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MY PARENTS RECENTLY RENOVATED THEIR KITCHEN.

It had been essentially the same, save for some minor changes, since before I was born. Slowly but surely it became more and more outdated, and all that cooking and living in the space were taking their toll.

Now, their space is lighter and brighter. Their Hoosier cabinet has been retired, the spot where a playful pup tried to pull up the floor is long gone and the scraps of old wallpaper that had been covered by trim and beams are distant memories. They removed a wall and opened up their main level, going from galley kitchen to open concept with a huge island that looks out to the dining and living rooms. My sister and I wish it had been this fabulous when we still lived there!

While updating flooring, moving walls and replacing cabinetry and appliances certainly changes a space, some small changes make a significant difference too. It took some convincing, but my mother finally conceded to painting her oak mantel white. It now looks brand new and beautiful (I promise, Mom!).

Whether you're tackling a project as large as my parents' reno this spring or simply looking to refresh your home in small ways, we have lots of inspiration in this issue.

Sandi Duclos redesigned a 10,000 sq. ft. home in Waterloo and shares her tips for major renovations on page 36. Similarly, on page 20, you'll see how Pioneer Craftsmen helped a Cambridge family revamp their home to create a more functional and livable space.

Until next time - I'll be dropping by my parents' house more often for a sunny mug of coffee at this island.

Cheers.

adrienne

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A Grand Renovation In Waterloo. Story, Page 36. Photography By Tara West.



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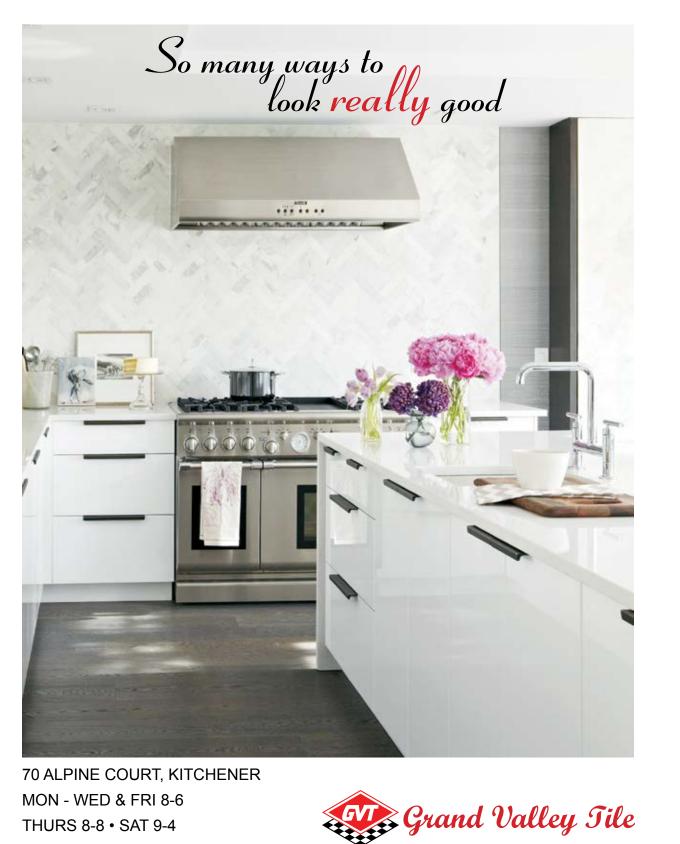
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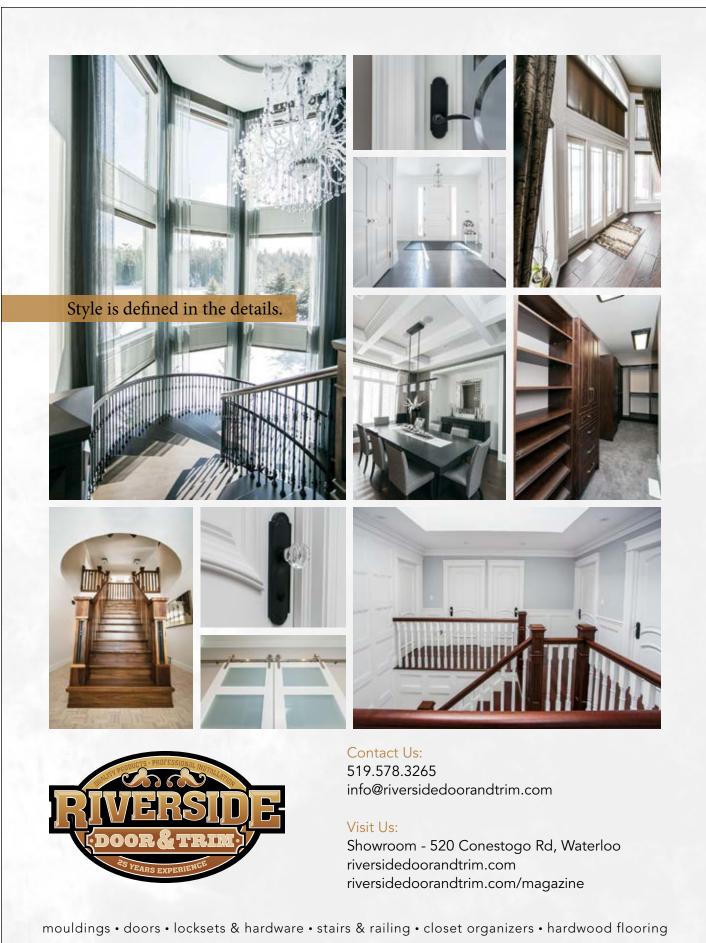
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SCANDINAVIAN (INTERIOR) DESIGN

STORY STEPHANIE REDMOND



THE FASCINATION AND popularity of Scandinavian interior design is remarkable to me. It's not that it isn't well deserved, quite the contrary. These countries - Denmark, Norway and Sweden - are characterized as dark and cold. Yet the interiors are white and simple. Somehow, the starkness of the interior reflects the chill of the landscape, but still evokes incredible warmth. How is this possible? And what's the obsession? A main characteristic of Scandinavian furniture design is minimalism, but also incredible craftsmanship. Simple lines using natural elements wood, metal, stone, paper and felt. When something 2 is really simple, you tend to see every working part unless it is carefully hidden. Take this Alvaar Aalto stool as an example. Instead of hiding the screws that hold the backrest to the stool and the footrest to the legs, they become the simplest design element. Other than the shape of the piece, it remains the single outside element that decorates this stool. (He was Finnish, but Finland is oft considered a



1. STANLEY SOFA : De La Espada 2. STOOL: Alvaar Aalto 3. LITTALA MENO HOME BAG: littala Finland 4. EPOCA WOOD FIREPLACE: Rais 5. ARM TABLE LAMP: Claesson Koivisto Rune



Designer Stephanie Redmond shares her ideas.

Scandinavian country). Simple and beautifully crafted; this is typical of a Scandinavian piece.

It's not to say that Scandinavian design is clinical, not by a long shot. The backdrop may be white, the lines might be clean, but there is often a sense of humour. What pops out of the strictness of this white palette are primary colours and fun patterns in some cases. Take this table lamp by Claesson Koivisto Rune. It follows the rules of simplicity, but comes in





a fabulous bright green for added pop. We also see these primary colours in textiles with patterns that reflect a rich history in weaving and embroidery.

