room, install under-cabinet strip lighting. If built-ins are not in your budget, you can create ample storage space by investing in adjustable wire shelving (ensure that your most utilized items are made available on the lower shelves). Incorporate pull out wire baskets for clever storage of odds and ends, including those pesky socks whose matches have yet to be found! And don't ignore the back of a door. It makes a perfect spot to hang baskets and holders.

A great feature to have in any laundry room is a place to air-dry delicates or to hang shirts fresh from the dryer. Use a tension bar installed between built-ins (or walls), or even a bath towel bar mounted on the underside of a shelf. Remember to position the rod far enough from the wall to leave adequate space for the hangers. If space is limited, pull-down and accordion-style drying racks are made to pull out from the wall and then be pushed neatly away.

Laundry rooms tend to be the place to keep a bulky ironing board. The problem is where to put it. Hanging it on the wall is a simple solution. Another is to purchase a built-in board that drops down from the wall. It saves space and makes ironing easier. Just flip out the board and plug in the iron. Better yet, there are fold-out ironing boards that can be built into cabinetry and pulled out with an expanding frame, concealing them completely.

Finally, incorporate decorative elements to liven up the space. If the room makes you happy, laundry will become less of a chore. Add a splash of colour with paint, or with patterns and colourful fabrics on your storage containers. Add style with bead board or with a fun backsplash in a shiny or iridescent tile. Why not hang up a piece of art? Prints, photos or wall decals will add whimsy and character. Now, with your laundry room feeling so refreshed and organized, you will wish that laundry day was every day! **OH**



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Sunlight floods through the windows opposite the front door of John and Tina Saundercook's open-concept abode by **Mason Homes**, welcoming and inviting you to enjoy the view of Lake Ontario, just a short walk away.

Newly retired, John and Tina moved to Port Hope this fall to be closer to their children and grandchildren. They were drawn to Port Hope "because it's a nice quiet town, close but not too close to Cobourg's big box stores, and not far from Toronto where I grew up," says John. "We like the small town atmosphere. The people are very friendly, and it's nice to walk the waterfront. I walk it every day."

Their 1,800 sq. ft. bungalow with 65 ft. frontage "is big enough for two people and occasional guests, but easy for a retired couple to maintain," he says. They plan to make this their final home, and have incorporated specific features to increase the comfort of their golden years. Kitchen and bathroom counters and toilets raised several inches higher than standard reduce the need for bending, and sinks are inset for easy cleaning.

The nine foot ceilings throughout the main living areas and cathedral ceilings in the grand room give the house an open, airy feeling complemented by Oyster walls beautifully drywalled by **Doug McKenzie** from **Doug McKenzie Drywall Inc.** Natural tile with beach buff grout floors in the foyer accentuate the beautiful espresso hardwood flooring throughout the rest of the home, by Irving Carpet One in Barrie.

John's man cave is just left of the front entrance, where he can relax in style, reading or watching his virtually wire-free Smart TV and Sonos Sound System from **Showtime TV & Stereo** in Cobourg.

Continued on page 26

LET THE SUN *shine in*

BY ALEXANDRIA BARKER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY ROBINSON

ABOVE: A view of the lake and sunlight flooding through windows at the peak of the cathedral ceiling make this kitchen Tina's favourite room, whether she's preparing food or researching recipes on the nearby computer station.
RIGHT: Just steps from the kitchen, this cosy living room features a gas fireplace to keep things comfy.





A guest bedroom on the right accesses the main bathroom through a second door, effectively converting it into a private en suite bathroom when company comes to visit. The main bathroom features bone mosaic-tile flooring in the shower, and a comfort height, slow-close toilet.

The brick and siding were sourced locally, and the garage doors are from **The Overhead Door Company of Peterborough**.

It's easy to see why the kitchen is Tina's favourite part of the house. It has plenty of sun, a view of the lake, a walkout to an expansive deck, and it's fully decked out with a sleek stainless steel gas stove, refrigerator with lower level freezer, overhead microwave and dishwasher. Shaker Maple Fume kitchen cabinets that match the floors are accented by Colonial Gold flecked counters.

The kitchen appliances and washer and dryer are from Sears, and the water softener from **Culligan Water Conditioning** of Peterborough.

"I love my gas stove," says Tina, perched on a stool from Port Hope's **The New Oak Tree**. A computer desk nestled in the corner affords easy access to recipes, while staying plugged in to whatever is going on in the kitchen and living room.

The best part is, it's just steps away from a generous deck with plexiglass railings, permitting a full view of the lake. Here, John points out the trains in the distance he enjoys watching, which remind him of his father and grandfather, who worked for the railway.

Tina and John both make good use of the living room, where even on

the coldest days, the gas fireplace creates a warm, cosy atmosphere. They love to travel, and have adorned their walls with an impressive array of paintings and photographs commemorating past trips to Paris, Italy and Istanbul. And now, to honour their new community, they've included Doors of Port Hope prints from **Ganaraska Art & Framing** in Port Hope.

