

FIRE IT UP

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THE PLACE: As winter descends upon us, thoughts turn to all things warm and cosy, like hot chocolate and flickering fires. David Schmitt knows just how enjoyable a fireplace can make a home. He's been in the fireplace design business for decades, first in France, where he started his own business at the age of 21 and then in Toronto, where he opened **Nero Fire Design**, a custom fireplace design studio in the city's west end.

THE SERVICE: Nero's custom designs are inspired by a home's architecture and interior space. The first step is an in-depth consultation, followed by detailed architectural drawings. Next, Schmitt puts his artistic and technical skills to work and handcrafts a beautiful, one-of-a-kind custom piece. "We can do any size or shape that will work for the space, whether it is a condo, single-family home or commercial application," says Schmitt.



David Schmitt



THE PRODUCTS: Design and technical excellence are top of mind at Nero Fire Design. It's the first studio in North America to exclusively sell the prestigious Ortal gas fireplace technology. The design selection is vast, with over 150 models, from front facing to see-through designs, island fireplaces and more. Customize the flame to make any fireplace unique. Ortal's Cool Wall Technology reduces the clearance needed for a television above the fireplace and keeps things cool. When it comes to electric, Nero Fire Design uses only Opti-Myst technology. "It's essentially water vapour coloured by light, so it is truly a 3D flame – you can blow on it and the flame will move." Hand-crafted cabinetry fashioned from solid wood and spray-painted MDF offers a contemporary look to elevate any architectural backdrop.

WHAT'S HOT: Linear gas fireplaces are still trending. Wall-mounted electric fireplaces are in high demand and work in any space. "It creates incredible ambience and it's easy to install – they are thin and have a light design," says Schmitt. "I essentially come with the unit built for you in our workshop, attach it to the wall and it's done."



FAVOURITES: With their unlimited design potential, ease of installation and cool surfaces, electric fireplaces are quickly becoming the style of choice. "With the Opti-Myst technology you can create any size or shape that you want. There is so much possibility, it is huge," says Schmitt. "You don't have to worry about safety, you don't need any clearance, just your imagination."

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