In a modern arrangement, we typically see a more organic approach: wool, felt and linens in off-white and soft grey. What stands out in this type of setting are the items placed against the backdrop. It's a gallery style setting – fabulous if you have an art and/or photography collection. The key to this approach though, is to keep it simple. If you have a vast array of tchotchkes and knickknacks, Scandinavian living may not be for you. One of my favourite things is a collection of curiosities. Odd found items put out on display. It's the kind of thing my husband might throw in the woodstove. But this creates warmth. A great piece of bark hung on a wall can look like a masterpiece in the right setting.

The best modern designs in woodstoves are also Scandinavian. No question. Take the Rais Epoca as an example. A woodstove is a quintessential item in this setting and the lines on this piece follow the typical aesthetic – simple yet beautiful. Paired with a fur rug we have immediately created a warm environment, both aesthetically and physically!

So what is the obsession? I believe a clean surrounding that is relatively clutter free gives us a sense of calm in an otherwise hectic life. This style is like a detox for your home. And let's be honest, who wouldn't want to kick back in front of a wood stove at the end of a long day? **OH**



style picks

PHOTOGRAPHY TARA WEST

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COUNTRY

Regardless of whether you have a city home or country home, farmhouse style is soaring this spring. Here are our favourite picks from local retailers.



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3 BLINDS ARE US

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4 SMITTY'S FINE FURNITURE

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5 HAUSER

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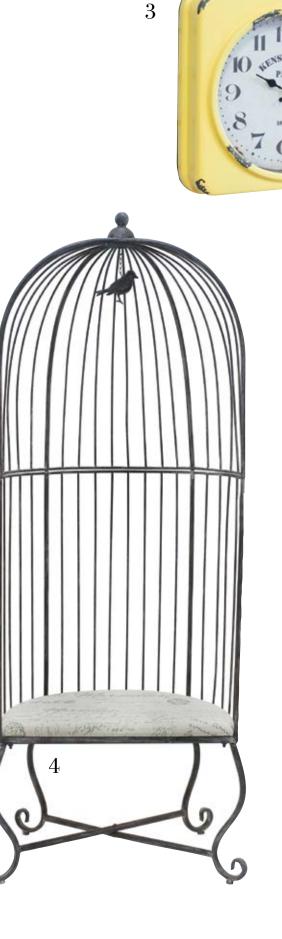
330 Weber St. N., Waterloo 519.747.3818 | hauserstores.com

6 THE ART OF HOME

Bird Print

Adoration of the Magpie is a colourful print worth tweeting about. It measures 27-by-27 inches and will add a touch of spring to your home all year round.

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6

STORY MELODY WREN | ILLUSTRATION SHEILA BRITTON

THE LUXURY OF LESS

Living a decluttered life in a streamlined, simplified house sounds easy. Why is it so difficult?

It is generally true that "outer order contributes to inner calm," as Gretchen Rubin writes in her bestselling book *The Happiness Project*. Massive decluttering is likely to leave you feeling lighter. Your first step should be getting rid of things, and then there will be less to organize.

Choose experiences over material goods. Get familiar with your stuff and your spending habits. Experientialists are not against spending, not even against stuff, but they are against having too much of the wrong stuff. Making sure your possessions play a healthy role in your life and knowing exactly what you own leads to the following question: Do my things give me experiences and make me happy, or are they creating debt, stress and unhappiness?

"Have nothing in your home that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

- William Morris

One way of finding out what you need is to put everything you are unsure about in a box or garbage bag. Over the next month, take out items as you need them. By the end of the month, you will know what you don't use because it will still be in the box. Your next step is doing it for six months.

Start anywhere – do any small thing to train the brain that change is coming. Once you are in the mindset to declutter, the following steps will help you get started:

One of the easiest methods to subscribe to is the four-box method:

- Decide which room you are starting on and line up boxes in the following categories: keep, sell, charity, trash. Place each item from every room into one of the four categories. Some rooms will take hours, and others will take days. But the technique and principles remain the same.
- Consider each item individually. Be ruthless and if you can't be, make sure someone is helping you that can question everything

you decide to keep. Whatever is in the keep pile, look at it a second time.

• Pick up one item at a time and make an instant decision – when was the last time you used this? If you haven't used it in a few months (six months at the longest), get rid of it, excluding seasonal clothes, of course.

Deal With Each Box

- **Keep Pile:** if you decide to keep it, organize it before you put it away, keeping similar items together. You might have scattered notebooks and stationary keep it all together in a nice-looking container in the office area of your home.
- **Sell pile:** List it immediately on Kijiji or Craigslist and keep it separate from the remaining items to sort so you aren't tempted to keep it. List it for a reasonable price with a photo, description and measurements so it sells quickly.
- **Charity Pile:** Donate as much as possible. Most charities are willing to pick up large pieces, otherwise load up the car and deliver as soon as you can to keep things moving. If you hold onto an item too long, there might be a temptation to keep it.
- **Trash Pile:** Papers often fall into this category. For anything you can use for tax purposes, the general rule of thumb in Canada is to save pertinent financial records for seven years.

Henry David Thoreau, everyone's favourite 19th-century hut-dwelling minimalist expressed the sense that owning things constitutes a spiritual burden. He advocated simplicity; not throwing out so much as not acquiring them in the first place. **OH**

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TOP: A shelf above the door to the front family room, hall tree and set of lockers (not pictured) add style and storage to the front entrance of this home. **ABOVE:** A gallery of black and white family photographs was an easy design project that added personal style to the custom mantel made by Artefacts. **OPPOSITE:** The beautifully landscaped backyard has a pool, lounge area and two separate cooking and eating zones, as well as a hot tub.

NOPLACE STORY ADRIENNE BROWN PHOTOS TARA WEST

After looking for a new home for her family for months, Alison Kelly realized there was only one place she wanted to be – in the home she already had. It just needed an update.

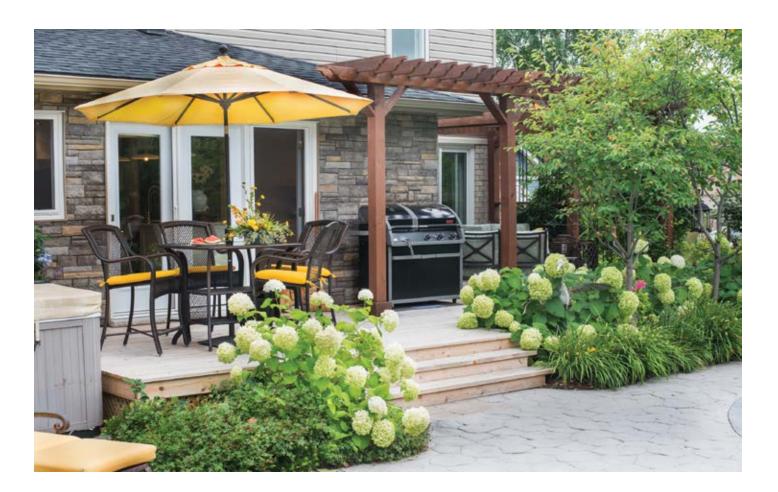
"I soon realized there was so much I loved about my house that even houses that were double in price did not even come close to making me think we should move," says Alison. She and her family have lived in their home for 17 years. They love the neighbourhood, schools, their lot and their location and just couldn't find anything that would compare, so instead of relocating, she decided to renovate.

She knew just who to call. **Pioneer Craftsmen Ltd.** renovated the Kellys' basement a few years ago. The main level of their home would be a much bigger project, but **Paul Meier**, Director of Design and Sales, says he was ready for the call.

