



A simple elegance

BY PATTI VIPOND | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE GUILBAULT

After discovering a natural talent for interior design, this homeowner created a retreat for her family that has both élan and ease.

Latent talents are like veins of gold lying undetected under the ground. Whether discovered by chance or unearthed by necessity, finding them changes your life for the better. For one homeowner, necessity provided the opportunity for her discovery of a talent for interior design. »





“I didn’t go to school for design, but either you have the interest and the ability or you don’t have the interest and, therefore, don’t have the chance to see if you have the ability.”



Five years ago, her family moved into their new home in Midhurst. After living in the older home for awhile, the wife could see that interior renovations and new decor ideas were needed. Moreover, she knew that she could design the project herself. This decision, born of an inner confidence, allowed her natural talent for design to come out and shine.

"It's funny because I'll look at homes that really need a lot of work, like a complete rip down to the studs, and my husband will not be able to see it," explains Lindsay, who now works as an independent design consultant for residential and commercial properties. "The work is fun and it's great to be able to see a finished project after knowing how things looked when it started."

By the time the couple decided to move on and build their own home, their Midhurst home had been transformed. Lindsay was ready to create an elegant but simple interior design for their new residence.

"I got the knack for interior design in Midhurst where I renovated the entire space," recalls Lindsay. "That was a process in and of itself. That's when I found myself thinking that maybe I could do this outside of my own space."

While looking for a quiet, family-friendly area suitable for their young son and within an easy drive to Barrie, the couple found a new development of custom homes in Snow Valley in Springwater Township. With many families already in residence and city shops a short drive away, the location was perfect. The couple soon bought a lot in the enclave from local builder Dendor Fine Homes. Dendor began construction on their luxury four-bedroom, four-bathroom bungalow in May 2013. The family took up residence in December. The home is cradled on a gently sloping lot that allowed construction of an above grade lower level with walk-out to a forest-fringed private yard.

"Dendor was fantastic to work with," says Lindsay. "They worked really hard and got it done for us. Dendor doesn't take on a lot of different projects. They construct a couple of houses at a time and do them very well. We liked the layout of our home on paper and knew this was a child-friendly area with lots of kids around."

To create the interior design plan for this home, Lindsay hired Amanda Forest, a Toronto interior designer who helped bring the homeowner's design vision into reality.

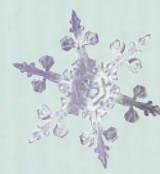
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The light-filled entry hall leads to an airy open-concept living room, kitchen and dining room encompassed by soft grey walls with fresh white trim accented by espresso brown hardwood floors.



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The 2,400-square-foot home's distinctive pitched roof with ornamental dormer windows suits the bungalow's generous dimensions. The exterior's traditional stone and stucco finishes are complemented by a three-car garage with vintage carriage house-style doors and a natural stone arch framing the front entrance.

The light-filled entry hall leads to an airy, open-concept living room, kitchen and dining room encompassed by soft grey walls with fresh white trim accented by espresso brown hardwood floors. The neutral palette creates a calm atmosphere while woodland views, seen through a series of large windows across the back of the home, add natural beauty.

Nature is also invoked through design touches like the branch-patterned upholstery on living room armchairs near the floor-to-ceiling gas fireplace with white marble surround. Beside the fireplace, a bed for the family's beloved golden retriever is colour coordinated with the grey and white room, keeping the décor theme of a stylish but definitely family home.

Flanking the fireplace, a set of tall twin cabinets, whose hue perfectly fits the prevailing palette, was a fortunate auction find as was the handsome hutch in the dining room. Graceful tray ceilings in the living room and kitchen add loft and subtle elegance to both rooms.

In the open kitchen, which was custom built by Astro Kitchens of Barrie, a marble-topped island provides comfortable seating for family meals. The island's light is supplied by a row of traditional pendant lamps with a hint of modern design.

"It is quite a large island which is great for entertaining," says Lindsay. "Everyone gathers in the kitchen anyway, so we decided to make room for them."

When guests arrive for brunch, a windowed breakfast nook off the kitchen is a comfortable spot to gather. With walls painted in Windham by Pratt and Lambert, the kitchen is a chef's delight with GE Monogram stainless steel appliances and gas stovetop. The distinctive carved wooden cabinets and woodwork décor accents were designed by Lindsay. »

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"My décor style is a romantic, elegant look but on the traditional side ..."

"I knew I wanted some sort of design for the wood in the kitchen, but I didn't want anything too elaborate or ornate," she explains. "I sketched out the entire kitchen. Astro Kitchens gave us the space and said go ahead and design it."

The formal dining room, whit walls glowing in Genteel Grey by Pratt and Lambert, is illuminated by a dazzling crystal chandelier from Restoration Hardware. Many of the light fixtures throughout the residence were sourced here and at Prima Lighting in Vaughan. A waffle ceiling adds charm and interest for diners and reflects its designer's style.

"My décor style is a romantic, elegant look but on the traditional side," says Lindsay. "Nothing too contemporary. I want a simple elegance."

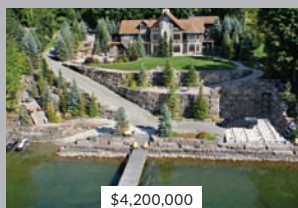
The master bedroom's ensuite also displays a romantic look with a classic standalone tub, soft recessed lighting and textured glass sconces. Down the hall, the son's cozy bedroom is attached to his playroom by a Jack and Jill bathroom with double sinks.

Downstairs, the design mode is casual for family and friends. Two deep-seated brown leather couches are ready for movie night or to catch a favourite show. Beyond the family room, a guest suite of a bedroom with TV and bathroom is handy for when the couple's families come to visit. In a quiet corner is a home office where windows give a long view across the countryside to Horseshow Valley Road.

"The downstairs is sort of our cozy space," says Lindsay. "The couches are from a little store in Burlington, the place where we come from."

Having created her family's dream home, Lindsay has turned her attention to projects for her clients.

"I recently finished work on a palatial home that is for sale," says Lindsay. "It was a complete renovation and a really large project that took almost a year to complete. But to see that house come full circle was fun. I really enjoy this work." ■



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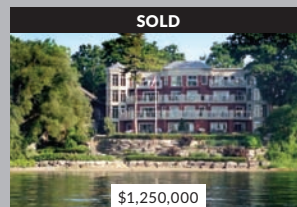


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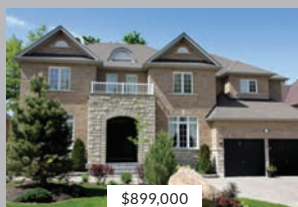


SOLD

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LUXURY WATERFRONT CONDO

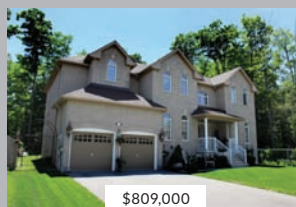
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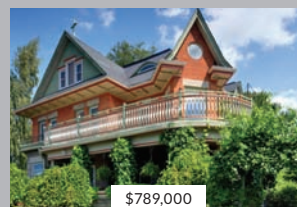
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