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editor's note



IN UNIVERSITY, MY
ROOMMATE AND I

made it our mission to spread the word in our residence building about how horrible Styrofoam is for the environment. At the time, our cafeteria was using Styrofoam plates and we watched mountains of them pile up

in the garbage bins every day. We could only imagine how many tonnes were headed to the landfill just from our one building – and Styrofoam never decomposes.

We were passionate about the environment then and we still are now. Except now we have the ability to make our own decisions about what we serve our meals on. The same goes for everything else in and on our homes.

All homeowners have the ability to make earth-friendly choices – and there are many. My husband and I recently had our roof replaced before installing solar panels. We spent hours researching our options for roofing materials and then the panels we'd install on top of them. Aside from quality, we wanted long-lasting and locally made wherever possible.

Now, we're hooked up to the grid and summer sunshine makes me happier than ever (I didn't know that was even possible!). I feel great about harnessing all that clean energy.

This summer, we're working hard on our yard and our home's exterior. In addition to the roof and solar panels, we've built a huge play set, raised bed vegetable gardens, window boxes for flowers and we're battling weeds and trying to improve our lawn. I'm also thinking of painting the front door. This issue is packed with outdoor living and decorating content, such as how to make concrete planters (page 46), upping the ante on your entryway (page 12) and styling your outdoor space (page 34), as well as some helpful gardening tips (page 16). I hope you'll also try to be earth-friendly whenever possible.

What's on your to-do list this summer?

Adrienne

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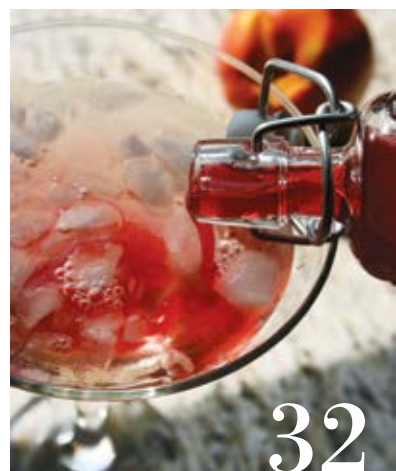
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CONTENTS

SUMMER 2016



22



32



38

ON THE COVER

Modern builds are gaining popularity in Waterloo Region. Story, page 38. Photography by Jason Hartog.



14



LOCAL FEATURES

- 14 Style Picks** Get cottage chic for a summer inspired by lakeside living.
- 22 Feature Home** Redecorating a Doon Village home in Kitchener.
- 30 Comfort Zone** Open the door to Riverside Millwork Group.
- 38 Home & Builder** Unique modern living for a family of five in Kitchener.
- 52 People** Proud local business owners are ready to help.

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 Editor's Note**
- 12 Advice** Front Entries That Pop
- 16 Gardening** Grow Well
- 18 Outdoor Living** Light The Night
- 32 Good Taste** Cheers to Cordial
- 34 Decorating** Outdoor Furniture
- 36 Real Estate** Water-Smart Gardening
- 46 Crafty Ideas** DIY Concrete Planters
- 48 Cooking At Home** Tasty Steak Tacos
- 56 Design Ideas** White Kitchens
- 58 Home Resource Directory**
- 60 Double Take** Cottage Bunks
- 62 Finishing Touch** Sweet Seashells



30



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FRONT ENTRIES

Much like your smile when meeting someone for the first time, your front door is the first impression of your home. It hints at the style to be found on the inside. Sometimes mess will permeate a front porch. Sometimes tidiness seems to glow from the inside out. There may be a hint of family life, a dog or kids, or a hint of artfulness – a homemade bench or a welcoming chalkboard. Whichever category you fall into, your front entry provides a clue to what lies ahead.

So how can we personalize such a small and seemingly important space?

A home will dictate the style of entry to a point, but it is also where you can add your own flair. For instance, you could add a glass door with a modern, lever handle to a red brick Victorian to give it a more contemporary edge. Eliminating the traditional, raised-panel, solid wood door will allow light to flow into your hallway and bring a modern touch to the outside of the home. For these changes to be made on a Victorian-style house, check with your local heritage society to ensure there are no restrictions on your updates.



1

ADD COLOUR

One easy tool for change is paint. For instance, an otherwise simple door redone in a bright welcoming colour can completely transform the feel of your home. Sometimes a good paint job is the best solution for a quick clean-up. Farrow & Ball has fabulous palette recommendations for window trim, shutters and front doors.



CHANGE HARDWARE

I really like the trend towards oversize door hardware. Rather than using a simple lever or knob, an oversize handle looks contemporary and unique. It defines the front door and provides a great design feature, dressing up an otherwise lacklustre, functional piece. The style works with modern and traditional depending on the finish of the hardware. See Rocky Mountain Hardware for a more traditional finish and Unison Hardware, Inc. for a more modern look.

IMPROVE FUNCTION

We are about to embark on a renovation and one of the items I'm most excited about is a steel grate at my front door (for inside too). This is a functional decision. We have a lot of gravel around our house and dirt seems to follow my kids and pets wherever they go. Insert a grate at the door so sand and gravel will fall right through and you can minimize your sweeping efforts. It also doubles as a slip-resistant surface.



UPDATE LIGHTING

Lighting is key for your front door. I prefer a very small and sleek light at the entry if it's coupled with some overhead LED pot lights to really illuminate the area. With LEDs being so small and versatile, lighting options have become much more creative. For a modern approach, use strip lighting under the nosing of your stairs to light up each step. It's a cool look and really useful on a dark night.

ACCESSORIZE

Last but not least, if you're into accessorizing, try contemporary style numbers for your house in a coordinating but contrasting colour. And you will probably have a plant and a mat. Every time we go away our plant dies at our front door, which is why I'm so intrigued by a self-watering planter. Maybe it's just laziness but I was one step away from purchasing a plastic plant and I think these are genius. Now, I just have to remember to fill up the water reservoir!



5

248⁶

One of the best ways to assess a situation is to stand back and take a photo, then look at the photo. What do you see that you don't like? Sometimes a new perspective is all it takes to gain a little creative insight. Good Luck! **OH**

1. FARROW & BALL: Rectory Red No. 217 Estate Emulsion 2. UNISON HARDWARE, INC.: Inox T-Shape Commercial Door Pull 3. ROCKY MOUNTAIN HARDWARE: Metro Entry Set 2-1/4 x 30" in Silicon Bronze Rust 4. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Luna Outdoor LED Wall Light 5. BARRACUDA INC: Dot Self-Watering Planter 6. NUMBER MY HOUSE: Modern House Numbers



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COTTAGE Chic

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GARDENS AGING *gracefully*

STORY AND PHOTOS **MELANIE REKOLA**

In life, things change – there is no avoiding it. And the ability to accept and adapt to change often dictates success. As with life, so it is with gardens. It is through adversity that both evolve. With some maintenance, you can delight in watching your garden getting better with age.

Great results take great sacrifice and a ripened garden takes work to realize its full potential. Gardens don't necessarily evolve naturally in a way that is pleasing. Saplings grow into full-bodied trees and a once sunny spot filled with abundant blooms becomes a shady nook with sporadic blossoms atop straggly stems. Mortar crumbles, patios heave and wood rots. The casualties of pruning mishaps are evident in evergreens with bare spots and trees sporting right-angled branching. Misguided pruning shows in hedging-gone-wild and gargantuan shrubbery blocking pathways and windows. Invasive triffids slink into the lawn. Alien species choke out the more delicate likes. Sadly the garden then resembles the Amazonian jungle more closely than a beautifully planted property. But, with change comes great opportunity. Amazing and exceptional beauty can be preserved and expressed with a few simple tactics!