In their stunning main bedroom, Tina opened California shutters from **Vosburgh Home Décor** in Port Hope to let the sun stream in, pausing to enjoy the view of the lake, which spans the entire southern side of the house. One of her favourite features, she says, is a spacious walk-in closet by **Chris McKeown of Top Shelf Closet & Design** in Port Hope. The other is a luxurious, extra-deep soaker tub. *Continued on page 28*

TOP LEFT: A separate formal dining room is situated adjacent to the kitchen for entertainment ease. **TOP RIGHT:** This man cave is John's preferred spot to enjoy his Smart TV or quietly read. **ABOVE:** Tina and John Saundercook look forward to creating many happy memories in their new home.



This luxurious soaker tub is Tina Saundercook's favourite aspect of the master bedroom. **TOP LEFT:** The main bathroom's raised toilet and counters were incorporated to enhance comfort as the couple age. **BOTTOM LEFT:** This master bedroom features a beautiful view of the lake, which spans the south side of the home.

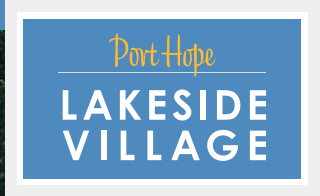
"I love my bathtub, I'm in it every day," she says smiling. The en suite bathroom floor is tiled in Banff Light Grey, which matches the bathtub, and the cabinets are crisp white. The shower boasts a frameless glass front provided by **Lindsay Glass and Window Ltd.** and a shower seat finished in marble. Light fixtures and electrical work throughout the home are by **Mariposa Electric** in Lindsay, and plumbing is by **Roger's Plumbing Service** in Lindsay.

Tina enjoys the convenience of her main-floor laundry room near the bedroom, where cupboards from Cobourg **Canadian Tire** make organization a breeze.

Embracing their new home and eager to give back, the couple have already become active volunteers in their new community. Tina looks forward to volunteering at the Port Hope Capitol Theatre, and John is a board member of Horses Help Canada, a non-profit organization working with youths at Maple Crescent Farm. Now that spring has arrived, they look forward to exploring all their beautiful new hometown has to offer. **OH**

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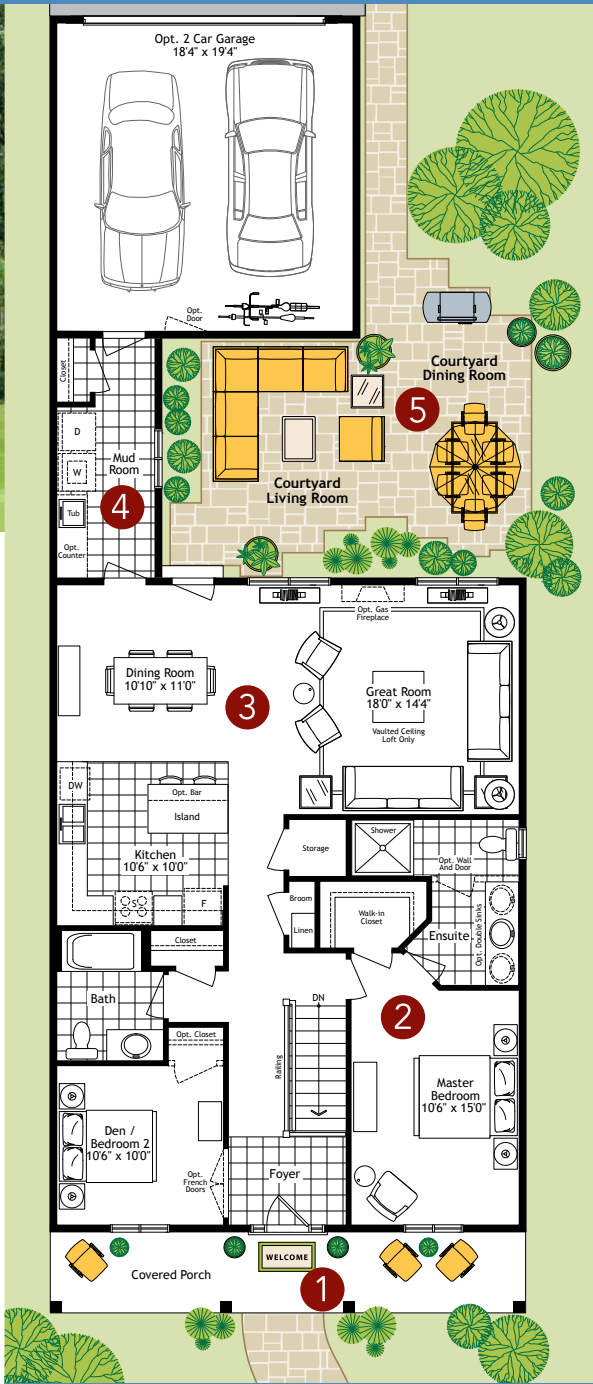
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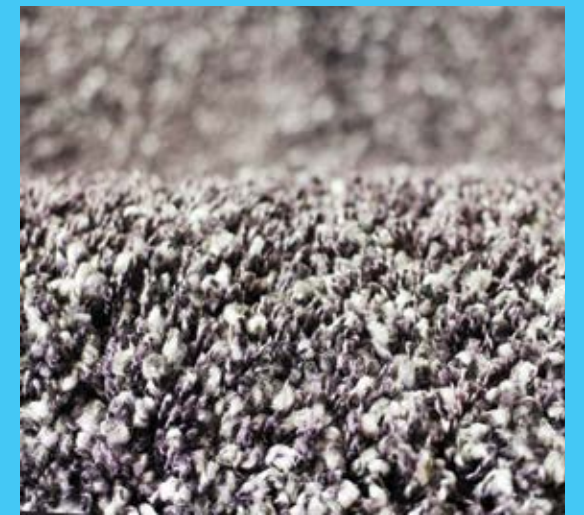
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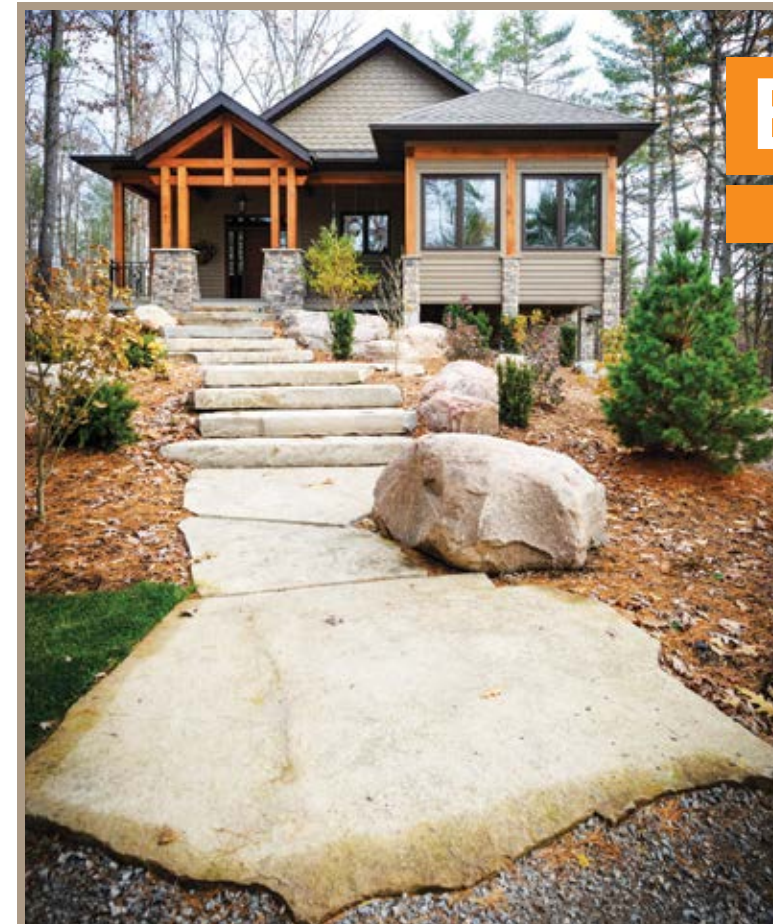
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BY ALEXANDRIA BARKER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY ROBINSON & DONNA GORDON

