



# The BAY HOUSE

BY WILLIAM SHELLEY // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

Thornbury's Bay House is a resounding success. The design, attention to detail, quality of materials and workmanship in this beautiful home make every square foot count. This approach offers pluses for both the environment and the homeowner, including fewer resources used, a smaller footprint, and lower energy and tax expenses.

It all started with a lot near Georgian Bay on a quiet Thornbury side street. The lot was narrow but deep and well-treed. "To find a lot in town that still looked like it was sitting out in the forest was pretty unique," says co-owner Lori Bennett. "It was the location that sold us."

"The Bennetts wanted the house to fit into the streetscape but still be very original," says **Black Tusk's** Bill Brown, who created the architectural plan. The end result makes a virtue of its small yard. It was always in the plan to keep the cedar tree cover, which offers privacy and year-round colour. **Tavis Yeats** and **Michael Chapman** of **Oasis North Landscapes** worked with Black Tusk on the landscaping plan and built the driveway, walkway, outdoor barbecue kitchen, elevated hot tub, patio living space and other features. *Continued on page 96*

The Bay House was built on a deep, narrow forested lot on a quiet street in Thornbury. The barrel-vaulted covered porch provides an eye-catching added touch.





**ABOVE:** A path along the right side of the home leads to a backyard landscape by Oasis North that includes a covered barbecue hut, a firepit with seating, a hot tub and a deck. **TOP RIGHT:** The Bennett family, daughter Jill, Mom Lori, son Andrew and Dad Dave. **RIGHT:** Tall pine and cedar trees frame the beautifully landscaped and very private backyard. **OPPOSITE TOP:** Step down into the living room at the back of the house where a roaring fire warms the bright space and large windows bring the outside in. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM:** The sunroom off the great room was a must. A second wood-burning fireplace makes this room a favourite all year long.



Complementing the existing landscape is a key theme for the Bay House. The two chimneys, built by mason **David Campbell**, are a dominant feature of both exterior and interior. The stone colour and texture echo the native boulders in the yard. The Pennsylvania Weatherledge Dutch Quality – placed by an expert hand such as Campbell’s – can fool the untrained eye into believing it is quarried stone.

Small but crucial design details distinguish the exterior from other post-and-beam builds. Take for instance the curved “eyebrow” on the front of the house, built by carpenter **Hugh Grafton** of **Sibbett Contracting**. “Fancy is what I do best,” says Grafton. For the front barrel-vaulted covered porch, Grafton and Bill Brown

employed the same curve motif. **Adam Burk** of **Due North Custom Carpentry** and **Sean Wood** of **Woodcraft Custom Carpentry**, framed the home, completed additional carpentry and built the outdoor barbecue kitchen.

For the interior, Lori Bennett mentioned to Black Tusk early on that she wanted to “bring the outside, in.” A key component is the millwork by **Jason Holman** of Clarksburg’s **JTI Custom Cabinets & Furniture**. Holman’s choice of kiln-roasted maple gives the interior a refined burnish. Along with apprentice **A.J. Carter**, Holman built the doors, panels, trim, cabinets, vanities and other interior detail of roasted maple. Apart from its beauty, this wood’s key feature is it needs only a clear-coat finish. *Continued on page 98*





The dramatic wall in the great room marries unique stone veneer and kiln-roasted maple. In the kitchen, oil-bronzed appliances match the patina on the custom kiln roasted maple cabinetry.



Holman added a custom touch using a different kind of wood for the island that separates the kitchen from the living room. For the live-edge top, Holman fashioned a board from an old ash tree that had been struck by lightning.