1 Assess your landscape with fresh eyes. Look at your garden from the whole perspective to decide what should stay, what should go and what should be changed. Don't focus on the emotional value of individual plants or outdoor objets d'art. Search for great bones lurking in the depths, and place equal importance on function and beauty. Write it all down.

TIP: This impassive approach is easier said than done for many, so if the going gets tough, enlist a friend with good taste or hire a professional.

2 Proper pruning can reinvigorate a well-established garden. To me, there is nothing as beautiful as mature wood, no matter if it's tree, shrub or vine. A lovely tunnel effect can be achieved by pruning out passageways and leaving overhanging branches above head height. This technique can also be used alongside a patio lending a divine feeling of walls and ceiling to an outdoor room. Where possible, remove only one-third of live wood at a time. Sometimes a shrub has grown so gangly there is no possible way to prune it aesthetically. In those cases the shrub can be lopped to the ground in hopes of rejuvenation. It's worth a try, as life wants to keep living!

TIP: Leave some dead wood, somewhere, to provide homes for our native stingless bee species that need our help by way of habitat.

3 Culling the garden can be a sensitive task, especially for those who place emotional attachment on vegetation. But realize many plants

can be relocated, grown in a pot or given away. A struggling plant will require removal. Invasive plant species must go! Research your hostile offenders to choose the best course of eradication. Chemicals are not an option as a mature garden is a living, breathing ecosystem that many life forms have become dependent on. Digging and picking out the roots or layering newspaper with mulch placed on the surface may be the only option to stifle out noxious plants. Plastic is not an ideal choice as it will rob existing tree roots of needed moisture, often killing nearby trees.

TIP: Relocate any spiders and toads you disturb to retain their natural, pest-consuming attributes for your property ecology. Adding bat houses and attracting birds will also help keep down the mosquito populous that often plague shady yards.

4 Explore the world of new plants adapted to your garden's evolution when considering new additions. Shade gardens, though more discreet, can be as stimulating as sun gardens, but with more focus around foliage and form rather than flowers. Pale blossoms, markings and silvery foliage look especially beautiful in shade and glow in low-light situations.

TIP: The soil around conifers is naturally acidic, opening opportunity for plants that enjoy this environment, such as blueberry, blue hydrangeas and lupines.

It is said life brings us not what we want, but what we need. Case in point, patience is not a personality aptitude I naturally possess. But when it comes to the garden, I have infinite tolerance and endurance. Gardens, like fine wine, improve with age. Both are worth the wait. **OH**

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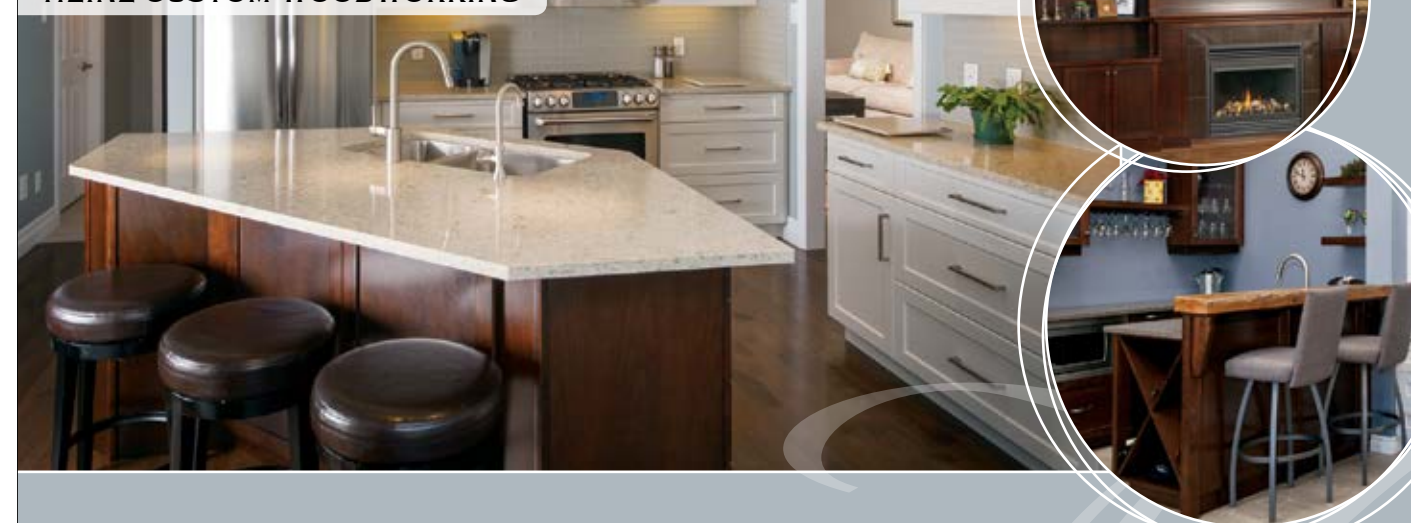
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NIGHT LIGHTS

ILLUSTRATION HINKLEY LIGHTING

With a few beams of light, your outdoor spaces can sparkle underneath the night sky. Light fixtures in the right place will enhance your yard's style and extend your evening's outdoor entertaining. OUR HOMES shows you how to light your property and offers some style ideas.



1. Flush Mounts light seating areas, balconies or porches with lower ceiling heights.

2. Hanging lanterns hang over outdoor dining areas or on porches with high ceilings.

3. Wall lanterns commonly light exterior doors for increased visibility and safety.

4. Post/Pier lanterns are often used to light the end of a driveway or front yard. They can also be used on top of a deck or fence post (not illustrated above).

5. Spot Lights allow you to highlight features in your yard with uplighting, shadowing or grazing techniques.

6. Well Lights are commonly used in uplighting and grazing techniques but can also be used for shadowing.

7. Hardscape Lights highlight larger structures such as built-in seating, deck or fence rails or retaining walls.

8. Deck Lights are mounted to deck posts, pergolas or gazebos to light the space perimeter.

9. Step Lights guide foot traffic, especially where there is a change in elevation.

10. Path Lights illuminate a walkway.

HINKLEY LIGHTING: 5. 3W LED Cast Aluminum Spot Beam 6. 50W Brass Well Light 7. Nexus Small Aluminum Hardscape Deck Light 8. Hardy Island Cast Brass Round Eyebrow Deck Sconce 9. Luna Zinc-Aluminum Alloy LED Step Light 10. Atlantis Natural Cedar and Aluminum LED Path Light

Continued on page 20

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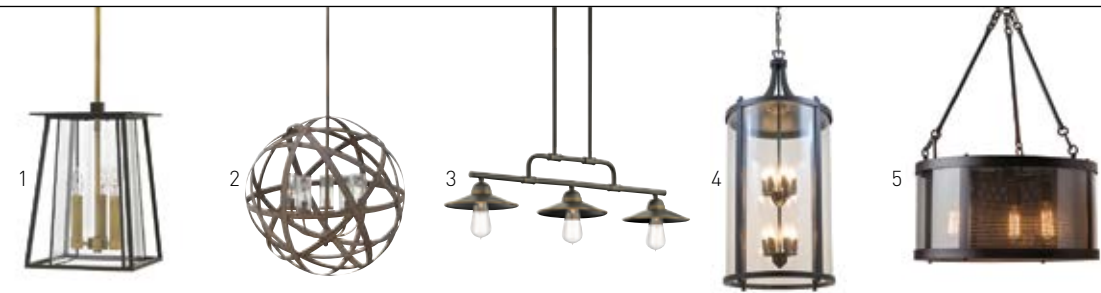
FLUSH MOUNTS

1. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Cape Cod in Aged Zinc 2. KICHLER: Ashland Bay 3. FEISS: Freemont in Hi Gloss Grey 4. PROGRESS LIGHTING: Westport in Antique Bronze 5. DVI LIGHTING: Niagara in Hammered Black