C'MON *in*

It's well known among Crystal Lake residents that when Barry and Marian Abelson fly the martini flag on their Tiki Hut, it's an open invitation to tie your boat to the dock and come for cocktails. To paraphrase Stevie Ray Vaughan's hit song, "When the tiki hut's a rockin, don't bother knockin, c'mon in."

"We've had so much fun entertaining on it," Barry Abelson says of the large floating dock made by **R & J Machine** in Lakefield, complete with a refrigerator from **Bert's Appliance** of Fenelon Falls. "We are on the best lake in the Kawarthas."

Crystal Lake is a fisherman's dream; spring-fed, with no other lakes flowing into it, it has low levels of phosphorus, no zebra mussels or algae, and lots of small and large mouth bass, lake trout, pickerel, whitefish and perch. Because it's so deep there are no noisy ducks or geese, just the hauntingly beautiful call of the loons. Deep, clean and quiet, the lake is equally ideal for swimming and boating – an exquisite setting for an exquisite home, situated perfectly to take advantage of the fabulous views and sunsets.

Built by **Stuart Charity Construction Ltd.** of Bobcaygeon, this two-storey 4,300 sq. ft. open-concept four-season home is truly unique. As Barry says, "We had an unlimited budget and exceeded it!"



It was built to last for generations with minimal maintenance inside and out. Its name, "Dunrunin," reflects the owners' playful nature. Towering mature trees provide plenty of privacy on this property, excavated by **Larry Kimble Construction** of Bobcaygeon.

Double doors open into the foyer where dazzling panoramic lake views capture attention through the great room's three-storey, self-cleaning windows and eight-foot patio doors. This is Barry's favourite area, which overlooks the dining room, kitchen and sunroom and features wood ceiling beams, dark maple hardwood floors and distinctive eight-inch baseboards. Aside from the breathtaking view, its most striking feature is the wood burning, floor-to-ceiling cultured stone fireplace created with stone from Kinmount's **Timber Mart** and installed by **Earl Given Masonry** in Bobcaygeon, who also completed the exterior stonework. *Continued on page 38*

LEFT: This towering 28 ft. cultured stone wood burning fireplace has a raised hearth and stone sill, bringing the flames to eye level. **BELOW:** Designed with the view in mind, this home offers spectacular panoramic lakefront views through the three-storey great room windows. **OPPOSITE:** When this Tiki Hut's martini flag is waving it's an invitation to come play. Situated on a floating dock, it has a bar with a thatched roof. **BOTTOM:** This cedar deck runs the full length of the lakeside of the home. Its railing-free design provides an unobstructed view of the lake, and comfy chairs entice you to sit at the lakeside patio, drink in the beauty, and listen to the loons.



