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# HOME DÉCOR AND **RENOVATIONS**

MAY - JUNE 2013 VOLUME 11 ISSUE 3

**IN THIS ISSUE**

SPECIAL SECTION

**OUTDOOR  
LIVING**

**bathe**  
**IN** *style*

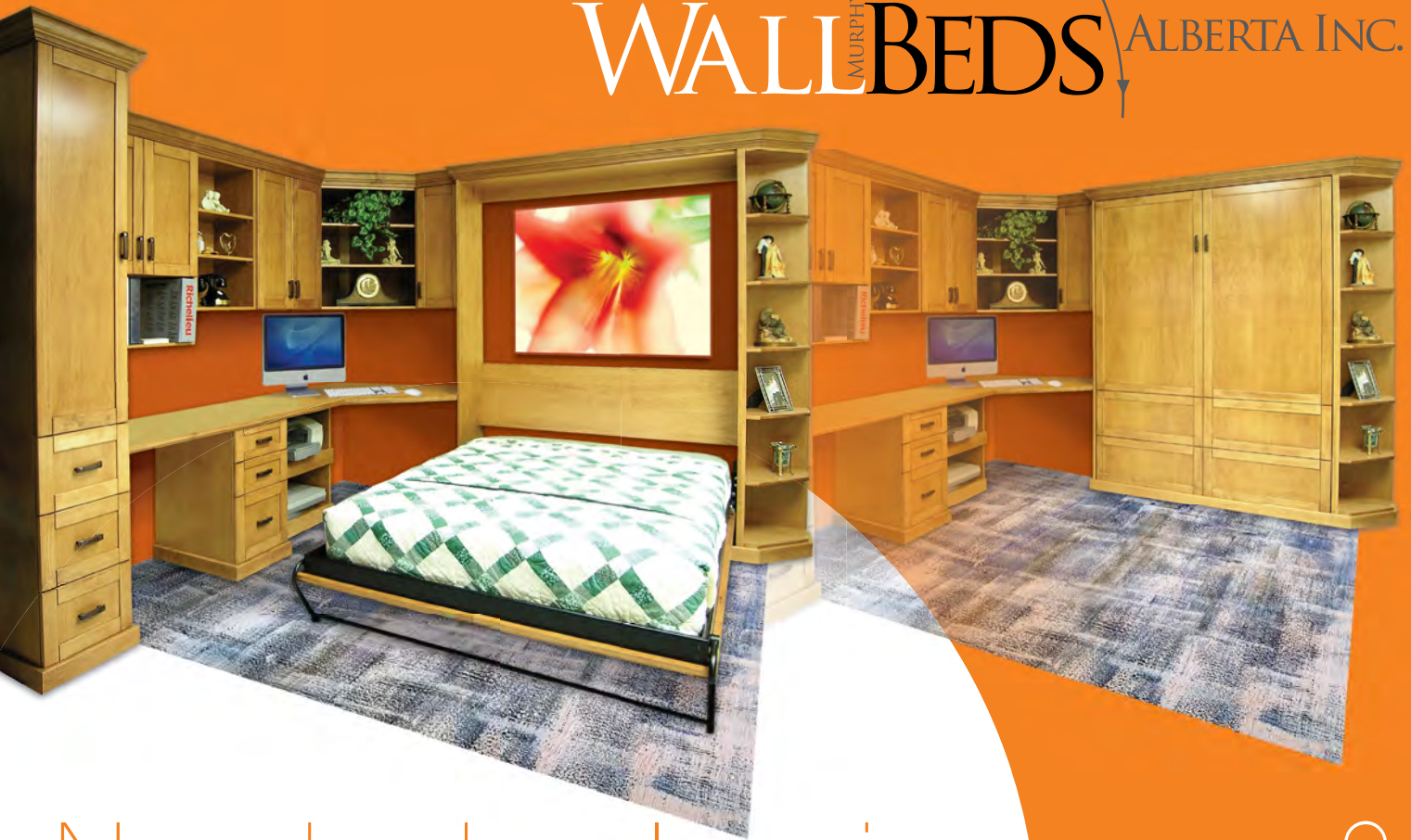
THE HALLMARKS OF  
**A GREAT  
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PART 3

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**BATHROOM  
MAKEOVER**

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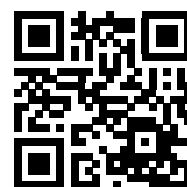
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## Refresh Your Home Inside & Out

Spring is here, and now is the time to refresh and renew your indoor and outdoor living spaces. This issue is filled with inspiring and informative articles that will help you prepare your home for the summer months ahead.