HANGING LANTERNS (LARGE)

1. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Walker in Buckeye Bronze & Heritage Brass 2. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Carson 26.5-inch in Iron Rust 3. KICHLER: Westington 3-Light in Olde Bronze 4. DVI LIGHTING: Niagara 35-inch, 12-Light 5. FEISS: Bluffton 3-Light in Oil Rubbed Bronze



HANGING LANTERNS (SMALL)

1. ELK: Dune Road 2. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Dorian LED in Titanium 3. PROGRESS LIGHTING: District in Metallic Gray 4. PROGRESS LIGHTING: Botta Small in Antique Bronze 5. KICHLER: Venetian Rain 2-Light in Black with Gold



WALL LANTERNS

1. PROGRESS LIGHTING: Brookside 12-inch in Cognac 2. KICHLER: Clear Point 1-Light 3. FEISS: Arramore 1-Light LED in Dark Weathered Zinc 4. FEISS: Freemont 1-Light in Hi Gloss Blue 5. HINKLEY LIGHTING: Aria



POST/PIER LANTERNS

1. KICHLER: Halleron 3-Light 2. FEISS: Chelsea Harbor 7-inch in Storm Cloud 3. FEISS: Lighthouse in Brushed Steel 4. PROGRESS LIGHTING: Township in Oil Rubbed Bronze 5. FEISS: Menlo Park in Cinnamon OH



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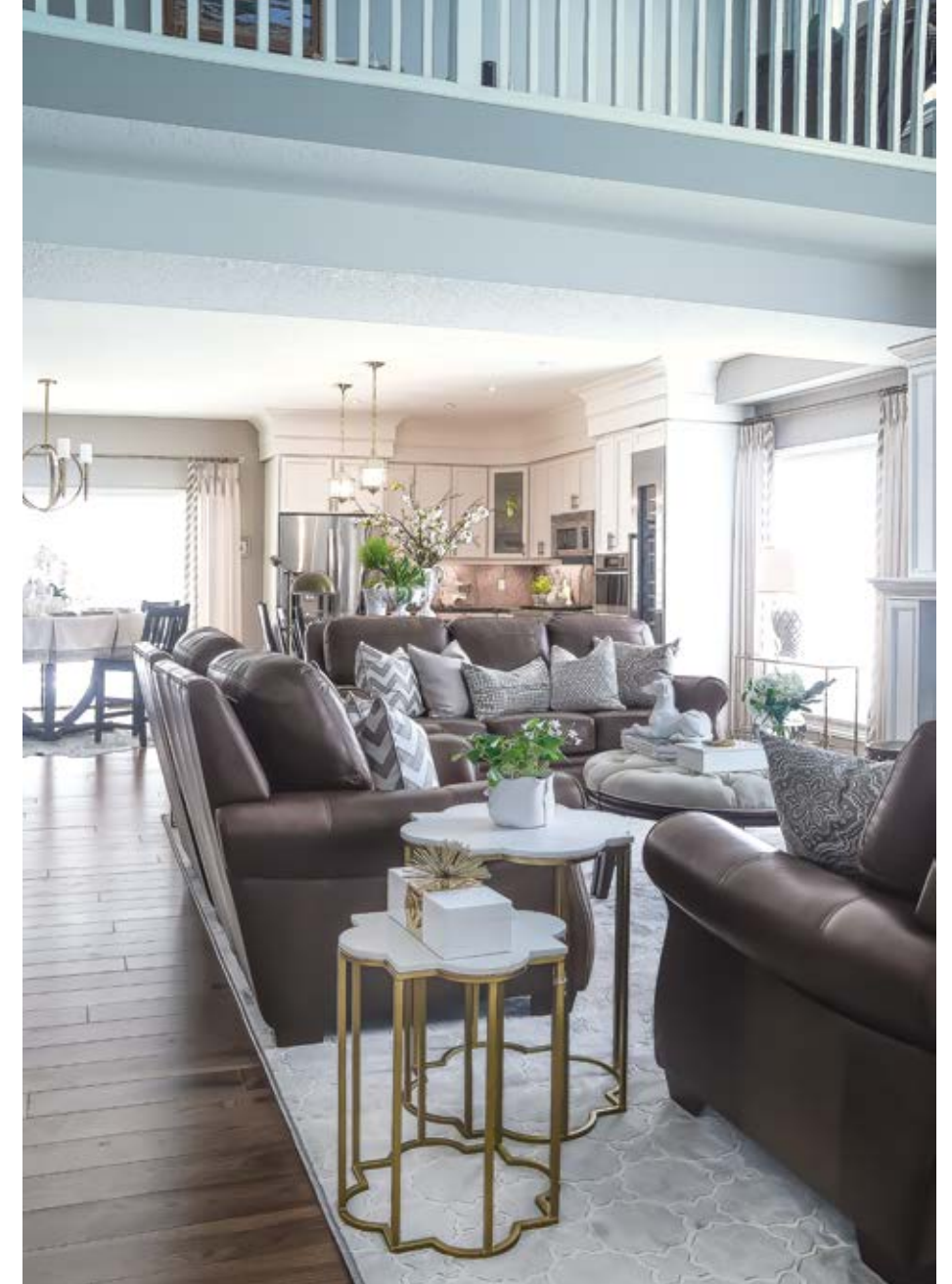
STORY ADRIENNE BROWN
PHOTOGRAPHY TARA WEST



It can be amazing how different the same home can look depending on successive owners' tastes. Take, for example, this home in Kitchener's Doon Village, recently redesigned and redecorated by **Sandi Duclos** of **Sandi Loreen Duclos Interiors**.

When its current owners purchased the home, it was awash in black and gothic-style décor. The current owner still chuckles over the number of crystal fixtures her predecessor managed to incorporate into the décor. "Crystals everywhere!" she laughs. Some rooms she loved as-is, such as her rich slate-and-wood en suite, but the crystals had to go.

Now, the home is lighter, brighter and easier on the eyes. Everything is more subdued. Although their previous home had more of a country feel to it, the homeowner says she told Duclos they were "ready for a change. So we went for a transitional feel," she says. As avid entertainers, they wanted everything to look nice for guests, especially the kitchen and main living space. *Continued on page 24*



TOP LEFT: The homeowners called Sandi Duclos from Sandi Loreen Duclos Interiors to help them redecorate their new-to-them home. **TOP RIGHT:** The view from the front foyer through the main living space to the kitchen. **ABOVE:** Duclos is partial to special details to really pull a space together. **OPPOSITE:** Light, neutral walls set the backdrop for sleek furniture and pretty accessories that dress up the dining space and beyond.

RIGHT: A fresh coat of light-coloured paint on the cabinetry instantly brightened the previously dark kitchen. **BELOW:** An interesting tablescape is an instant conversation starter for dinner parties.



After painting all the walls, installing custom draperies and installing new flooring, the whole house felt more like home for the new owners. “Paint made the biggest difference in this space,” says Duclos.

Len Koebel Flooring Ltd. installed new hardwood floors throughout the upper level and Duclos sourced area carpets from both **Fitzgerald Carpet One Floor & Home** and **Alexanian Carpet & Flooring**. Duclos designed the custom draperies herself and had them made by **It’s Curtains For You**.

The staircase and railing feature fairly prominently, since they are situated in the middle of the home and lead up to an open-to-above landing area that looks down over the living space. Duclos had **Riley Painting Corp.** repaint the railings in white.

They also repainted all of the kitchen cabinetry. Luckily, the

appliances were all top quality and once the cabinets and walls were painted, the dark granite on the island suited the homeowners’ tastes, so it didn’t need to be replaced. Duclos had custom moulding and trim installed to give the kitchen more visual interest. “The bones were really good, it just needed the cosmetic update,” she says.