BELOW: A gourmet cook's dream, the kitchen's stainless steel appliances complement the gleaming Italian black granite countertops. The four-inch thick butcher block is on a dark maple stand, which matches the cupboards. **RIGHT:** Facing the lake, the formal open-concept dining room is partially separated for privacy, and has easy access to the kitchen. **BOTTOM LEFT:** This three-season sunroom, with a view of nature from every side, can be accessed through the dining room or the lakeside patio. The telescopic sliding door opens eight feet, effectively making it part of the house.



The formal dining room faces the lake and affords amazing views through 16-foot patio doors. Designed for entertaining ease, the room features a colourful hand-blown Italian Murano glass chandelier. The dining room overlooks a three-season sunroom, which offers a stunning vista of the lake. The sunroom is equipped with track lighting, speakers and a 12-foot telescopic door that makes it an extension of the house.

Marian says her favourite rooms include “the dream kitchen and butler’s pantry, which any woman would kill for.”

The custom kitchen features a curved maple wet bar with five Murano glass lights that match the dining room’s chandelier. The cabinets, crown mouldings and computer desk are dark maple hardwood by **Chervin Kitchen & Bath Inc.** of Parry Sound and Waterloo, with Italian black granite countertops. A four-inch thick butcher block stands in the centre on a multi-coloured slate floor, which matches the foyer.

This gourmet kitchen is fully decked out with a stainless steel gas stove, stacked microwave oven and electric wall oven, double oversize refrigerator and freezer, dishwasher, compactor, two wine coolers and an icemaker. And if that weren't enough, there's a pantry/laundry room just around the corner with a beverage refrigerator, tons of storage, sink and a stacked washer and dryer. The pantry is adjacent to an oversize two-car garage with 10-foot-wide doors by **Deer Bay Overhead Doors Ltd.** in Selwyn. *Continued on page 40*



This stunning maple entertainment bar with black granite countertops completes the dream kitchen. It has views of the lake on one side, and features two wine fridges, an ice-maker, and hand-blown Murano glass fixtures from Italy. **ABOVE:** This three-storey floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace is as functional as it is beautiful. Wood-burning, its fans circulate warm air throughout the home.





A plaque over the entrance to the main-floor master bedroom proclaims, "And they lived happily ever after." The master wing has cathedral ceilings and wonderful views of the lake and trees through 16-foot patio doors, which access a private deck area. "You can see the stars from the bed through the high windows above the doors," says Barry. And if you ever tire of that, a 53-inch flat screen TV is suspended on the wall over a gas fireplace.

The six-piece en suite bathroom has heated multi-coloured slate floors and nine-foot ceilings, a large soaking tub with white bead-board and tile surround, a walk-in shower, urinal, and custom designed vanity with marble countertops and his-and-her sinks. The spacious walk-in closet also has nine-foot ceilings.

The main floor guest bathroom is stunning in white and black. **Highland Glass** of Haliburton completed all mirror and shower glass.

Continuing up the maple staircase you'll find a smart-wired entertainment loft with a cathedral ceiling and wood beams. There are two bedrooms upstairs and a five-piece bath.

Sharp Electric in Haliburton completed all the electrical work and the smoke alarms and alarm system are from **McKee Security & Telephone Systems**, also of Haliburton. The stamped cement patio was done by **Fenelon Stampcrete**. *Continued on page 42*



TOP LEFT: Just off the entertainment loft on the upper level, this bedroom has lakeside views through custom designed windows. It's conveniently located close to the five piece bathroom, which converts into a private en suite. **TOP RIGHT:** A dramatic study of black and white, the main floor guest bathroom offsets black ceramic floor tiles and black wallpaper with an elegant white vanity and marble countertops. **ABOVE:** The master bedroom en suite features a large soaking tub, a roomy walk-in shower and a urinal to conserve water. The attached walk-in closet has nine foot ceilings and plenty of storage. **LEFT:** The master bedroom is set apart in a private wing. Windows above the doors are tailor-made for stargazing from the comfort of the king-size bed. It features a sitting area to view the lake, and private access to the deck.



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ABOVE: When weather permits, the lakeside patio is the ideal spot to bask in the breathtaking natural beauty surrounding this home. **RIGHT:** During inclement weather this sunroom is the next best thing to being outside. Expansive 'no-see-um' screen windows keep bugs out. **BELOW:** Situated on beautiful Crystal Lake, this oversize dock and Tiki Hut, outfitted with speakers, lights and a refrigerator, is perfect for entertaining.



The Abelsons adore the dream getaway they've created, and memories of entertaining family and friends, romantic picnic lunches on the boat, al fresco dinners on the patio, and spectacular sunsets are held dear. However, they're eager to travel the world and create new ones. Their home is currently listed for sale and includes all furnishings, most from **Cornerstone Home Furniture** in Fenelon Falls and Hauser, and a 21 foot Campion Bowrider boat.