During the previous renovation, Alison had mentioned she would eventually want a better entertaining space upstairs as well. It was no longer working for Alison, her husband Jim and their three teenagers – not to mention the plethora of boyfriends, girlfriends and friends often dropping by for supper, too!

"They were frustrated with what they had," says Meier, who told her the space would benefit greatly from an addition. It had to be small because the Kellys' yard was not overly large and was already landscaped with a pool (by **Tim Goodwin Pools Ltd.**). But Meier worked with the space he had and presented Alison with plans that included an addition. "As soon as she saw that, she knew," he says.

The extra space – barely 200 sq. ft., according to Kelly – was all it took to transform her main level and accommodate everything she wanted in the redesigned floor plan. "The flow is great, I got my pantry and huge island," she says. "Best of all, it made use of dead space outside







in the backyard and fixed a multitude of bad sight lines as well." Not only did Meier add everything she had on her wish list, but Alison says he also "got rid of stuff I hated about the house in one fell swoop."

Once they had the floor plan how they wanted it, all the floors themselves were replaced. Most is very carefully selected engineered plank hardwood flooring from Len Koebel Flooring Ltd., which Alison says she knew would dictate the style in the kitchen and family room area. Tile in the foyer and main bathroom is from **Brodrechts** Flooring Canada. The tile, granite and quartzite in the master bath are from Graniteworx in Guelph and all of the master bath plumbing *Continued on page 22*

home & builder

fixtures are from **Watermarks Kitchen & Bath Boutique**. They're so good Alison can't get her two teen daughters out of her beautiful new bathroom.

"It's about function and practicality first, then work in the gorgeous if possible," says Alison.

It was a fine balance of both that led to the finished product that is her stunning kitchen. Adam Friese from DelMar Woodcraft was her cabinetmaker. "I had always admired his work," says Alison, "he really specializes in reproduction and period pieces. However, my husband is more modern with clean lines, so we had to compromise a bit."

Alison had originally described her vision for the kitchen to Meier and Friese as "modern country" featuring "a big old farmhouse sink." But when she fell in love with a particular piece of quartz, which she describes as "too sophisticated" for that style, she had to reevaluate the whole concept. Standing in front of the stone, she and Meier felt a more "Ralph Lauren" look would be in order. Friese was then tasked with crafting clean lined and modern cabinetry for the kitchen.

The reproduction look Alison loves was





25 The stone for the kitchen island inspired the entire design scheme for the room. **ABOVE:** Built-in storage for dishes on either side of the fireplace in the dining room makes the most of extra space. **BELOW LEFT:** Scott at Artefacts helped Alison reinvent her existing kitchen table, which she now calls "just gorgeous."



worked into her dish hutch, pantry, dining room and master bath instead, many of which solve some very specific structural issues. The dish hutch in the kitchen, for example, hides structural support beams and TV wires, houses electrical outlets and is home to a strategically-placed heating and cooling vent. This is also where Alison displays all her favourite items and keeps dishes and serve ware. "It also directs traffic flow with the way it is angled," says Alison – all thanks to Meier's intelligent design and Friese's beautiful and careful craftsmanship.

Allison also managed to work "gorgeous" into some other functional pieces in her home, all thanks to **Artefacts** in St. Jacobs. Not only did they custom-make the mantel in her family room and the bath caddy in her master bath, each a statement piece in its respectful room, but they revamped Alison's existing kitchen table to suit the new style. "All three pieces are like functional art," she says. "Beautiful to look at, but they serve a purpose. I think that is my favourite kind of art. My pantry is also functional art!"

Her whole home is filled with beautifully selected art and personal photographs displayed gallery-style. Designer Cindy Gibson from Accents for Living in Guelph helped Alison with the décor. She says it was important for her design to reflect the family. She describes the home as having "classic traditional elements with a modern twist."

Continued on page 24

LEFT: A sectional sofa fits perfectly behind built-in cabinetry that helps define this living space off the kitchen. **BELOW:** While it looks beautiful, this dish hutch has lots of secret functionality, too: it hides everything from wires to structural support beams. **BOTTOM:** The front room has a formal, rustic aesthetic, but is still functional and livable.







Many items Alison already owned were re-imagined or moved around to suit the new design. "We made items she already had sing," says Gibson.

Gibson understood her style and taste from their very first meeting, so the pair worked wonderfully together.

The same goes for Meier and his team at Pioneer Craftsmen. As they were working through the design process, he told Alison "everything can't be a superstar." That was one of the most valuable pieces of guidance he provided. It helped her find the right balance: not everything in a room can shine. Some surfaces and items just need to work, while others are the stars.

"If my house is special, it's because many people made it so," says Alison, crediting the amazing team Pioneer pulled together to update everything from plumbing to electrical.

Now, it truly is special and Alison and her family are happy to be staying put. **OH**

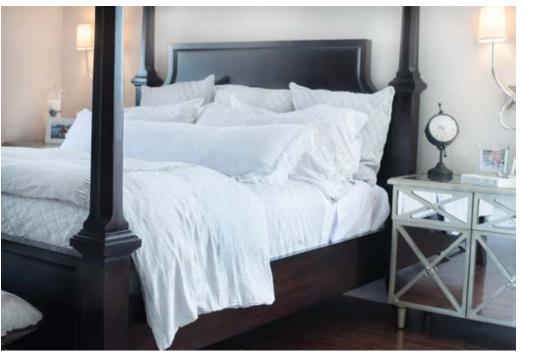
LEFT: Alison's advice for picking the perfect tub: sit in a whole bunch. The prettiest aren't always the most comfortable, which she learned by trial and error (and she's glad she got in so many before buying). BELOW LEFT: The basement man cave was the first level in the home to be renovated by Pioneer Craftsmen. BELOW: The peaceful master bedroom is a work of art, which (like the rest of the reno) Alison credits to great teamwork between Paul at Pioneer Craftsmen, Cindy at Accents For Living, and herself.



KATI BUJNA FINE ART STUDIO









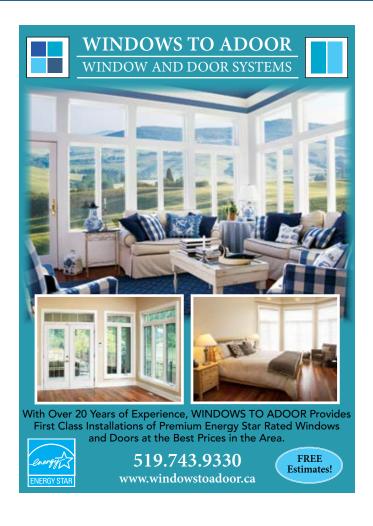
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Whether our interiors are big or small, we all hope to make the most of the square footage we have. With that in mind, I pulled together my best advice for expanding your horizons in every room – in any home - for the feeling of additional space, without the addition!



Tip: Tiling from top to bottom will make walls appear neater and taller

In the Living Room

Balancing Act: To maximize seating flexibility, start with a large, plush sofa or sectional for everyday lounging, and then add compact seats or stools to seat everyone at a large gathering. If your dining chairs also suit your living room décor, they can serve double duty in a pinch.

Don't Shrink Away: Avoid the temptation to make everything in your space "condo sized" just to fit more in it. Anchoring a space with some large objects (especially large art) creates a less cluttered, large-scale look.