In the great room, the homeowners replaced a DIY fireplace and mantel with a whole new unit in white, then situated their television over top. The homeowner said she had originally asked Duclos to embellish and improve what was already there, but Duclos recommended replacing the whole thing.

Now, the homeowners spend many evenings sitting together in the comfortable leather recliners here and they’re glad they went for the full refresh. *Continued on page 26*



A dark island, statement pendant lights and tall wine fridge are all details that make this kitchen special. It may not be overly large, but it’s functional and beautiful.



LEFT: This hall table in the front entrance fits perfectly in the wall space separating a main-floor office, to the left, and the rest of the living space to the right. **BELOW:** This bedroom has a masculine feel without going overboard. Duclos had the side chair recovered to suit the space.

Overhead in the great room is a large double fan the homeowner says was originally purchased just for its appearance – it’s a style she’d always liked. “I just wanted it because it looked pretty but it’s actually really functional,” she says.

On the wall is a treasured family heirloom, now framed in gold. The antique scythe belonged to one of the homeowners’ grandfathers. It had been sitting above their fireplace, but Duclos says it just didn’t pop – but she had a solution for that. Duclos set about gold-leafing a board then had **Waterloo Framing & Art** mount and frame the scythe onto the board. It’s now the perfect adornment to the great room’s high wall.

On the opposite side of the main floor is a large office with floor-to-ceiling built-in storage. The homeowners believe it had previously served as a dressing room, but they use it as an office for two.

Duclos redesigned one of the home’s main bedrooms to appeal to the



male homeowner. Its masculine touches mean the space is tailored just for him. He selected a bedroom set from **Penwood Hand-Crafted Furniture** and Duclos had **Acadian Upholstery And Interior** reupholster a vintage channel-back chair for the corner of the room (they also reupholstered a bench in the home’s front entrance).

She had a custom closet organization system installed by **California Closets** so he can see everything in his wardrobe. It may not be large, but it’s an efficient use of space and, with the addition of a large mirror, feels like a luxurious dressing room.

Similarly, Duclos gutted and redesigned his adjacent bathroom. **Chervin Kitchen & Bath Inc.** installed new cabinetry, the shower got a refresh and Duclos found the right art and accessories to make the bathroom feel like an extension of the bedroom, although it’s not a true en suite. Storage was an important factor in the redesign, so the vanity offers deep drawers and the medicine cabinet is recessed into the wall to add extra inches of valuable space.

Schmidt Custom Carpentry Inc. is the contractor who made Duclos’s plans in the upstairs bathroom, bedroom and walk-in closet a reality. *Continued on page 28*



ABOVE: Duclos also redesigned this luxurious shower with a bench seat. **TOP LEFT:** A hexagonal floor is visually interesting in this bathroom, while the vanity and medicine cabinet were designed with functionality and storage space in mind.





LEFT: With a place for everything, plus a floor-length mirror, this organized closet is the ideal men's dressing space. **BELOW:** The antique scythe hanging high on the wall has sentimental value for the homeowners. Duclos gave it the attention it deserves by mounting it on gold. **BOTTOM:** The basement bathroom has huge wow factor – the homeowners didn't want anything dull and boring, so Duclos started with a statement wallpaper and built on it.



In the basement, the homeowners have a gym and more entertaining space. They had Duclos add some oomph to the large bathroom downstairs. She opted for a bold, dark wallpaper and striking art. It works well with the rest of the basement, where the homeowners keep their collections of music memorabilia and hockey jerseys.

The backyard is its own great entertaining area, with beautiful landscaping and a waterfall. Their yard looks out to greenspace, so the homeowners often see deer grazing in their back or side yards.

Although the home wasn't quite to their tastes when they moved in, they're glad they could see past the surface and find a designer who could really make it right for them. **OH**

Some décor and accent pieces courtesy Bowring Sunrise Shopping Centre, Kitchener. Styling assistance was provided by Jules For Your Home.



PHOTO: SANDRA MONACO PHOTOGRAPHY





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INTERIORS

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sandiloreenduclosinteriors.ca



KNOCK KNOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY **TARA WEST**

THE PLACE: Riverside Door & Trim has provided southwestern Ontario builders, contractors and homeowners with interior doors, mouldings, custom wood doors (interior and entry), door hardware and locksets, closet organizers and basic cabinetry and hardwood flooring for over 10 years. However, last year, it joined forces with London's Country Heritage Forest Products to become the **Riverside Millwork Group**. Now, still owned by the Gianniotis family, the company offers large, exceptionally outfitted showrooms in Waterloo and London of over 2,500 square feet, showcasing the latest in interior millwork trends. Visit their showrooms to see, touch and feel the products that will make your house a home – from doors, trim and railings to locks, knobs and decorative hardware.



Mario, George and Stelios Gianniotis

THE STYLE: Managing Partner Mario Gianniotis says Riverside Millwork Group's two locations have a little bit of everything on display, whether your style is modern, contemporary, traditional or craftsman. They provide different looks "in application" in their showrooms. If it's not on display you're invited to browse through their literature to find what you're after.

WHAT'S HOT: "Large, bulky mouldings and millwork have made a big comeback in fashion," says Gianniotis. "Our mill is producing high-end doors, mouldings and millwork for higher end homes." Similarly, he says, clean lines and modern, minimal mouldings and doors have made a big statement as of late. "Solid brass or bronze hardware for doors has also become a must on higher end projects."



SEASONAL: Gianniotis says "the up and comer" of Riverside's product mix is its closet organization line. "People are putting more emphasis on this area of their homes and devoting more of their budget in new builds and renovations to this area," he says. Have Riverside Millwork Group quote on your custom closet organization system or a mudroom space tailored just for your home.

FAVOURITES: "We have done tons of unique projects!" says Gianniotis. The team is always up for a challenge and love to try something new so ask about your custom project and the team at Riverside Millwork Group will help you from planning through execution.

WHERE: 520 Conestogo Rd., Waterloo
519.578.3265 | riversidemillwork.ca **OH**



good taste



Summer CORDIAL

STORY AND PHOTOS **PAT CROCKER**

This cordial is one of a few homemade drink syrups that give my entertaining a very personal flavour. I enjoy having this on hand for mixing tall, summer iced refreshers and winter cocktails.

Combined with carbonated mineral water or chilled white wine, it makes a light and fruity drink. Mixed with spirits, the result is a dark and mysteriously delicious drink with plenty of panache. Brandy adds an alcohol dimension to this rich, dark syrup, but is not required, especially if you want to keep your drink options open and use it in a non-alcoholic punch.

BLACKBERRY CORDIAL (Makes 4 cups)

3 lbs blackberries

1-½ cups water

1 tsp whole cloves

1 tsp freshly grated
or ground nutmeg

½ tsp ground cinnamon

¼ cup freshly
squeezed lemon juice

3 cups granulated sugar

⅓ cup brandy, optional

- In a large stockpot or canning kettle, combine blackberries, water, cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the blackberries are very soft.
- Strain through a cheesecloth-lined sieve, allowing the juice to drip into a non-reactive bowl or pan overnight. Combine the strained blackberry juice, lemon juice and sugar in a large saucepan or canning kettle. Bring to a boil over high heat and boil for 1 minute.
- Skim and discard any foam. Stir in brandy if using. Pour into 2 pint or a 1-litre jar, cap, label and let cool. Store cordial in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.

NOTE: If you fill Mason-type jars, cap with 2-piece canning lids, cover them with boiling water and keep the water boiling for 10 minutes and the cordial will keep for up to 1 year. Refrigerate the cordial once the jar is open.