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Monday to Saturday and we are located across from Victoria Park on King Street East in Cobourg.

For additional product and service offerings, please contact us or visit us online at www.friendlyfires.ca (Please see ad on page 57)

THE GREENHOUSE ON THE RIVER

We are a grower-garden centre, specializing in plants that work. We are committed to bringing you excellent plant quality, refreshing choice and innovative design at affordable prices.

If a product could define a business as a signature item then we would have to claim it to be our beautifully designed containers and baskets. We offer a wonderful array of ready-made planters, pots and baskets to fit every taste and budget no matter what the season. We are pleased to provide the ultimate in shopping experience with our signature container and basket service. Our top quality, home grown plants coupled with the experience and knowledge of our creative designer staff will help you to create one-of-a-kind containers or baskets to beautify your outdoor living space.

Special effort is made to provide a great assortment of succulents, tropical foliage and flower, and new and dependable perennials.

Visit us at The Greenhouse on the River in the spring to be inspired by the plants and colour combinations that we love to grow.

LET OUR PLANTS BE YOUR GUIDE...

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(Please see ad on page 46)



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Milt Peel & Sons Sand and Gravel is a family owned and operated company celebrating over 50 years of service in the City of Kawartha Lakes region. We take pride in providing our customers quality aggregate products and excellent construction services.



In 1959, Milt Peel opened the company with one truck, a backhoe, and a gravel pit located at his family farm on Highway 35, south of

Rosedale. As the demand for his quality products and services grew, the company added another gravel pit and additional excavation equipment and trucks. Now in 2014, Milt Peel & Sons is owned and operated by Milt's eldest son Ron, and his grandson Doug.

With highly skilled operators and a wide range of equipment, Milt Peel & Sons is equipped to handle a variety of projects. We supply and deliver sand, gravel, screened topsoil, river rock and more. We have experience in road construction and maintenance, landscape and shoreline construction, septic system design and installation, basement excavation, demolition and other services. We are open year round for your convenience.

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MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE WITH STEVENSON BUILDING PRODUCTS

Windows and siding and doors, oh my! Building or renovating a home can be a daunting and overwhelming experience. There are so many choices and options; you're probably wondering how you can possibly make all the right decisions. You might be pulling your hair out just reading this! But don't fret: Stevenson Building Products is here for YOU! Since 1979, Stevenson Building Products has been run by a dedicated team of professionals, who bring unparalleled knowledge of the products and trade, backed by 34 years of hands-on experience. We carry North Star windows, DEL windows, Gladstone entrances, and Mitten vinyl siding and aluminum products. We also carry Haas garage



doors, Anex steel roofing and siding, green and energy efficient Guildcrest homes, and so much more! With specialized one-on-one consultations, we can ensure that every

single customer's needs are fulfilled all while offering them the best pricing around. The recipient of the 2013 Northumberland Readers Choice Award for Doors and Windows, Stevenson Building Products is your #1 choice! Stevenson Building Products welcomes all homeowners, do-it-yourselfers, and contractors to come visit our showroom or website www.stevensonbuildingproducts.ca and remember: You never pay the tax! (Please see ad on page 49)

A MISCELLANY OF THE NEW, NEAT, UNIQUE, AND FABULOUS IN PETERBOROUGH & SURROUNDING AREA

THOSE WHO LIVE IN PORT 32 REALLY LOVE IT!

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It's like living in a 5-star woodland clubhouse resort, with a harbour and elegant homes. All-brick bungalows are built on solid rock and it's Ontario's first R-2000 community. This all began some eighteen years ago. It took a rock of a man to bring this community to life.



The task was huge. It was an engineering feat of pure stubborn will. Now it's green with mature trees and natural limestone terraces. A true garden of Eden for gardeners.

The spirit of Port 32 is about the things that matter. On a summer night you'll walk the shore and breathe sweet air. Something will splash out in the dark. A bright butter moon will light the bay, and a buttery light ride ripples to the shore. Raise your gaze to the Milky Way, and maybe see a shooting star. Then in moonlight, make your way home.

Search forever, but you'll find there's only one Port 32.
1.888.528.5555 • port32.com (Please see ad on page 2)

SIGNS YOUR TREE NEEDS A CERTIFIED ARBORIST!

Can you identify a tree's 'Call for help?' Knowing the signs could be the difference between an Arborist inspecting, diagnosing and treating a tree to keep it standing versus removing it. In short, trees do not die overnight and identifying and treating tree issues before it's too late is the best option.

Without a doubt, proactive tree work is far better, and usually more economical, than reactive tree work. It's no surprise that many people are still unsure when to call a Certified Arborist and often wait until it is too late.

Consider calling an arborist when:

- you see dead branches/cracks/seams/holes
- your trees are making sounds i.e. creaking, popping
- your tree loses its leaves during the growing season or is late to leaf out
- the leaves are small and/or discoloured
- you see mushrooms on or around the tree
- you find insects in or on the tree/or find saw dust around the base of the tree and finally, if you are not sure - call anyway!

We are here to help you and your trees!