Even Out: I can't stress the importance of layered lighting enough! A more even wash of light created by multiple light sources will open a space, so aim for ceiling lamps, sconces (or lamps near the periphery) and specific task lighting to round it out.

In the Kitchen

Keep a Low Profile: Achieve a more seamless look by going knobless, or with minimalist knobs that mount to the underside of the door, giving you less to bump into and smooth surfaces. You can then reintroduce character with earthy tile and wood flooring.

All Wood Everywhere: Speaking of wood flooring, yes, you can apply it in the kitchen. I usually avoid breaking the floor material between rooms where possible to create longer visual planes and continuity throughout the home.

White on White: White cabinets and white walls create a clean and fresh look, while again, avoiding colour breaks that can disrupt the visual flow of your space and shrink the walls. Also consider a pale grey, greige, or blue for a similarly airy appeal.

In the Bathroom

Double Dip: A large vanity mirror is a perfect way to visually double a bathroom space. Feel free to extend the mirror beyond the edge of the vanity (or to the ceiling, or both). This will also reduce the amount of wall area to be tiled, which can save you in the long run.

Go Big: In a primary bathroom or en suite, an oversize tile (grouted to blend out) creates the feeling of a single expanse of material, which helps the walls appear larger in all directions. If you don't want to invest in tiling every wall, tile just a few walls top to bottom rather than breaking them midway up – it'll look neater and taller.

STORY YANIC SIMARD

Or Go Wild: In a powder room, forget about expanding the space and indulge your wildest décor desires, applying the bold colours and loud looks you wouldn't risk in the main spaces. You can get your daily dose of design drama here while leaving the rest of your home breezy and open.

In Everywhere Else and Beyond

Get Elliptical: An oval table is one of the best options for fitting in many seats without wasting space or creating circulation issues, and you can use chairs on the ends or remove them as needed.

Divide and Conquer: Creating functional zones within an awkward space (often by breaking it down into smaller squares) avoids waste. Try bridging two areas, such as a TV zone and reading nook, with an open-backed bench or lightweight chairs that can be used in either zone.

Blank Slate: I often use one paint colour throughout a room or even an entire home, dressing both the walls and ceiling to blend out the divisions and any flaws. Benjamin Moore's OC23 Classic Gray gives some depth and warmth without weighing the space down.

Don't Miss the Point: Although consistency is key to creating large-looking spaces, don't forget the power of the focal point. Creating some standout moments (like a wallpapered accent wall or punchy palette of sofa pillows) is essential to directing the eye and giving it the structure it craves. Make sure to include one-to-two focal areas in small rooms, with two-to-three in bigger spaces to keep the eye moving. **OH**

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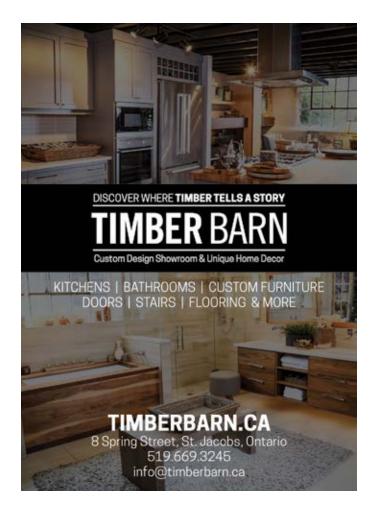
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STORY ADRIENNE BROWN PHOTOGRAPHY TARA WEST



THE PLACE: Although Next Time Around, the Tri-Cities' largest furniture consignment store, is frequently voted "favourite antique store" in local awards, it's so much more than that. Since opening in October 2012, Next Time Around has offered visitors a wide variety of new and gently used mid-to-high-end furniture - some antiques, some not. Now with over 10,000 sq. ft. of showroom space in the Southworks Mall in Cambridge, there's something for every design taste - and the furniture and accessories change all the time. "We always stay current with design styles and trends," says Kristy Morgan, the owner of Next Time Around. "We are also your Tri-Cities Retailer for Miss Mustard Seed's Milk Paint and Fusion Mineral Paint." In its Re-NEW'd By You Centre, Next Time Around regularly offers how-to workshops on painting furniture or re-upholstering and even Pinterest Parties, "where we bring to life all those ideas you see online."

THE STYLE: "Our products range from traditional to contemporary and everything in between," says Morgan. What makes Next Time Around different is how they display their items. "When you walk through our doors you feel like you're entering a design store where everything looks fresh and new." The Next Time Around team, which includes a residential designer, a lighting expert, an antiques specialist and a professional painter, always tries to make everyone feel at home.

WHAT'S HOT: "Mixed warm metals, in general, are hot and this year gold is back," says Morgan. Painted furniture is very popular too, and Morgan is seeing a trend towards farmhouse decorating, "where your home is warm, cosy and full of charm and character. It's about having a balance of old and new and surrounding yourself with things that speak to you."



SEASONAL: "This spring, we're seeing a mix of bright and bold colours along with the soft, muted tones," says Morgan. In keeping with the farmhouse style, many people come looking for neutral and off-white items – they will always be on trend. However, for this spring, Morgan says she's also seeing a mix of bright and bold colours to help complement and add depth to neutrals.

FAVOURITES: Morgan says Fusion finish, all-in-one paint that requires very

beautiful hues.

WHERE: 64 Grand Ave. S., Cambridge 519.740.6398 | nexttimearound.ca он





Mineral Paint is extremely popular and is flying off her shelves. It's a foundation to little prep work and has built-in top coat (no need to wax), plus it's available in 30













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ON THE WALLS

THE CENTURIES-OLD BLACKBOARD IS MAKING A

resurgence into the modern home in the form of a fun statement wall, which can be utilized in almost any room.

With the increasing availability of specialty paint, the blackboard has become a versatile home décor tool, transforming empty walls that have proven difficult to decorate. Both whimsical and practical, a blackboard can improve family organization or provide a place for displaying inspirational quotes and original art.

The kitchen is one of the most popular spots to paint a blackboard. For the aspiring chef or dinner hostess, blackboards make functional menus. They're also great places to jot down the ever-evolving grocery list. If you don't have wall space in your kitchen, the end of a cabinet or the fridge are alternative spaces to paint. Transforming a traditional backsplash into a blackboard is also a unique option.

In the front entrance, a blackboard makes a convenient message centre, and a home-office wall can always benefit from a calendar. Children will love having an expansive blackboard to create a mural in a bedroom or a playroom. Add one to the craft or laundry area, two possible locations where a blackboard can be functional and decorative.

Break Away From Black

Companies such as Benjamin Moore and Rust-Oleum offer blackboard paint in a spectrum of colours, while Krylon has a spray paint in basic black and vintage green. An off-white blackboard, styled with colourful sidewalk chalk, will set you apart from the crowd while blending seamlessly with your décor. Experiment with the subtle and varied tones of grey to give your blackboard a softer appearance, or forget subtle and get wild with a bold blue or tangerine hue.

If the right shade or tone remains elusive, mixing up custom blackboard paint is a surprisingly simple process.

Make Your Own Paint

- You will need 2 Tbsp. unsanded tile grout per 1 cup matte latex paint.
- Mix the paint and grout in one-to-two cup increments.
- Use a grout mixer to combine the paint and grout. (Paint mixer attachments are available for drills, which will make the task easier.)
- Properly prime your wall and then roll on your homemade blackboard paint. Once the paint has cured, it will need to be lightly sanded with 150-grit sandpaper and wiped clean.