Use: Blackberry Cordial is perfect for making Kir: combine 2 Tbsp Blackberry Cordial with 1 cup white wine or champagne. I have tossed it with fresh fruit as a quick dessert and it is a great base for Blackberry Granita: in the bowl of a blender, combine ½ cup Blackberry Cordial with 10 ice cubes. Process on “chop” until ice is blended with the cordial. Serve with a spoon. **OH**

Pat Crocker is a Culinary Herbalist, writing and growing herbs in Grey County. She is the author of 18 cookbooks, including her latest, Kitchen Herbal.



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OUTDOOR STYLE



STORY **JACKIE GLASS**

It's time to reclaim our outdoor spaces and transform them into easy-living summer rooms that transition seamlessly from inside to out. Today, there's no reason why you can't design your outdoor living spaces as beautifully as those you've created indoors.

If you're like me and enjoy making the most of our short fair-weather season, you already know the importance of creating outdoor living spaces that are perfectly situated, attractive, comfortable and easy to maintain. It all comes down to clever planning and smart buying.

Whether you're simply updating and refreshing your existing garden furniture or shopping for a whole new look, it's important to know what to look for when buying durable and stylish outdoor furniture and how to properly maintain your investment. These key tips will have you dining al fresco, day or night, and spending more time outdoors enjoying the experience with family and friends.

This season's patio furniture offers the convenience of superior weather-resistant, low-maintenance materials and is designed to be lightweight for easy portability and storage at the end of the season. From traditional natural teak and powder-coated aluminum to natural and all-weather wicker and innovative plastics, today's durable outdoor furniture will create instant style, comfort and function in any outdoor living space no matter the size of your space or budget.

Plan, Budget & Measure

My best advice as a designer is to budget and plan before you buy. Just like you would when designing an interior space, determine a style and how you want to use your outdoor space. Do you cook, dine and entertain regularly outdoors or do you simply want a private, shady spot in the garden where you can get away and relax? If your yard is large you may want to consider creating multiple outdoor spaces, each focused on a different activity.

Once you've determined your style and needs, grab a tape measure and measure your outdoor "rooms," taking location into consideration such as the proximity to the kitchen for a dining area, sun/shade exposure and the quietest spot in the garden. Make some notes then look for inspiration to get an idea of style, scale, construction, availability and pricing before heading out to buy. Smart planning and shopping will help you find exactly what you're looking for and avoid disappointment and costly, time-consuming mistakes.

Make It Last

Buy the best quality outdoor furniture you can afford and keep these quick tips in mind to maximize the life expectancy of your furniture.

- When in doubt, hire a professional designer and landscaper to save time and money in the long run.
- Ensure all fasteners (nuts, bolts, washers, etc.) are rust-proof stainless steel.
- Choose furniture that's made of weather-resistant material (see "Select Your Type").
- Choose only tempered glass for tabletops for safety and make sure they are scratch, impact, and heat-resistant.
- Fabrics for cushions should be labelled UV tested and made of acrylic materials that are water-resistant.
- Look for cushions with foam cores wrapped in water-resistant, breathable synthetic fibre padding.
- Accents like rugs, lights and heaters add comfort and extend the use and enjoyment of your outdoor living spaces.
- The more you shade your furniture, the longer it will last while providing comfort for you and your guests. Consider adding trees, umbrellas, gazebos and shade structures.
- Clean with a soft cloth using only mild dish soap and warm water or cleaners specifically formulated to protect fabrics and all outdoor furniture, including aluminum, plastic, steel, resin, wicker, wood and rattan.
- Wipe down furniture after it rains to reduce water exposure and wipe away food and spills immediately.
- Cover all furniture when not in use.
- For fast and easy end-of-season storage, consider choosing folding or stacking dining chairs and tables.
- Clean, dry and cover all outdoor furniture and cushions before storing to avoid mould, cracking and rot.

Select Your Type

Choosing the right type of outdoor furniture to suit your style, location and lifestyle all starts with knowing how and where you plan to use it. For small, protected spaces like a covered balcony or porch that aren't exposed to heavy rains or high winds, you can consider small-scale, lightweight pieces. Heavier, full-size, more durable furniture should be considered for large, unprotected outdoor areas that get used regularly for entertaining and dining.

Although design options and construction of all-weather furnishings have come a long way, remember that, unlike interior furniture, outdoor furniture will inherently be exposed to much more abuse by both people and the elements so invest in the best quality, construction and materials you can afford. Consider the following for the most durable and popular types of outdoor furniture available today.

Wood: For a relaxed, rustic look, hardwoods such as teak are naturally sturdy and offer high resistance to the elements. Wood furniture is best stored indoors during the winter months.

Iron: Iron patio furniture lends a traditional look, is almost impossible to damage and won't topple in high winds. Add cushions for comfort and protect with rust-resistant paint.

Aluminum: Durable powder-coated aluminum sets give a modern look, require minimum maintenance and are lightweight for easy portability. Most are stackable for easy storage.

Steel: For a contemporary design theme, stainless steel furniture is a bit lighter than iron and offers an appealing lustre that resists corrosion. Highly durable and easy to maintain and clean.

Wicker: Offering a romantic natural look, lightweight yet durable natural wicker furniture is typically made from bamboo, cane or rattan. All-weather wicker is made from synthetic resin fibres woven around the frame, and then coated with durable weather-resistant finishes.

Plastic: 100 per cent recycled, high-density polyethylene furniture is non-porous, wipes clean with soap and water and is available in a wide range of fade-resistant colours. This material can be left outdoors year-round. **OH**





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STORY **ADRIENNE BROWN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **CHARLES MANN**

No doubt everyone in your neighbourhood has a different approach to watering plants through the summer months: there are those who over-water, those who let their gardens dry up to desert-like states and many variations in between with endless methods of water application.

This summer, help your plants thrive and add value to your property by adopting some water-smart gardening practices. Your yard, the environment and your wallet will all thank you.

"In a nutshell, a water-smart garden is a sustainable garden, where conserving and nurturing all natural resources leads to a healthy, mature landscape," says Diana Maranhao, author of *Water-Smart Gardening: Save Water, Save Money, and Grow the Garden You Want*. Anyone can achieve this through a combination of conservation methods and good gardening practices that will help maintain, preserve and nurture soil and water supplies. Once plants have what they need to grow to maturity, she says, "they can survive and thrive on what Mother Nature provides!"

INCREASE YOUR PROPERTY VALUE

According to Maranhao, "Planting, nurturing and growing healthy trees adds assessed value of between \$1,000 and \$10,000 to properties," depending upon the maturity, type and number of trees. Similarly, she adds, "Developed landscapes add as much as 20 per cent to total property values – not to mention the energy savings from the cooling effect of mature trees around a home." So what are you waiting for?

START SAVING: 3 STRATEGIES

Although Maranhao outlines in her book countless ways to save water and grow a garden destined for longevity, she offers her top three water-saving strategies:

1. Apply and Re-apply Mulch

If you only do one thing for your garden this year, says Maranhao, make it mulch. A thick layer (about three to five inches) of organic mulch across your whole garden will conserve water immediately. It seals in moisture, cools the soil and plant roots, creates a layer of darkness that discourages weed-seed germination, reduces sun damage on plants, diminishes erosion and protects soil from drying winds.

"Chipped tree trimmings, pine needles and shredded bark are my favourites in the landscape," says Maranhao. "Allow leaves that fall from trees to lie where they fall or rake them up if they shade the lawn and spread them elsewhere in the garden. Use straw in the veggie garden – it's good for at least two seasons before you can rototill it in."

2. Share the Resources

Zone your plants so you can water sections of your garden accordingly. Group low-water need plants together, plant shallow-rooting shrubs and flowers under trees with deep root systems and try incorporating your edibles into your wider landscape so they can help each other out.

3. Capture, Direct and Slow the Flow of Water

This is the year to finally install a rain barrel! Capture the free stuff falling from the sky. If you already have a rain barrel and are looking for more ways to minimize your water bill, Maranhao suggests creating and moulding the landscape that will best direct the flow of water where you need it: berms, basins and swales can all work to your advantage.