For more information contact Logan Tree Experts to speak to an ISA Certified Arborist and Tree Risk Assessor. Call 705.652.691 or email contact@logantreeexperts.com. Visit our website at www.logantreeexperts.com (Please see ad on page 31)



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real estate

SIZE MATTERS

BY SHELBY HILSON

Not too big, not too small... just right! Simple enough, but when it comes to what size of home to buy, how do you know what's just right for you? It's easy to be influenced by the "norm," but the norm may not be your Goldilocks home. There are several factors to consider, not the least of which is history.

Last year, the *Globe and Mail* reported that the average size of a house in Canada in 1975 was 1,050 sq. ft., and that new homes being built in 2010 almost doubled to an average of 1,950 sq. ft. It was also noted that the average number of people living in a household dropped a whole person from 3.5 in 1971 to 2.5 by 2006. So, we're building bigger homes for fewer people.

According to the Canadian Home Builders' Association, the average new single-detached family house size in Canada is now 2,000 sq. ft., ranking us third internationally, behind Australia and the U.S., and well ahead of the U.K. where a mere 818 sq. ft. is average.

None of this is to say that a big house isn't for you, just that the norm is not necessarily reflective of needs and that one size does not fit all.

Think about your current home. How do you use it? Perhaps you're like me and spend an enormous amount of time in the kitchen, meaning a big, functional kitchen would be a huge asset for you. Or, maybe you're like many moms who spend too much time in the laundry room, so a big, bright space on the main floor would be a major upgrade from the dank basement.

If you think about how you use each room in your home, calculate the square footage of what you actually use and estimate the amount you'd like more of in certain rooms, you'll come up with a pretty good idea of what square footage will work best for you and your family.

If you're not exactly sure of how you will use and grow into your home, here are the general pros and cons of buying big and small with some personal considerations to follow.

PERSONAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

Family Size: How many bedrooms do you need? Can your kids share a room?

Career: Do you work from home and need a separate room for an office?

Finances: What percentage of your income do you want to spend on your home monthly? Will you be able to save, put away for emergencies and still have the lifestyle you want? If your budget is tight, would you rather spend money on quality or quantity in terms of finishes and furnishings?

Lifestyle: How often and how many people do you entertain? Is it important to you to have a guest room? Could it double as an office, den or living space? Do you travel a lot or want to? Do you have the time to put into maintaining and cleaning a big home? Do you have a hobby that requires its own space?

Layout: The right layout can make a smaller space seem much bigger. Is it more important to you to have an open space than a large space, or four small bedrooms rather than three big ones?

Skills: Are you handy and able to perform many maintenance tasks on your own? Are you an organizational wizard who can make a small space very functional?

By taking these questions into consideration, you should have a much better idea of what home size is right for you; not for your next-door neighbour or your friends overseas. Size does matter and can make all the difference when it comes to enjoying your home and your life. **OH**

	PROS	CONS
BUYING BIG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More space for a growing family, storage, entertaining and accommodating guests Extra space for hobby rooms, such as craft rooms, workshops, home theatres, gyms, wine cellars etc. Possibly more land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More costly mortgage, maintenance, utilities, taxes, insurance Higher environmental impact More rooms to furnish and clean Less time and money to spend doing things outside the home May be too much house once you retire
BUYING SMALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller mortgage payments, utility bills, insurance premiums, property taxes Less time and money spent on maintenance and cleaning May have more money to spend on higher-quality furnishings and finishes More time and money to spend on activities outside the home May not ever need to downsize Fewer rooms to furnish More environmentally friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less space to entertain and accommodate guests Less personal space – may feel cramped May need to move or build an addition to accommodate a growing family Lack of storage space Less or no room for hobby space, including a home office Possibly less land

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DESIGNING YOUR *perfect* POOLSCAPE

BY MELANIE REKOLA

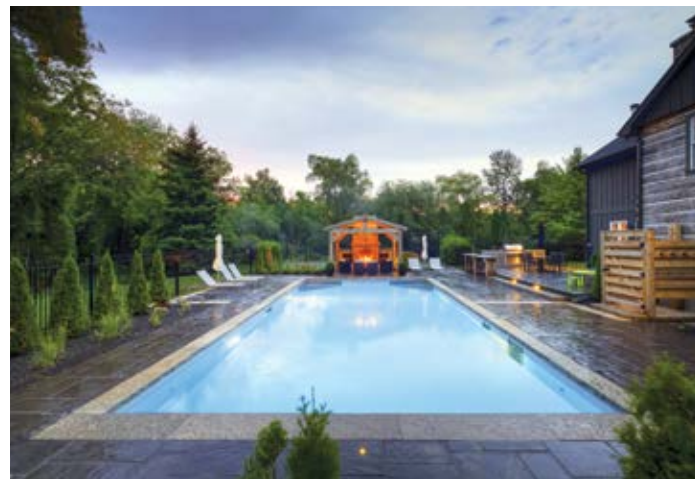


PHOTO COURTESY OF BLUE DIAMOND POOLS & LANDSCAPING

Congratulations! You've decided to take the plunge and embark on the journey of transforming your ho-hum backyard into a lush oasis housing an all-important pool. Due to its absolute permanency, pool choice and placement can be a daunting task. But take heart, follow these steps and you'll be on the right path.