Regardless of the paint you choose to use, season your new blackboard surface before you start practising any fancy typography.



Take the broad side of a piece of white chalk and rub down the entire area, then rub it clean with a dry cloth. Don't neglect seasoning the surface or a ghost of your first design will permanently remain.

Mastering Chalk

Deciding what to draw or write on a new blackboard is only half the battle. As a décor centrepiece, the content should look attractive, and mastering the chalk may take a bit of practise. Here are a few tips that will help transform even the most novice chalk artist.

- Lightly sketch out the design a few times
- Use a level and a ruler to keep things straight and symmetrical
- A wet Q-tip is the perfect tool for cleaning up lines
- To generate a paint-like effect, keep the chalk wet
- Sharpen the chalk
- Give chalk markers a try

Alternative Surfaces

If you're a commitment-phobe, painting a wall may seem daunting. Think about using blackboard paint in your home décor accents instead

- A painted playroom table can become an instant checkerboard, game of tic-tac-toe or artist's easel
- Create an erasable pantry system by painting labels on jars
- Coat a serving tray for easy identification of appetizers
- Customizable placemats make a unique adornment to the dinner table
- Update a filing cabinet by turning it into a blackboard surface

Just have fun and remember – you can always erase and start fresh. **OH**

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STORY WALTER FRANCZYK

INSPECTIONS MAKE GOOD DEALS AND better homes

Buying, selling or maintaining a home are all a lot easier with professional help.

It's one reason many people turn to home inspectors to help them decide whether to purchase a home, when to repair it or spruce it up for sale.

"Inspections help home buyers make an informed decision," says Blaine Swan, a registered home inspector and owner of Home Probe Canada.

"Buyers are usually inundated with details about colour choices, how their furniture fits and the home location," he says. "A home inspection is the nitty-gritty details. An inspector looks at the multitude of systems that all come together to make the home - the roof, structure, heating system, plumbing system, electrical, etc.," says Swan.

"It is a large financial investment they're about to make and it provides them with a number of answers, but primarily, is the home safe, is the home habitable, are there significant costs needed to make it safe and habitable," says Swan, who's been inspecting homes since 2002 and is president of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors.

Home inspectors don't prescribe repairs or estimate the cost of renovations, but their findings can help prospective buyers choose whether to renegotiate the sale or accept the home as is and deal with repairs later, Swan explains. "Sometimes, the information provided is walk-away information. There's just too much, and it's a deal breaker. It happens all the time."

While most older homes often need some work and are carefully scrutinized, newlybuilt homes are also worth a professional look. The quality of building materials and contractors can vary widely in new construction. "You've got the low end and you've got the high end," Swan says. "Not everybody is at the high end. That's why we

inspect. The problem with new homes is that sometimes it's not readily evident what the problems are."

Pre-sale home inspections performed for homeowners can help prepare them for selling their home and give them time to ensure the house is ready for sale. "This allows the seller to be proactive," Swan says. "In other words, if it needs a new furnace, or it needs a new roof or something like that, the homeowner can go out and gather the pricing and information, or even get the jobs done, prior to putting the home on the market," he says.

Inspections can also assist home maintenance, especially for those people with limited mobility, knowledge or skills in home improvement.

"Not everybody can crawl on the roof," Swan says. "A lot of people are older and can't get up there and look at the roof. Even if they could look they may not be able to interpret what they see. A home inspector would." Inspectors are knowledgeable about the life expectancy of different materials, products and systems and can advise homeowners accordingly. "It's better than laying awake at night, worrying about what's over your head. or what's happening in the basement," he

says. "It's just good information so you can do financial planning."

Before choosing a home inspector, homeowners and buyers should check the websites of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors (cahpi.ca) or the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors (oahi. com). Their published standards of practice define what you can expect from a home inspector. Just as importantly, these standards state what inspectors don't do. For example, inspectors are not required to determine the advisability of purchasing any property. Nor are they required to determine the remaining life of any system or component. They're not required to move suspended ceiling tiles, furniture or debris or to determine the strength, adequacy, effectiveness, or efficiency of any system or component or the causes of any condition or deficiency. Both sites list nearly 80 exclusions.

The Canadian and Ontario home inspectors' associations can help homeowners and buyers find trained and qualified inspectors. OH



The Ontario government urges homeowners and buyers to do some research to find a reliable and knowledgeable home inspector. Here are some of its tips:

Look for a home inspector who:

- provides written inspection reports
- will give you references
- has experience with the type of home you're considering (e.g. condos, heritage-era homes, cottages)
- has an accreditation that shows training and experience
- will provide a written contract

sure to:

• get quotes from more than one inspector

When hiring a home inspector make

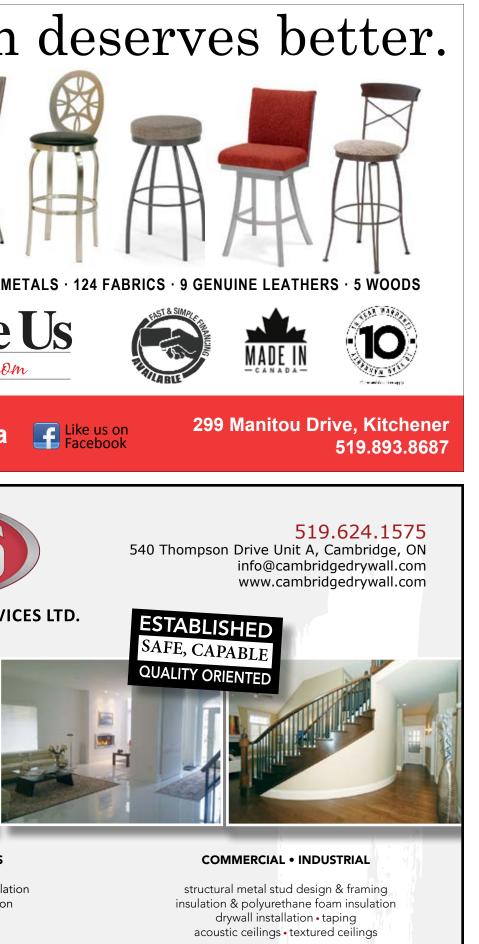
- check references
- ask about their training and experience
- ask to see a copy of the inspection report they use
 - ask if they choose to have insurance













beams, which were updated with a fresh coat of light Trim, Sandi Duclos from Sandi Loreen Duclos Interiors, and

Some homes are just too beautiful to pass up, even if they aren't what you were shopping for.

When George and Andrea Gianniotis, part owners of the family business **Riverside Door & Trim**, were looking to downsize, they happened across a 10,000 sq. ft. stunner in Waterloo. At least, they knew it could be a stunner, once it got some help.