STOP WASTING

Being water smart isn't just about installing rain barrels or irrigation systems. It's also about changing bad habits that waste water.

Give plants the space they need to grow to maturity and water them slowly and deeply to the entire root zone during their developing years so they can put down solid, deep roots and better fend for themselves.

"'Right plant, right place' means considering all of the environmental needs of the plant before selecting and then siting the plant so that it can grow naturally to its mature size and form – the best horticulture practice to have a healthy plant," says Maranhao.

TOP PLANT PICKS

For Ontario gardeners, Sean James, President of Fern Ridge Landscaping & Eco-Consulting, Chair of Landscape Ontario's Environmental Stewardship Committee and Master Gardener, prefers to use native species whenever possible.

HERE ARE HIS FAVOURITE PLANTS FOR LOCAL GARDENS:

Shade Plants:

- Polygonatum (Solomon's Seal)
- Rubus Odoratus
- Geranium Macrorrhizum

Sun Lovers:

- Little Bluestem Standing Ovation, interesting all-year round
- Common Milkweed, attracts monarchs
- Purple Dome Aster, long-blooming
- Blood Brothers Switch Grass, small with nice colour in late summer
- Fireworks Goldenrod, "Folks still don't know that goldenrod doesn't cause allergies," says James. "This is a spectacular plant for late-summer/fall flowers and good winter interest."

Ask your local garden centre about native trees and shrubs and their requirements to make sure your yard is a good fit. **OH**

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MODERN Family

STORY **ADRIENNE BROWN**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

There are no interior walls dividing the main floor of Ben and Stephanie Eby’s home. The exterior walls consist of largely floor-to-ceiling windows. *Continued on page 40*



Blinds Are Us installed Hunter Douglas blinds on all the windows, so privacy is easily at hand when necessary.

Minimalist decor that’s still comfortable suits the style of this modern home as well as the needs of a young family. **OPPOSITE:** A fireplace and built-in storage in the great room is flanked by floor-to-ceiling windows.



Appliances are built into the long island so the kitchen has a seamless appearance from all sides. The Ebys can see the whole neighbourhood from their lot. **RIGHT:** Five stools line the island for quick meals, while a larger dining table behind is convenient for sit-down dinners. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The main-floor powder room is the only room without at least one wall of windows on the whole floor. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A separate sitting room with a desk and lounge separates the kitchen and great room from the master suite.



Ben, the co-founder of **NEO Developments Inc.**, a boutique infill residential development company, designed their modern home in Kitchener's Hidden Valley neighbourhood. He had architect **Laird Robertson**, of **Robertson Simmons Architects Inc.**, take care of the formal plans, massing and elevations of the home while Ben took on the finer details and material selections. It was the only home in the neighbourhood with a high corner lot.

"Rather than build down at the corner, we decided to put the house up on the hill and flip it upside down so we get the best views," says Ben. By that, he means the main living spaces and kitchen are on the top floor, while most of the bedrooms are downstairs, on ground level.

Now, they can watch both sunset and sunrise from inside their home and they have

a vantage point on the neighbourhood that nobody else does.

The lack of walls gives an illusion that the home is open and seamless, but there are hidden doors and dividers so the Ebys can close off their master suite from the rest of the top floor, for example. Millwork and built-in storage act as dividers for the rest of the spaces.

Stairs lead straight up from the large Douglas Fir front door (from **Timber Barn**) and entrance from the garage to the kitchen, which is open to a large family room. One long island serves as a large food prep area, houses the Miele stove and steam oven, and is home to five bar stools for quick and easy meals for the whole family. A large dining table sits behind it for longer family meals and hosting and the refrigerator is hidden behind cabinetry, continuing the seamless look.

Storage divides the whole great room and main living space from an office, library and lounge area. On the other side of that is the master suite, which includes a spacious en suite with more floor-to-ceiling windows. Details like the live-edge walnut vanity, lavish soaker tub, rain shower and radiant in-floor heating add to the luxury. There is even enough space for a treadmill. Large closets lit by LEDs complete the suite.

Blinds Are Us installed Hunter Douglas blinds on all the windows, so privacy is easily at hand when necessary, although Stephanie says she has grown to embrace having the blinds in the great room up and open at most hours of the day, enjoying the panoramic views of the valley, which often include wandering deer and turkeys strolling through the neighborhood. *Continued on page 43*





The Ebys didn't stray from the modern style when they decorated their home, either. They opted for many mid-century, modern-style furnishings, which work well in the minimalist décor. Ben incorporated niches into the design for the lounge and office area; there, he displays favourites, including a guitar and model ship.

Their three kids live on the ground floor level. Ben describes it as similar to a hotel. "The trend is to have an en suite in every room," says Ben. "We didn't want to do that. We wanted to make the space multipurpose." The kids' rooms are lined up three in a row. Across the hall from all their entrances is their shared bathroom space: sinks open to the hall, plus closed off rooms for the toilet and shower.

Along the wall outside their bedroom doors (each decorated to the child's preference – this is where the style strays from modern), each of the Eby children has a designated gallery space: just as their parents hang their favourite pieces of art, and in Ben's case, his own photography, on the walls upstairs in a gallery style, their children can display their latest masterpieces on the walls outside their rooms. No other art is required in the space.

On one end of the main floor, the kids have a shared play and entertainment space, and on the opposite end is the laundry room. Floating staircases on either end of the hall connect the levels together simply and easily. There is a continuous flow through the whole home.

Continued on page 44

TOP LEFT: The entryway to the master bedroom looks straight across the home through the lounge and kitchen to the front windows. **TOP RIGHT:** Sleek doors and LEDs combine for a truly unique closet in the master suite. **RIGHT:** The basement hallway also acts as an ever-changing art gallery, where the kids can hang up their latest masterpieces. **FAR RIGHT:** The children's bedrooms are on the ground floor and are just as bright as the rooms above. **OPPOSITE:** A floating walnut vanity is just one of the features in the master bath: it also has a soaker tub and a huge walk-in shower with luxurious rain heads.



home & builder

BELOW AND RIGHT: Each child’s bedroom is a reflection of his or her particular interests and styles. **BELOW RIGHT:** Another floating vanity is open to the basement hallway, so the kids can use and share it easily. The shower and toilet each have their own closed-off spaces. **BOTTOM:** A games and entertainment space separates the front door and entrance to the garage from the kids’ rooms and laundry area, which is located at the back of the home.



The Ebys will soon be moving to Uptown Waterloo, where they are planning to build their next home. That means this home is for sale. **Janette Braun**, the Ebys’ realtor, says the home, which “brings the outside in” is perfect for “anyone looking for a unique property that will stand out amongst luxury homes.” For more information, contact Braun, Sales Representative at **Coldwell Banker, Peter Benninger Realty, Brokerage. OH**

SOURCE GUIDE

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TOOLS & MATERIALS:

Quikrete Anchoring Cement or Sakrete Fast-Patch Fast Concrete Repair

Non-stick cooking spray or Vaseline

Small containers to use as moulds, 2 per planter

Rubber gloves

Mask

Safety glasses

2 buckets

Water

Measuring cup or scoop

Bowl, bucket or container to mix small batches of cement

Wooden spoon

Trowel

Fine sandpaper

Succulents, to plant

Potting soil

HOW-TO:

- Fill buckets with water. Use one to add water to your concrete mix, the other to store your tools while you're working so the concrete mix doesn't harden onto them.
- Select your moulds by pairing containers to create your planter form. Visit dollar or second-hand stores to find shapes that you like.
- Coat the inside of the larger container and the outside of the smaller container with non-stick cooking spray or Vaseline.
- Measure and mix small batches of concrete according to the package directions. Work quickly, especially with the Sakrete, or the mix will start to set.
- Pour wet mix into the larger container and apply quick taps to the bottom and sides to level the mix and release any air bubbles.
- Press the smaller container into the wet mix, being careful to leave a minimum half-inch thickness at the base; hold for 30 seconds. After 30 seconds, if the form rises when you release the smaller container, weight it down gently with water or stones. If mix overflows, skim the excess with a trowel.
- Allow mix to set for 24 hours or more to minimize cracking.
- Once your concrete planters are completely set and removed from the moulds, give the tops a quick sanding with fine sandpaper.
- Add potting soil and your succulent plants and display!