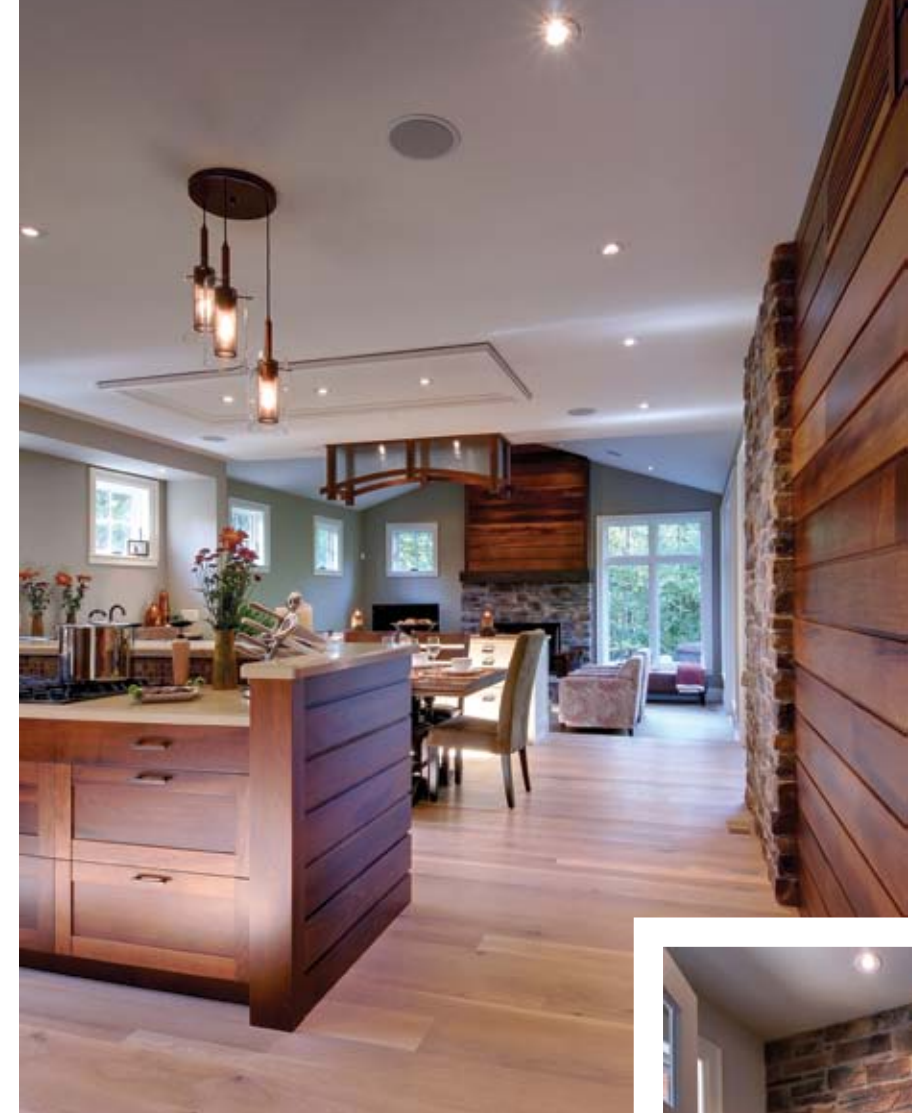
Above the island hang two dramatic clusters of pendant lighting at various heights provided by **Helen Labelle** of the **Georgian Design Centre**. This feature is three things at once: lighting, a room divider, and an art object.

Creative thought is evident in every room. The master bedroom on the main floor has transom-effect windows for light and privacy, a linear flame gas fireplace and a spectacular master bathroom with eye-catching tile work. The “wave wall” of gypsum formed tiles by Modular Arts, installed

by **John Lister** and purchased at **Desert Tile**, is another salute to the surroundings of the Bay House. Black Tusk’s Barbara Patton explains: “I was looking for a texture reminiscent of Georgian Bay waves. There are two commercial installations in Toronto but this is the first residential installation in Canada that we know of.”

**Sarah Osburn** of Georgian Design Centre provided plumbing fixtures throughout the house as well as the master bathroom’s freestanding tub. “It’s made of a rare volcanic limestone mixed with resin,” says Sarah, “making it a lightweight, highly insulated alternative to cast iron. The bathtub is not only a truly unique piece, but extremely comfortable as well – we made Barbara sit in it in our showroom to prove it – which isn’t always the case with luxury tubs.” *Continued on page 102*

**ABOVE RIGHT:** A large island provides lots of prep space and separates the well-appointed kitchen from the dining area. **RIGHT:** A built-in buffet with trough sink is a wonderful serving bar in the dining area. **FAR RIGHT:** The stone is carried into the main floor powder room with a floating vanity and vessel sink.



## ADDITIONAL TRADES AND SUPPLIERS

Roger Tomlinson of Chantico Fireplace Gallery, Thornbury Computers, Just Ask Judy, Kolbe Gallery Windows & Doors, Charles Davies, G. Lawrence, Cedarport Window and Door Centre.





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Daylight and moonlight shine in from piano windows in the main floor master bedroom. **ABOVE LEFT:** Peeking into the master bedroom from the main-floor hallway. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The wave wall in the master en suite is the first residential application in Canada of this amazing new product.

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**FAR AND BELOW LEFT:** Orange is the surprising accent colour, found in the tile and towels, in the upstairs bathroom shared by the Bennett's two children. **TOP LEFT:** Andrew's room is uncluttered and simply decorated. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Jill's room is filled with memories from a recent trip to Europe. **BELOW:** Bill Brown and Barb Patton of Black Tusk Development Group in the second floor lounge.



The laundry room and kitchen feature appliances provided by **Tom Macdonald** and **Don Stevens** of **Macdonald's Countrywide Furniture & Appliances** in Meaford. "Bill and Barb came to us and said they were doing a unique concept house," says Macdonald. "For the kitchen appliances they wanted something different from stainless and we had just the line: Oiled Bronze from Jenn-Air. From there we just sharpened the pencil on price." The appliances make a perfect match with the kiln-roasted maple cabinetry. Upstairs are the children's bedrooms and the guest bedrooms, with a rec room between. The kids' bathroom has orange Murano glass drawer handles to match the shower tile laid by **Trevor Robertson** of **The Flooring Place**. As the project undergoes final touches, Barbara Patton reflects: "We

were able to complete the vision developed between Black Tusk and the homeowners and had a great time doing it. Dave and Lori Bennett were able to articulate to us their overall goals for their home – from general statements such as 'bring the outside, in' to working together on finer details. Throughout the project, there was trust and confidence on both sides, which allows for a great deal of creativity." For their part, the Bennetts are more than pleased with both the process and the finished product. "Lori and I have enjoyed it very much," says David. "It's probably been the least stressful of anything we've done and I consider this a major thing. We've had fun, we've had some laughs back and forth. Would I do it again? Absolutely, in a heartbeat." **OH**



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