Although they changed their minds and didn't end up moving into the home they fell in love with, the couple Continued on page 38





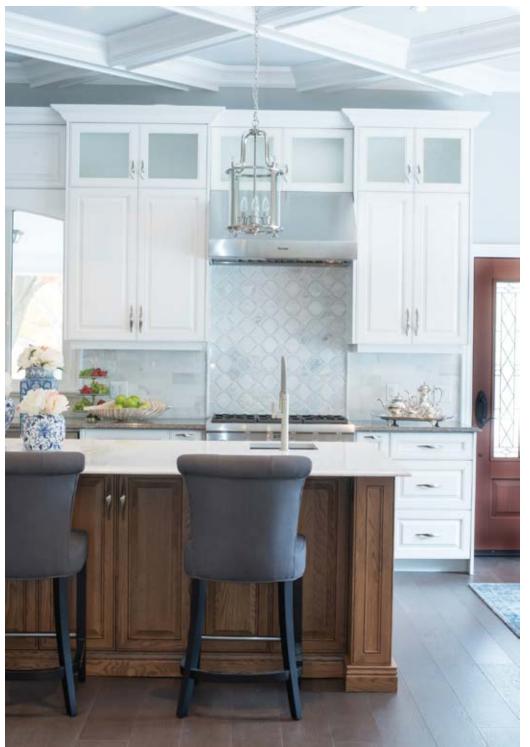


feature

RIGHT: Soaring ceilings offer plenty of height for new cabinetry, which was all built by Riverside Door and Trim. **BOTTOM:** The island is the centrepiece of the kitchen, which features all brand new appliances. **OPPOSITE:** The eat-in nook in the kitchen is the perfect spot for afternoon tea.







did decide to renovate and update the whole space before relisting it.

After working on the bones for several months, they hired **Sandi Duclos** of **Sandi Loreen Duclos Interiors** to help them make the five-bedroom home shine. "This house needs a family in it,' Andrea told me," says Duclos. "And because the house was going up for sale, we wanted to appeal to the masses." White cabinets and "greys you can live with" were her first choices. "It's all neutral but very fresh looking," she says.



But tackling such a large project was no easy feat. Almost everything had to be changed.

Aside from the Calacatta marble in the foyer, which is original, all the flooring in the home is new. Area carpeting was provided by **Fitzgerald Carpet One**, tiles were installed in the bathrooms and Riverside Door & Trim installed hardwood in much of the home, including the top floor nanny quarters. They also replaced all the trim and cabinetry and redesigned the master walk-in closet. All seven bathrooms were gutted.

The main level footprint was also slightly altered. To accommodate more modern closet-space needs, the Gianniotises took some space from the formal living room to make a larger walk-in closet and adjust the en suite.

"I felt like the house had a story to tell and my job was to complete it," says Duclos. "The real end will be whoever buys the house, but for me it was choosing surfaces, fixtures and design elements that were current yet timeless and furniture to complete the story," she says. Accents For Living in Guelph provided all the new furniture in the home and Duclos complemented it with some antique pieces of her own. *Continued on page 40*

ASK A Designer

OUR HOMES asked Sandi Duclos, the designer behind this home's dramatic facelift, to share her expertise on all things interiors:

With a large-scale renovation, how do you decide where to begin? Much like any renovation, a large-scale reno begins



with careful planning and precise organization. First, I establish the scope and budget. From there, itemizing needs, wants and "we would love to have, but not sure if it's in the budget" is what begins the design process. Thoroughness and attentiveness in critical planning is what can make or break a positive renovation experience, especially when the scale of the project is large.

What advice do you have in regards to sticking to a budget, whether large or small? Ensure the budget you are working with is realistic. If a budget is unrealistic, you are setting yourself up for failure even before you begin the design process. Overspending can be detrimental to a home's realistic value, especially when dealing with fixed furnishings like bathroom and kitchen fixtures. Budgets are one of the most difficult aspects of any design process.

What are some of your favourite design trends

for 2015? Current design trends are heading in a direction that thrills me. I have always had a love affair with classic and traditional design, so I am delighted to see modernism going by the wayside! With that being said, I love the new look and feel of the transitional home, which is a modern take on traditional home decorating. I'm thrilled to see gold and brass re-emerging, pattern-on-pattern trends, the use of fabric in artful ways, wallpaper and Hollywood-glam style, including tufted everything!



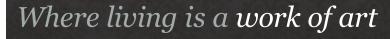


It's Curtains For You sewed custom draperies designed by Duclos for many of the home's tall windows and wide doors, many that lead out to the spacious backyard, which features a pool.

"I've seen the blood, sweat and tears these people have put into this home," says Duclos. Not only a lot of work, but a lot of love went into updating the home. "It's a house that's full of character. The detail work is exquisite."

It's the series of specific design choices – from painting dark timbers in the great room white and selecting a new limestone mantel for a two-sided fireplace, to painting the coffered ceiling a half-tint of the wall colour – that pulls everything together just as the Gianniotises had imagined. "It doesn't feel like a big house. It just kind of wraps you in grace," says Duclos.

Although the project may have seemed daunting at first, it's exactly the sort of job Duclos loves to sink her teeth into. "Interior decorating has always fueled my passion, but when everything you fancy is on trend, you just can't wait to get up in the morning and decorate!" **OH**





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As happens so often in fashion, what is old is new again. Adding edibles to the landscape is presently very stylish, however being the world's oldest form of horticultural cultivation it is, in fact, the origin of the modern-day garden.



Fruit Trees:	Nut Trees:
• Apple	Chestnut
• Pear	• Shagbark
• Peach	Hickory
• Plum	• Walnut



Evidence suggests plant-based gardening began in prehistoric times where our ancestors planted favoured food species along jungle-clad river banks. By 10,000 BC, we were enclosing our food gardens, very likely to protect our crops. The word "garden" descends from the Old English term "geard," meaning fence or enclosure.

Adding food plants to your landscape is easier than you may think. Many are quite lovely, performing double duty. Other common garden plants are both edible and delicious proving there is no need to sacrifice beauty for a food-fare garden.

Add A Fruit Tree Or Two

I never hide the fact that I am in love with woody plants of all types. Most properties lack trees for privacy, to mask ugly sight lines, to ground the house and to give outdoor spaces that content and cosy feeling. Many fruiting trees are quite good looking, and though you may have heard fruiting trees are high maintenance, by choosing diseaseresistant varieties, you can cut your work in half. Yes, you will have to prune thin to increase the size of the remaining fruit and spray a safe, chemical-free pesticide to be successful, but the reward far outweighs the work in my opinion.

They all bloom, and some are even fragrant. Many are selfpollinating (meaning you only have to plant one), yet others must be planted in pairs, of male and female, to produce fruit. Select tree placements wisely. If you are not judicious about harvesting, the fallen fruit will attract wasps. Therefore, they are best planted away from patios and walkways. If fruit trees are not your thing, then don't forget about the low-care nut producing trees and sugar maples for syrup.

Berry-Bearing Shrubs

Fruiting shrubs are lower maintenance than fruiting trees due to the smaller size and faster maturation of fruit that makes insect infestation less likely. As they take up less space than trees, they are also easier to fit in.

Serviceberry (can also be a tree) produces tasty berries, and it looks gorgeous with lovely grey bark, great form, fluffy white flowers and red scarlet fall pigment.

Elderberry is another great choice. It comes in standard leaf and lacy cut-leaf variation that mimics a Japanese maple (but is much hardier). Leaf colours also vary wildly from yellow to deep wine, making them highly ornamental. Its prolific berries taste great on their own and also are perfect for pies.

Low-growing velvet leaf blueberry is appropriate for the front of the border. Though it is not highly ornamental, it makes a good filler plant and is worth considering due to its supremely luscious berries. 1089 Colborne Street W. Brantford, ON N3T 5L7 patti@paradisepools.org

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MELANIE'S PLANT PICKS

Herbs:	Perennials:	Annuals:
 Chives 	 Daylily 	Nasturtium
• Thyme	• Echinacea	 Pansies
 Oregano 	 Lavender 	 Calendula
• Sage	 Yucca 	
	 Violets 	

Underused and vigorous, vivacious vines are a wonderful way to screen unsightly walls or fences and maximize vertical space. They also give a garden a much-needed sense of age.