Use of Living Space

Begin your planning by considering how you live and play. Do you love to soak up the sun, or lounge in the shade? Areas for sun bathing need to face south or west whereas eating and casual seating areas are generally located in the shaded area, either through a pergola, gazebo or shade from the house. Do you love to entertain guests and host large dinner parties? You will likely need an outdoor kitchen and table for eight-to-10, plus you'll need to be sure there is enough room for circulating visitors. Do you require a spa or cabana, and where will the pool equipment go? For your pool's proper placement and the related patio space you will have to consider these questions carefully and consult your municipality's bylaws for related info.

Contemporary, Curvaceous or Classic?

Your home and décor will give you cues to decide which style best suits you, but lifestyle also plays a role.

Do you appreciate straight lines, clean textures and bold contrast? This would be considered modern pool taste. These contemporary pools have large, wide steps with deep treads for sitting or lounging and a monochromatic planting scheme. Active people may appreciate this style and choose a long, narrow rectangular sport pool of a single depth.

Do you prefer pond-like pools with natural looking waterfalls and lush plantings? This curvaceous style is more causal and mimics waterscapes found in nature. Families that have children of a variety of ages may choose a large, curvy pool with a deep end and water slide to keep the whole brood entertained.

Maybe classic elegance is more your taste? Similar to the contemporary setting, classic pool design is usually rectangular or Roman-ended, also with straight lines but with little contrast. The gardens are often highly manicured, with sculpted hedges and lawn.

Stairs, Entryways & Gates

It is amazing how much patio area gets eaten up in the access points. Careful contemplation must be put towards the size and placement of steps inside and outside of the pool. Consider how the pool area will be accessed, how it will be fenced and where the gates will be. For properties with large-grade changes, terracing the patio and gardens may be a nicer option than a long flight of stairs, but keep in mind railings will likely be required.

The View

Do you have a stunning panorama view to highlight, or an unsightly neighbour's shed to mask? Perhaps a lovely infinity edge pool would bring the vista to focus, while a grouping of large emerald cedars could take care of that ugly storage house. Also ponder the views from within your house. Privacy issues also need to be addressed, especially in areas meant for sun bathing, seating/dining and around the hot tub.

Budget

Though this step may not be so enjoyable, it's important to establish a budget range. Once you get the proper footprint of what you need for pool and living space, it will come down to material choices that can make or break the bank. There are also situations that by spending more initially you'll save in the long run, say, by installing an insulated pool bottom to save on heating costs. Knowing your options is vital.

The Options & Accessories

There are many exciting possibilities in today's marketplace to truly customize your backyard setting. Considering that pools are often used in the evening equally to sunlit hours makes landscape and pool lighting almost an essential component. Water or fire features can really give your piece of heaven the focal point it needs. Do you desire an automated maintenance system, a diving rock or perchance a high-velocity jet for laps or wake boarding? Perhaps you are ecologically-conscious and would prefer the natural filtration of a swim pond instead of saltwater. All of these possibilities need to be explored.

Having a scaled 2D landscape design is a pertinent part of any large landscape project. It helps you make the majority of your decisions before the construction process begins and is a crucial communication tool. A 3D drawing can also be particularly helpful to illustrate in a real time perspective. Professional help is available and many pool builders include their landscape design service by an "in-house" designer or you can choose to hire an independent. Any way you decide, having a proper design will help keep the creation of your personal paradise on track and on budget. **OH**

Melanie is a certified horticulturalist and landscape designer.

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Strawberry CUSTARD PIE

BY MARIA DASILVA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT HUNTER

What better way to usher in spring than with this decadent berry-topped pie? An orange vanilla-scented custard is the perfect vehicle for a mound of pure strawberry love. It's the perfect pie to end an early summer meal on the deck.

You'll want to use the easy no-bake crust and custard base again and again throughout the summer. Simply substitute the strawberries with other fresh, seasonal berries – blueberries, raspberries and blackberries will all work beautifully.

For the smoothest, creamiest, shiniest custard every time, be sure to cook the mixture over medium heat, whisking constantly, just until it begins to thicken (don't worry if it looks a little runny or loose, it will set completely in the fridge as it cools) and strain it through the finest mesh sieve you've got. You can make the crust and custard base up to 24 hours before topping with the strawberries if you're planning to make this for a stress-free special occasion. Keep it covered and refrigerated and top with the berries just before serving.

TO PREPARE:

Crust:

- Stir together graham crumbs and melted butter until combined.
- Press into bottom and up side of 9-inch pie plate.
- Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.

Orange Vanilla Custard:

- In large bowl, whisk together cream, sugar, cornstarch, egg yolks, eggs and vanilla until smooth.
- In medium saucepan over medium heat, heat milk just until steaming and tiny bubbles form at the surface.
- Slowly pour the heated milk into cream mixture in a steady stream and whisking constantly to prevent cooking the eggs.
- Return mixture to saucepan. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, just until it begins to thicken, about 2 minutes.
- Strain through fine mesh sieve into clean bowl; stir in orange zest. Let cool for 5 minutes.
- Whisk smooth and pour into prepared crust; smoothing top.
- Cover and refrigerate until set, at least 3 hours.