One of the most popular renovations is the bathroom. If you have been dreaming of renovating that old and outdated bathroom, there is no time like the spring to tackle that long overdue project. Our cover story delves into the basic elements that make a bathroom fabulous, even on a small scale and budget. See page 12 for all the details.

Also in this issue, we bring you the second installment of our Outdoor Living feature, which will help you create your own backyard oasis. From gardening tips to a spring spruce-up safety checklist, we will have you on your way to enjoying that fresh air in no time!

Home Décor & Renovations Magazine is proud to announce the winners of the Renovation Awards at the CHBA-ER Awards of Excellence, which took place on Saturday March 16, 2013. See page 11 to read about the celebrated event that recognized the best in the industry. Congratulations to all the winners and finalists!

Happy Renovating!

NANCY CHEMAIT

EDITOR [nancy.chemait@wall2wallmedia.com](mailto:nancy.chemait@wall2wallmedia.com)

# HOME DÉCOR AND RENOVATIONS

MAY - JUNE 2013  
VOLUME 11 ISSUE 3

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Home Décor and Renovations magazine is published six times a year. Home Décor and Renovations magazine is distributed throughout Edmonton and Greater Edmonton area. This publication has been designed for the renovation market as a guide. Home Décor and Renovations magazine carefully inspects all ads for accuracy, however, the publisher and the printer shall not be responsible for any mistakes, design errors or incorrect information which is provided by the advertiser or their representative.

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# top drawer

We've teamed up with paint and wallpaper experts *Farrow & Ball* to give you an inspiring do-it-yourself drawer project for your home!

by **SARA DUCK**



## what you will need before you start



Condor Wall Coating Brush  
by Simms. \$6. rona.ca



Detachable Scissors by Henckels.  
\$23. kitchenstuffplus.com



St Antoine BP947. \$285 per  
10m roll. farrow-ball.com



Clear Wallpaper Adhesive by  
Dynamic. \$17. rona.ca

## THE steps

- 01** Give the inside of your drawer a good wipe to ensure a clean surface.
- 02** Measure the inside of your drawer.
- 03** Using your wallpaper off cuts, cut a shape to fit.
- 04** Place or paste your wallpaper into the drawer, and if you're using paste, leave to dry.

## tips

» This is a great way to put your wallpaper off cuts to use. To add an unexpected twist to your drawers, bold colours and intricate patterns work really well.

» The pattern will look best if it's central to the drawer, so bear this in mind when you're cutting it out.



CHBA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING

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Congratulations to the winners and finalists at this year's Awards of Excellence in Housing. Your achievements represent the best of the best within the residential construction industry.



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# Winners for the 2013 Awards

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1 & 2  
RENOVATOR OF THE YEAR  
Aquarian Renovations

**ON SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2013, THE CANADIAN** Home Builders' Association - Edmonton Region hosted its 33rd Annual Awards of Excellence in Housing Awards Gala, formerly known as the Sam Awards to a sold out crowd of over 1,700 people.

The Awards of Excellence in Housing pay tribute to the best in sales and marketing ideas, outstanding products, superior home building, and exceptional neighbourhoods.

Congratulations to all winners and finalists of the 2013 Awards of Excellence in Housing!

Established in 1954, the Canadian Home Builders' Association - Edmonton Region, represents over 400 member companies comprised of builders, developers, renovators, trade contractors, manufacturers, suppliers, designers, engineers, financial institutions, and a host of allied professionals.

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### RENOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

**AQUARIAN RENOVATIONS**



# CREATING A *small, stylish* bathroom

by **EVELYN ESHUN**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LARRY ARNAL

**N**o matter how large or how small your bathroom is, the basic elements which make a bathroom fabulous are the same. Functionality, easy to clean, lots of storage, and of course, attractive. In this case, I had carte blanche to design a bathroom for two very adorable little girls with the caveat that it had to be girly and timeless.

When clients give me their wish list for the renovation plan of their bathrooms, they usually have a tile or counter in mind, that is more often than not the jumping-off point of the aesthetic plan of the space. This is a good place to start, since it sets the tone for the look, the feeling and the colour of the bathroom. In this case, the client wanted Statuario marble for a countertop. Knowing this fact, it was easy to plug in the other elements which would make this small bathroom bright and fresh for the girls using it.

Choosing the vanity colour or finish is key to creating the mood in the space. Stained and dark tends to be masculine, while white and light tends to be feminine. A perfect white was chosen for the vanity, one of my favourite whites, Benjamin Moore's CC-20. You cannot go wrong with white vanities in a bathroom – classic, timeless and bright. The crystal knobs gave a finishing touch to the simple lined vanity.