NOTE: Any materials used in this project should not be used again for food preparation. Be sure to wear rubber gloves during the entire process while concrete is wet. **OH**



DIY CONCRETE SUCCULENT PLANTERS

STORY AND PHOTOS **TARA CHATTELL**

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cooking at home

STEAK TACOS

with
CHIMICHURRI
& AVOCADO SAUCE

STORY AND PHOTOS
JENELLE MCCULLOCH

Try these steak tacos for an easy, yet impressive, summer entertaining meal. Charred skirt steak is topped with refreshing chimichurri and an herbed avocado sauce.



MARINADE

2 lbs flank or skirt steak
juice of 1 lime
1 Tbsp soy sauce
¼ tsp dried chili flakes
1 clove garlic, crushed

ADDITIONAL TOPPINGS (Optional)

Radish, thinly sliced
Jalapeno, thinly sliced
Queso Fresco

PICKLED RED ONIONS

1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, smashed
A few slices of jalapeno or a dried chili
½ tsp peppercorns or pickling spices
½ tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
½ cup white vinegar
Boiling water

CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

1 bunch of parsley
¼ medium onion
2 cloves garlic
½ cup olive oil
juice of 1 lime
2 Tbsp vinegar (red wine, apple cider or white)
salt to taste

AVOCADO SAUCE

2 large avocados
4 cloves garlic
¼ cup onion
handful of watercress
handful of basil
olive oil, as needed
water, as needed
salt to taste

MARINADE

- Mix together ingredients for the steak marinade, pour over steak and set aside.

PICKLED RED ONIONS

- Bring 2-3 cups of water to a boil.
- In a large bowl, mix together garlic, jalapeno, peppercorns or pickling spices, sugar, salt and white vinegar.
- Place thinly sliced red onion in a mesh strainer and pour the boiling water over the slices, letting them drain in the sink. This par-cooks the red onion before pickling.
- Once strained, add the red onion to the pickling mixture and set aside.
- This can be done in advance, but let pickle for at least 30 minutes.

CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

- Finely chop parsley, onion and garlic.
- Mix together with lime juice, vinegar and salt, and set aside.

AVOCADO SAUCE

- Add garlic to a food processor with a teaspoon of salt and pulse.
- Add onion, watercress, parsley, basil and avocado flesh.
- Blend together and slowly add olive oil while processor is running. If the sauce is too thick, add water as needed. Season with salt to taste.

COOK AND ASSEMBLE

- Preheat a cast-iron skillet over high heat, or preheat your outdoor grill, and coat with a layer of cooking oil.
- Once heated, pat the steak dry and sear on each side for 4 minutes for rare (cook longer if preferred).
- Remove steak from heat and let rest 10-15 minutes.
- Thinly slice meat against the grain.
- Serve with flour tortillas, sauces and optional toppings, including radish, jalapeno and Queso Fresco. **OH**

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KITCHEN CONCEPTS

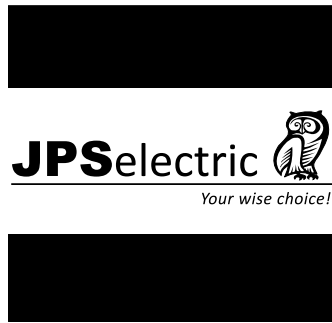
Kitchen Concepts by Martha Beckermann has been known for great design, quality and service!

And when a DISPLAY SALE comes around, every few years or so, her clients have the opportunity to purchase that great quality and design for steep mark-downs! Martha has discounted two kitchens and some vanities at 65% OFF in order to move them for an upcoming showroom renovation.

The kitchens are medium to large size and come complete with islands and granite or quartz countertops. Additional cabinetry is available, as well as some appliances and fixtures to fit the display. It most certainly is a great opportunity for a new home construction or addition! There are also wall units, office furniture, including a beautiful cherry desk, as well as selected appliances and accessories available at over 50% savings! Renovations are scheduled to begin late summer so these prices will not be around for long.

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View the cabinetry at her showroom on 299 Manitou Dr, Kitchener
Consult the website at kitchenconceptsbymartha.com for opening hours or contact Kitchen Concepts at 519.894.4020

(Please see ad on pg 37)



JPS ELECTRIC

Over the years, electrical wiring materials, and installation methods to be code compliant have changed. We have seen wiring from the old knob and tube methods in houses built before the 1950's, to aluminum wiring in the 1970's, to our current copper wiring now used today.

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(Please see ad on pg 61)



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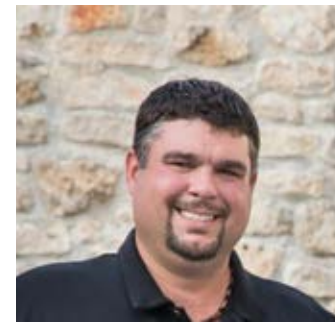
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(Please see ad on pg 36)

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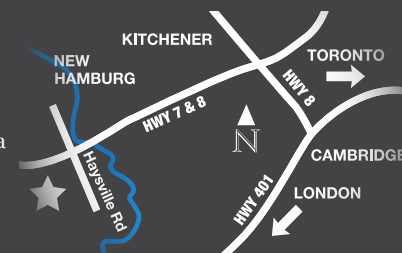
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Proud OWNERS

PHOTOGRAPHY TARA WEST

These local business owners are proud to do business in Waterloo Region. Get to know them and give them a call or drop in to see them this summer.



SHANNON ECKEL-BRAUN

Owner

Design Factory Interiors, Kitchener

What services do you offer? Design Factory is a full service decorating and design company. I offer everything from one-time consultations to full renovations, including custom millwork, window treatments, colour consultation, styling and concept development.

How would you describe your style? Strong, timeless foundations that can be built upon using polished modern lines layered with colour, texture and pattern. I love to incorporate thoughtful elements into my spaces, whether it's a re-purposed

item, vintage or rustic piece. It is very important to me that your space reflects who you are.

What projects are you working on right now? I have a few projects on the go, both commercial and residential – including my own 1930s home! I just wrapped up an orthodontics office in Waterloo, a complete build. It is such a rewarding experience to see a commercial space come together from the ground up. In the upcoming summer months I will be working on projects in the Muskokas and here in Waterloo Region.

CRAIG & JULIELYNN MILLER

Owners

Xclusive Elements, St. Jacobs and Waterloo

Tell us about your business: Xclusive Elements is a lifestyle store with locations in Bayfield, St. Jacobs and Waterloo. You will find unique fashion, gifts and home décor. Our customers are always intrigued by the treasure they find when visiting us. Our lines are constantly changing, keeping things fresh and vibrant. “We don't follow the trends... we set them!”

How would you describe your style?

Our style is contemporary, mixed with a vintage, industrial flair. We enjoy keeping things simple, but with an element of “eye-candy” to it. We like to source items that are Canadian-made or have a story associated with it. Your décor should be a reflection of you as a person or family.