For grapes, by deciding on native or cold hardy, disease-resistant varieties and by using careful pruning techniques, you'll have a great chance of success!

Hardy kiwi is a lower-maintenance but aggressive vine to ponder with lovely reddish stems, thick mid-green leaves and succulent fruit.

Scarlet runner beans are yet another delightful option. They grow fast and have gorgeous red blooms that hummingbirds love and develop into edible beans. Scarlet runner beans are an annual and, for this reason, require planting every year, but it's easy to let a few beans develop and save the seed for sowing the following year.

Edible Perennials (and a few annuals)

Interestingly, the flowers of many common garden perennials are edible or partially edible. Flower cookery can be traced back to Roman times but was especially popular during the Victorian era. Most herb blooms are just as tasty as their foliage, and many are quite handsome, available in colourful leaved and variegated variations. You may recognize some







of these edible and vibrant annuals, perennials and herbs (listed above) already growing in your very own garden. And if cooking with flowers doesn't delight you, they can be used as a lovely plate garnish or frozen into ice cubes for a fancy dinner party.

Gorgeous Kitchen Garden

You could also choose to be all-out obvious with your edibles and plant a kitchen garden. Kitchen gardens can be a thing of beauty when formal geometry is bordered with low-herb hedging, and are best situated in a spot with easy kitchen access. Select but one good-looking food plant per quadrant. Finish the look by decorating the space with lovely potted edibles such as vibrant hot peppers. Save those ugly tomatoes and potatoes for the designated veggie plot.

In a world where many children grow up eating from the grocery store (and many ingesting mostly packaged food), it is especially important to demonstrate just where all this food is coming from. Growing edibles creates an important teaching opportunity by showing first-hand the life cycle of food, including the importance of (and the necessity of protecting) our pollinators. To sum it all up, food gardening can be both attractive and appetizing, is fun, convenient and healthy, offers educational opportunity and will save you money. What's not to love? **OH**

Melanie is a certified horticulturist and landscape designer.

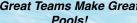


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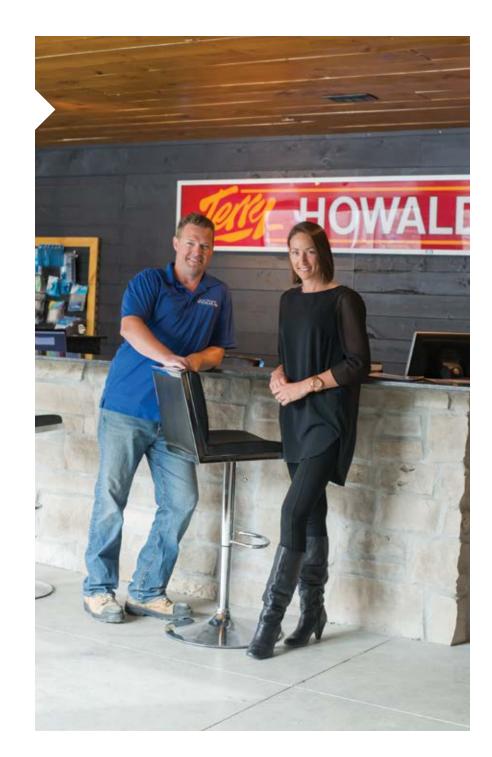
SAM AND SARAH SIMONS Terry Howald Pools

Tell us about your business: Terry Howald Pools has been providing service to Kitchener-Waterloo and surrounding regions for over 40 years. We take pride in offering top-quality products and services at an affordable price. We design and install new pools as well as renovate and enhance existing inground swimming pools.

What are the latest trends in pools? One of the many features we offer is the new Pentair Easy Touch. This feature allows homeowners to control everything from pool and spa temperature, to jets, lighting, water features and more, right from your favourite Apple or Android device. The unique ScreenLogic interface gives you access to your pool and spa's operation from practically anywhere.

What should every new pool owner know? They should know that a swimming pool is easier to maintain than you may think. New technology that we offer makes it simple and easy to schedule and control the operation of your pool and spa equipment. We are always just a phone call away and our experienced full service team is available to help with any questions or concerns.

What's your favourite pool-side music? A constant mix of new and classic hits sets the ambience for the perfect backyard get together. We love to entertain by the pool, and our playlists range to enhance a variety of gatherings!



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What services do you offer? We offer a wide range of services for both commercial and residential properties, including: property maintenance, landscape design, landscape maintenance, tree and shrub planting and removal, snow plowing and removal, ice control,

How often should lawns be fertilized? Even the healthiest lawn gets hungry and needs a solid meal. Twice a year, spring and fall, is the bare minimum most experts recommend for fertilization, though some add a feeding in the middle of the summer.

parking lot sweeping and asphalt repair.

What should all great landscape plans include? They should have great attention to detail. The materials, colours and surface textures are very important to consider when designing or maintaining a landscape.

What do you love most about working outside? Having the freedom of being outside enjoying the weather beats being cooped up inside any day! Not to mention the tan!





DAVE WRIGHT Wright Landscape Services Inc.

What are your specialties? They include designing, building and maintaining exceptional landscapes in Waterloo Region. We can build a project that is right for clients, from residential front entries and foundation plantings to patios and outdoor living spaces, estate design and high end multi-residential projects.

What are the latest trends in landscaping? Curb appeal and outdoor living spaces tend to be the two trends that continue to dominate the residential market. Our clients want their homes to look great from the street and they want a place to wind down and relax with their families with privacy and unique finishes.

Homeowners shouldn't be afraid to: Hire a professional to design and build their project. People do not buy patios or front entries every day. Hiring a contractor they can trust and communicate with will make their project run smoothly and everyone will be happy in the end.

What is your favourite plant, shrub or tree? My current favourites are the Annabelle Hydrangea and the Japanese Maple. On their own, both plants are very impressive but together they create an amazing pairing. **OH**

STORY SHELBY HILSON

RE-FRESH-MINT

When we read about the world's healthiest foods, the focus is often on fruits and vegetables, but fresh herbs offer some of the highest medicinal benefits and are, quite frankly, delicious!

One such herb, which brings our spring gardens to life with its sweet, fresh scent, is mint. Scientifically known as Mentha, mint has more than two dozen species and hundreds of varieties.

Mint is somewhat of an overachiever in the natural health world with a list of benefits that is long and impressive. It contains an antioxidant known as rosmarinic acid, which has anti-inflammatory properties and has been studied for its effectiveness in relieving seasonal allergies. It also acts as a natural decongestant, helps ease sore throats, aids upset stomachs and indigestion, speeds the digestion process, relieves nausea and headaches, and is a natural stimulant, which can give you a boost and help you focus when you're feeling depressed, anxious, fatigued or sluggish. We also know that mint helps to freshen our breath and gives many products, like toothpaste, their refreshing flavour.

So, how can we incorporate this beneficial and refreshing spring herb into our daily lives? Simple... add it to your drinks.

Fresh mint can enhance the quality and taste of so many refreshments. Add it to your water to help with nausea or fatigue, or simply to enjoy its wonderful flavour. Toss in a lemon wedge and getting your eight glasses a day won't feel like a chore anymore.

Give your guests a taste of spring with one of these simple, pretty and refreshing drinks:



With the addition of ginger and raw honey, this tasty drink boasts even more health benefits and is a wonderful solution for upset stomach and indigestion.