Paint colours in the bathroom should be light and non-obtrusive in order to allow the tiles and stone to take centre stage. Getting away from all the grey and blue which is the trend these days,

**There are no hard and fast rules in this department – it is much like cooking; all the ingredients have to work together in harmony, the tiles, floor, counter, vanity, paint and plumbing fixtures.**

**My two little clients were very happy with their bathroom and the open storage in the upper cabinet, which allowed them to display their favourite little trinkets**

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I chose a soft blushy pink for the wall colour. This imparts a warm glow over the entire bath.

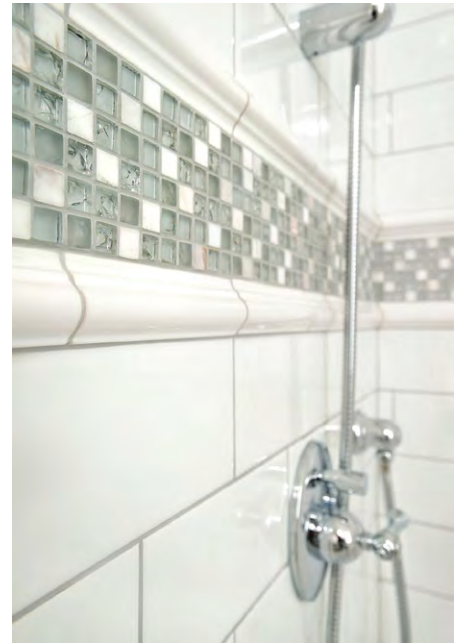
When designing a bathroom on a budget, keep two things in mind: plumbing and tiling. Try to keep all the plumbing fixtures where they are, since moving them can really add dollars to the bottom line. Your tile budget can easily explode – to keep this in check, I like to use a simple white porcelain 3-by-6-in. or 2-by-4-in. tile as my main tile and add a gorgeous mosaic and bullnose tile as an accent. In this case, we used a mosaic which had glass and marble in a combination of smooth and textured square. The sparkle added the perfect girly touch the bathroom needed.

When it comes to the plumbing fixtures, we often adore the sparkle of chrome or polished nickel in a bathroom. Yes, you have to wipe the water stains away, but the sparkle is what imparts that finishing touch. I often like to use a cool polished chrome in a white, more modern bathroom space, while polished nickel suits a more traditional bathroom with creamy finishes and stained vanities. There are no hard and fast rules in this department – it is much like cooking; all the ingredients have to work together in harmony, the tiles, floor, counter, vanity, paint and plumbing fixtures.

My two little clients were very happy with their bathroom and the open storage in the upper cabinet, which allowed them to display their favourite little trinkets.

## tips

- » Save on your budget by planning to keep the plumbing fixtures where they are, work with what you have and you will shave that bottom line.
- » A banjo top behind the toilet will give you ample storage, it only needs to be 6-in. to 8-in. deep.
- » Though brushed gold is the trend for faucets at the moment, choosing the classic polished chrome will give you a timeless look. As a bonus, it tends to be the most cost effective finish.
- » Choose a dark coloured grout to avoid seeing dirt gather in the grout lines over time. When you do so, you create a more graphic look to your space, which can add to the design aesthetic.
- » Keep in mind that it will take six to eight weeks to get through the process of renovating the average bathroom and it can cost \$10,000 to \$20,000 for the average bathroom renovation.
- » Splurge on counters and plumbing fixtures. These elements will be put to the test daily.
- » Install your mirror from the counter to the edge of the vanity and all the way to the ceiling or underside of the moulding. It will double your space visually and brighten up the space tremendously.



**Splurge on counters and plumbing fixtures. These elements will be put to the test daily.**



### EVELYN ESHUN

Toronto-based accredited Interior Designer, Evelyn Eshun, Principal of Evelyn Eshun Design. For more than 14 years, she is known for her custom designed residential projects throughout the GTA that showcase the space and bring out the best in you. [evelyneshun.com](http://evelyneshun.com)

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# The hallmarks of a great renovation PART 3

by MARIE SOPROVICH



## IN THE PREVIOUS TWO

articles you met a family engaged in a renovation of a lifetime. They owned a spectacular piece of property high on the bank of the North Saskatchewan River where they lived in a house that was adequate but within the soul of their dream home rested... Their dream was of a home with a continuous view of the meandering river by day and the harvest moon by night. A place that would forever be "home" for their family, a gathering place for friends when invited, and a place that would bring justice to the majestic land that it stood on. This has been a romantic story of finding the right relationship for the magic of their dream to unfold.

Homeowners Darren and Joyce did their due diligence in their quest for the renovation company in whom they could place their trust, their ideas and the dreams they held for their future. In this final chapter you will see the results of meticulous planning and problem identification, as well as the solutions that made everything work. You also may share in some of the joy experienced as a result of a homeowner asking for what they wanted and taking the actions necessary to create it. This renovation was not without challenges unforeseen before the demolition started but with careful consideration to resources, need and possibility, along with open communication between the homeowner and the renovation company, the project navigated through in fine stead. (If you've missed the earlier chapters of this story please call Home Decor and Renovations Magazine or Aquarian Renovations for a copy.)