What's your favourite way to spend a summer weekend? Our favourite way

to spend a summer weekend is hanging out with family and friends on our newly designed patio. If we are not on our patio we enjoy hitting the open highway on our motorcycle. *Continued on page 54*





KARA DERKSEN

Owner

Kara's Stained Glass, Kitchener

What makes Kara's Stained Glass different from competitors? Kara's Stained Glass deals with creating new and individual artwork that can't be found anywhere else. When customers come through the door, they speak with me, in person, to guarantee their vision comes to life. My custom designs are a direct reflection of what the customer wants. My work adds unique and attractive characteristics that can make a house your home.

Where do you find inspiration for your work? Inspiration is all around me. We live in such a blessed world and Canada is one of the most beautiful countries. I've always been inspired by all the places I have travelled. I offer a modern appeal to this classic style of art. As opposed to the traditional two-dimensional look of stained glass, I use textured glass and designs that often simulate movement within my glass canvas.

Tell us about your special summer ahead: I am looking forward with excitement to the reunion of family from afar, friends and festivities at the wedding of my daughter this summer. Spa day and hair are booked!



JOE SHEWCHUK

Owner

JPS Electric, Kitchener

Tell us about your business: JPS Electric was established in June of 2012. A satisfied, well informed client is of great importance to me. I give great attention to detail to all of my clients so they can make well-informed decisions about their electrical installations.

What are some of the services you offer? I specialize in residential electrical repairs, installations and service upgrades. Small jobs are very much welcome! Aluminum wire rejuvenations are a specialty of mine, as well as corrections to Electrical Safety Authority defect notifications.

What do you love most about working in Waterloo Region? Being born and raised right here in the Waterloo Region has many advantages. I've watched the region grow quite rapidly over the years and having a business based here is a good thing. We have a good population of senior citizens here who, by listening to them speak about this area, help me learn even more about the way things were here. It allows me to gear my business towards their electrical needs, as well as all my other clients. **OH**



The coveted white kitchen: it may sound strict, or even boring to some, but if you start with a solid base, this classic scheme actually leaves lots of room to add personality, drama, and yes, even colour. Read on to learn how to do a white kitchen the right way – your way.

Never Run-of-the-Mill

Cutting corners with your millwork will usually show in the long run: good solid cabinets in a classic style can always be repainted or touched up, while low-end or trendy options will grow dated much faster as materials are dinged or peel. A good investment here will anchor the space for years to come.

TRY: Flat slab drawer/door fronts for a sleek modern look, with a lacquer or ultra-matte finish that highlights the beautiful simplicity. For a balanced transitional appeal, opt for shaker doors with a simple frame-like border, which can then be dressed to look more traditional or more contemporary with hardware.

Hard to Forget

Often, cabinet hardware goes overlooked, but good knobs and pulls can be the jewelry of the kitchen, so don't be too quick to settle for plain factory options. I often like to add variety by using different styles on the lower and upper cabinets, such as brass pulls and glass knobs – but play it safe with just two styles.

TRY: Brass or copper cabinet pulls for warmth, gem-cut glass or crystal for boutique elegance, or fun, patterned knobs for a trendy indulgence. To go minimal, use knob-free reach-in fronts, or try inset finger-pulls for a traditional upscale touch.

Colour Chameleon

The white kitchen endures because it's so adaptable: a strict palette of neutrals for the fixed finishes still leaves room to update and accessorize the look endlessly. A hot trend for 2016 is to mix white with warm off-whites for a subtle richness, but a crisp white will work with virtually any favourite hue. When in doubt, keep the major investments neutral and add spice through non-committal accents.

TRY: Colourful tea towels (like this Bumble Bee Dish Towel from CB2), containers or appliances (like a KitchenAid stand mixer in Blue Willow), and be sure to leave room for a natural element like fresh flowers or fruit. Choose glass inserts for a few upper doors to let beautiful dishes and glassware add even more personality.

Contrast Control

A colour pop isn't the only way to make a statement – lighting from unexpected sources, such as under-cabinet light pucks, floating shelves with LED strips, or inner-cabinet lights (with a windowed door) add interest and functionality. Consider mixing in a darker element such as espresso floors or smoky, stone counters for a pleasing contrast, and finish the scheme with a dimmer to change the mood at whim like a filter on Instagram.

TRY: Oversize pendant lights (like the Mason Wide Pendant from Arteriors) to add evocative points of interest without a single new hue. **OH**



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ARTISANS, ARTISTS, ART GALLERIES & WORKSHOPS

Artefacts Salvage & Design, 6
Kara's Stained Glass, 13
PDR Picture Frames & Gallery, 50, 59

BUILDERS & NEW HOME DEVELOPMENT

Downie Management, 45, 49
Heisler Homes, 2
Stonecroft Homes, 51

CARPETS, RUGS

Grand Valley Tile & Carpet, 7
Silk Road Persian Rugs & Interiors, 61

CLOSETS, ORGANIZATION & STORAGE

Riverside Millwork Group, 64

COUNTERTOPS, GRANITE & STONE

Greenville Soapstone Company, 57
Heinz Custom Woodworking, 17
Schweitzer's Plumbing Centre, 9

ELECTRICAL

JPS Electric, 50, 61

FINE WOODWORKING, FURNITURE REFINISHING, CUSTOM FURNITURE & CARPENTRY

Artefacts Salvage & Design, 6
Jacob's Woodworking, 33

FLOORING, TILE, STAIRS, RAILINGS & TRIM

Grand Valley Tile & Carpet, 7
Riverside Millwork Group, 64

FLORISTS, FLORAL DESIGN

Dutch Mill Flower Shop, 59

HOME ACCENTS, HOME DÉCOR, FURNITURE & COLLECTIBLES

Artefacts Salvage & Design, 6
Bauhaus Window Coverings & Draperies, 47
Blinds Are Us, 17
C & G Solid Wood Furniture, 45
Cornerstone Home Interiors, 11
Expressions on King, 4
Heer's Decorating & Design Centre, 4
Home Furniture, 8
Kathie Jordan Design, 61
Leather By Mann Interiors, 3
Natür Sleep, 36, 51
Next Time Around Inc., 5
PDR Picture Frames & Gallery, 50, 59
Smitty's Fine Furniture, 63
Studio 428 Design & Décor, 21
The Art of Home, 45
The Frugal Decorator, 12
Xclusive Elements, 19

HOME IMPROVEMENTS & HOME RENOVATIONS

Klompco Carpentry, 47
The Frugal Decorator, 12

INTERIOR DECORATING & INTERIOR DESIGN

Expressions on King, 4
Jenni Does Designs, 59
Sandi Loreen Duclos Interiors, 29
The Design Factory, 59
The Frugal Decorator, 12

KITCHEN & BATH

Heinz Custom Woodworking, 17
Jacob's Woodworking, 33

Kitchen Concepts, 37, 50
Schweitzer's Plumbing Centre, 9

LANDSCAPE DESIGN, LANDSCAPING, LAWN & GARDEN

Perfect Image Property Maintenance, 19

LIGHTING

Moonlighting Outdoor Lighting, 21, 51

PAINTING & DECORATING

Expressions on King, 4
Heer's Decorating & Design Centre, 4
Kathie Jordan Design, 61
Studio 428 Design & Décor, 21

PLUMBING

Schweitzer's Plumbing Centre, 9

REAL ESTATE

Five Walls, 49, 50

SERVICES

Perfect Image Property Maintenance, 19

WINDOW FASHIONS

Bauhaus Window Coverings & Draperies, 47
Blinds Are Us, 17

WINDOWS & DOORS

Golden Windows, 57
Riverside Millwork Group, 64



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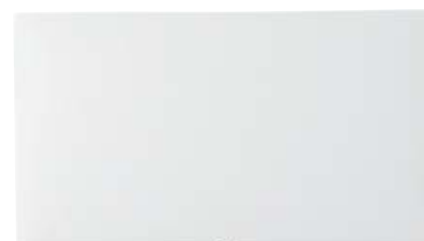
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