MINT & GINGER LEMONADE Makes 4 servings

½ cup chopped fresh mint leaves

⅓ cup chopped fresh ginger

⅓ cup raw honey

2 cups boiling water

Juice of 2 lemons

1 ½ cups cold water

 Combine mint, ginger and honey in a bowl. Add boiling water. Let steep for half hour. Strain into juice jug, extracting as much liquid as possible. Add lemon juice and cold water. Pour over ice and garnish with mint leaves and lemon slices.

This powerhouse smoothie is hearty enough to replace a meal and a great way to start the day or give you that afternoon pick-me-up.

MINT SUPERFOOD SMOOTHIE

Makes one 16 oz serving

1 cup almond or coconut milk

8-10 leaves fresh mint (try chocolate mint variety)

1 frozen banana

½ cup spinach

1 tbsp cacao nibs

1 tbsp hemp seeds

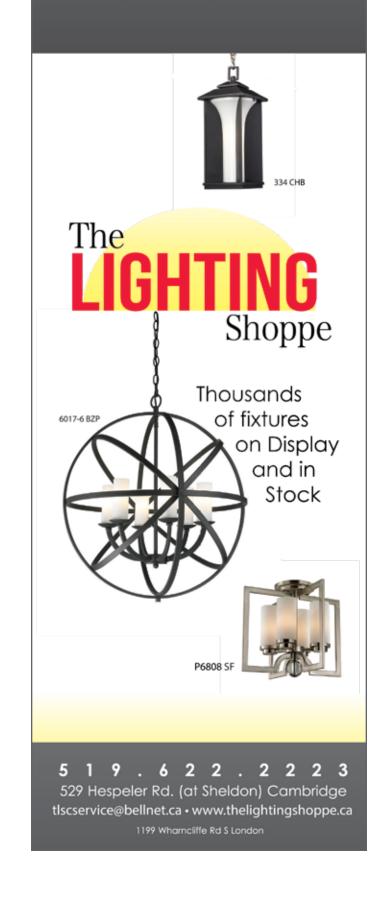
2 medjool dates, pitted

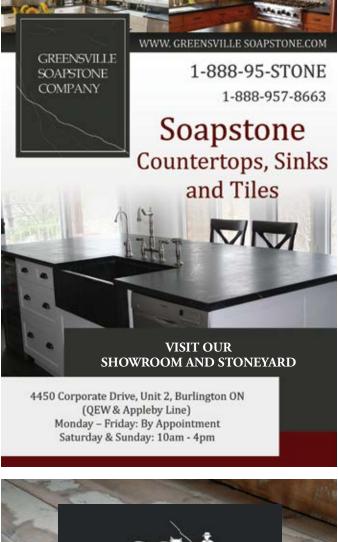
1 scoop protein powder

1/2 cup ice

 Add all ingredients to a highpowered blender and blend until smooth. Serve immediately. OH

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BLINDS ARE US

From early morning breakfasts with families sitting around the counter to late night parties that end up in the kitchen, barstools have become an essential piece of furniture in today's homes. Quality and comfort are the most important features to consider when purchasing stools - after all, you're going to use them a lot.

Getting the height right is important. The wrong height can leave you hunched over your meal or resting your chin on the counter for an uncomfortable experience for you and your guests. Blinds Are Us carries barstools in four

heights instead of two to make sure you get the perfect fit.

With an endless selection of options available, you create a stool that is just for you. From the frame finish, fabric, leather or wood, you select each and every element of your stool, making it fit your style and your family.

Guaranteed for 10 years and Canadian made from recyclable materials, choosing these stools from our store is a no brainer. Blinds Are Us is happy to partner with Canadian family run businesses because we know that those qualities mean great service and great quality.

Try them for yourself and feel the difference. Your bum deserves better!

299 Manitou Drive, Kitchener 519.893.8687 • www.blindsareus.ca (Please see ad on page 35)

LAKE AND POND CARE

Fish Farm Supply Co. has been helping lake and pond owners for more than 25 years to manage and improve their water bodies. We have helped owners with ponds ranging in size from small



b a c k y a r d lined ponds, to large rural fire ponds

and irrigation ponds to 500 acre lakes. There is no pond that we are not prepared to help you with.

We carry a wide variety of solutions ranging from fountains to beneficial bacteria and are happy to offer advice and information to help you make the right choices for your property. We have the ability to help you in our retail store located in Elmira or can offer an onsite visit for a small fee to discuss the needs and challenges specific to your pond. We also offer repair services for many fountains and aeration windmill brands to make sure that all your equipment is running optimally. We at Fish farm Supply Co. know that water bodies can be challenging and we look forward to helping you learn how to manage your pond or lake.

Fish Farm Supply Co. • 116 Bonnie Cres, Elmira 1.877.669.1096 • www.fishfarmsupply.ca info@fishfarmsupply.ca (*Please see ad on page 27*)



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HEER'S PAINT & DÉCOR

What started as a paint and wallpaper store on Belmont Boulevard in 1955 is now one of the area's most reliable paint and décor companies, continually dedicated to quality products and customer service. During more than 50 years of business, the Heer family has learned a thing or two about our region's décor needs - and they have evolved accordingly.



Michelle Heer-Maue has become one of Waterloo Region's most highly respected décor experts. Heer's caters to a variety

of styles, but always aims to keep things fresh. All the employees know what's trendy, but they also know what works in a room (and what doesn't!) so they can help customers with any project they have in mind. Heer's now offers in-home consultations, floor plans and presentations, custom draperies and blinds, complete product installation, shopping services and building and remodeling assistance.

Each store carries a selection of accessories and artwork. Visit us at any of our four, full service decorating centres. **428 Gage Ave. In Kitchener**

1120 Victoria St. N. in Kitchener 245 Edinburgh Rd. S. in Guelph 583 King St. N. in Waterloo 519.578.5330 • www.heerspaint.com (Please see ad on page 25)

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After 20 years and over 300 custom homes, Heisler Homes has proven itself as a leader in the custom home building industry. We have received multiple awards for our outstanding floor designs, beautiful bathrooms and functional kitchens. Heisler Homes is now using that experience to build top quality townhomes and singles on 40' lots. "We are bringing the custom home building



experience and opportunities to all segments of the market". Unique craftsmanship, the highest of standards and premium custom finishes is what Heisler Homes embodies in all of our projects. We would also be pleased to design and build your dream home on your lot to your specifications.

Currently in Carriage Crossing we are building our highly sought-after executive townhomes with spacious singledetached homes on 40' lots to come in Phase 2.

Carriage Crossing is a neighbourhood with many desired features such as walking trails, golf course, sports fields, parks, walk to Italian Café, animal hospital, pharmacy and more. For more information go to www.heislerhomes.ca or visit our model home located at 109 Oak Park Drive, Waterloo. Monday-Thursday from 4-7 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday from 1-5 p.m. or call Sandra Reier at 519.742.5800 ext. 2234. sreier@coldwellbankerpbr.com (Please see ad on page 2)



directory

OUR HOMES attracts the area's finest businesses to advertise in our pages, and utilize our unparalleled distribution and coffee-table appeal to market their products and services. We're making it easier for you, our readers, to become educated as you plan your home-and real estate-related purchasing decisions. View these business ads online at www.ourhomes.ca/waterloo

The listings below are organized alphabetically by industry.

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