Strawberry Topping:

- Just before serving, toss strawberries with sugar and vinegar.
- Let stand for 10 minutes.
- Mound berries onto centre of pie. **OH**

CRUST:

1¼ cups graham wafer crumbs

⅓ cup butter, melted

ORANGE VANILLA CUSTARD:

½ cup whipping cream

⅓ cup sugar

2 tbsp cornstarch

4 large egg yolks, and 2 large eggs

1 tsp vanilla extract

1¼ cups 2% milk

1 tsp orange zest

STRAWBERRY TOPPING:

4 cups hulled halved strawberries

1 tbsp sugar

1 tsp white or regular balsamic vinegar

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REAL ESTATE WISDOM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY ROBINSON

Spring is a classic time to buy or sell a home. We asked realty experts to share advice on what you should consider to help get the most value, whether you're buying or selling.



▲ Peter McLean, Corrie Denomme, Kari McLean, Kiwon Kim
McLean, Simon & Associates Real Estate Appraisers & Consultants, Peterborough

WHAT DO REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS DO? They determine, report on and attest to the real value of property, the foundation on which informed decisions are made, whether they are individuals buying a home, a farmer selling property, a retailer choosing their next outlet or a developer considering an empty lot.

WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE HIRE AN APPRAISER? You may want to hire an Appraisal Institute of Canada appraiser when renovating, building, buying or selling property or making an insurance claim.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SPRING? I look forward to golfing and spending time at the cottage.

► Marianne Wilson,
Sales Representative
RE/MAX Lakeshore Realty Inc.
Brokerage, Cobourg

WHAT CHANGE HAVE YOU SEEN IN THE LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS AS THEY PERTAIN TO REALTY? It's not a bedroom community, people moving here are ages 40 to 45-plus, semi-retired, and are integrating into our neighborhoods. They want to be part of a small town community and are helping it thrive.

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU PREDICT FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS? We have some exciting housing projects on the go, and a lot of optimism for growth. We have it all in Northumberland, it's a great place to live and a great vacation destination.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SPRING ACTIVITY? My husband and I strive to grow our own organic food, so I will be in dirt getting the garden ready.



◀ Corinne and Mark Jenden-Selway
Laird's Interiors, Bobcaygeon

WHY SHOULD YOU STAGE YOUR HOME FOR PROSPECTIVE BUYERS? You have to make the buyer want to live in your home and imagine themselves living there.

WHAT QUICK, EASY STAGING TECHNIQUES CAN YOU

RECOMMEND? Here's a quick list: remove old furniture and personal effects and de-clutter. Give every room a purpose, define the space. Do a really good spring clean or have your home professionally cleaned. Add colour with new throw cushions and replace old bathroom towels. Invest in new lighting. Remove any signs of pets. Remember, first impressions count, so clean up outside. Plant inexpensive shrubs, cut the grass and paint the front door.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SPRING? Bringing the outside in with freshly cut flowers.

Continued on page 54





◀ Cheryl Brown & Angela Flindall

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OFFER? With access to various mortgage lenders, we shop the market for the lowest mortgage rates and offer mortgage solutions that best suit your unique mortgage needs.

WHY WOULD SOMEONE CHOOSE A

BROKER OVER A BANK? We can save you thousands of dollars in interest. And, brokers are generally paid by the lender rather than the borrower, making it a logical choice to always consult with a mortgage broker. They're shopping the market for the best rates, doing all the work, at no cost to you.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING

FORWARD TO THIS SPRING? We look forward to all the beautiful new growth and colours after this long winter.

▶ Paul Galvin

Residential Home Inspections, Peterborough

WHAT SHOULD HOMEOWNERS LOOK FOR IN A HOME INSPECTOR? Most importantly, one with a background in construction. Right now there are no regulations, anyone can be a home inspector. I belong to the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors, which requires you to take courses and exams.

WHAT DOES A HOME INSPECTOR DO? I

accompany the purchaser to the house and tell them all about it, good and bad, so they know what they're buying. I look for what needs repair, and also tell them how to maintain and fix things.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO

THIS SPRING? The busy spring housing market and the warm weather, which makes inspections easier. **OH**



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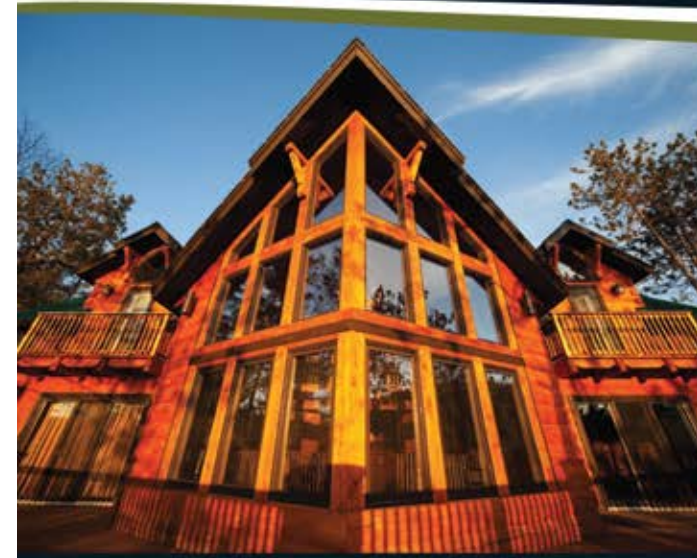


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