Who doesn't love a happy ending? If you are renovating your house, a happy ending is always the desired outcome. For Joyce and Darren and their two teenagers, being able to move back into their beautifully renovated home three days before Christmas was the happiest ending imaginable. Fifteen year old Sarah had her heart set on decorating the Christmas tree in their newly renovated home and just may have done it even if the hardwood guys were still installing. But they were finished, in spite of a mix up on hardwood colors and a need to reorder and restock. Touchwood Flooring was tremendously accommodating and worked well into the night to make the family Christmas dream come true. What a tremendous work ethic and attention to detail! "We are loving our hardwood floors; they add so much character to the house – now we just need some furniture." Joyce commented just before the holidays.

WE REALLY FEEL THAT IT IS STILL VERY MUCH OUR HOME – JUST A LOT PRETTIER! ...AND THAT IT FINALLY DOES THE PROPERTY JUSTICE. I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH WE SIMPLY ENJOY JUST BEING HOME.

The cabinets, flooring, lighting, electrical, bathrooms, bedroom closets were all new. The paint was fresh, new doors were perfectly hung and the new windows were sparkling clean. From the newly replaced roof to the reinforced foundation walls and everything in between, this house was ready for their owners to come home. "After years of planning and saving, our dream home has finally become a reality! We really feel that it is still very much our home – just a lot prettier! ...and that it finally does the property justice. I can't tell you how much we simply enjoy just being home."

With two weeks of Christmas vacation ahead of them, a nice bottle of champagne, a freshly decorated Christmas tree and very open-hearted and in-love with their new world, the owners settled in for one of their most memorable family together times in their lives.



The magic was spectacular. The joyful experience was worth every grain of sawdust and every ratchet that the crane endured as it lifted the new roof into place only a few months earlier. Here is a glimpse into the joy the family was feeling on their first night with only three short sleeps to Christmas. "We are sitting in our beautiful kitchen listening to some jazz music, enjoying the ambiance of the fireplace... and just really enjoying being home! We spent most of the evening moving stuff in, putting a few things together and have finally settled down for a toast to the new house. I don't think you can wipe the smiles off any of our faces! We are super happy to be back home and we were just saying to each other, it's our home, except now it's so beautiful and perfect in every way."

The Quality Control team from Aquarian (who earlier that day was everyone who wasn't hurriedly finishing up other job sites for the Christmas break) had been on site removing any trace of renovation debris, cleaning, polishing, dusting and ensuring that not a trace of construction residue was left behind. Months later Joyce commented, "Never having gone through a renovation project before, we really had no idea how important it was to receive good service from your renovation company after the project is considered complete. When we did our final walk through you made it very clear that if we found anything that wasn't

100% to please let Aquarian know and that they would gladly come out and look after it. It is part of the warranty that is offered. We were impressed that as home owners we were encouraged to be picky about finishing touches. It just added to the level of confidence we already had in Aquarian Renovations."

Renovating your home is a lot like buying artwork. Your home is a canvas with a painting already begun. A good renovation company is the artist who will finish the project. Renovating can be one of the most rewarding decisions you'll ever make. Make the right choice and you will see a masterpiece every time you open your door!

**For a truly successful renovation that leaves a very satisfied homeowner and a happy contractor consider the following steps:**

- » **Find just the right company to do your work.** Darren and Joyce said repeatedly through this renovation, "Hiring Aquarian was no accident. We did the research, asked many questions and found a company we could put our trust in. Once we were confident that we had the right renovator for our job, we knew we were in good hands and would be able to solve whatever renovation challenges came along."
- » **Talk about budget and vision right from the start** and then let the designers, architectural technologists and estimators put the perfect package together capturing what you want from your renovation. Joyce and Darren shared, "We just wanted to let you know how pleased and happy we are to be working with Aquarian Renovations. You have some phenomenal people employed who have been a pleasure to work with. The craftsmanship and service were excellent, communication has been great and the process has been surprisingly easy."
- » **Remember**, you might be asked to invest more for a renovator who can deliver the best product and service. The quality you receive makes the value of your investment worth the price.
- » **Be an educated consumer** and be sure to talk to previous customers to validate this very important point and ask them the questions that are floating around your head in the middle of the night. Visit other projects both completed and in progress. Talk to other customers who are working with the renovator you are considering. This is what doing your due diligence looks like. Be informed. Back up your decision with knowledge and you'll feel more comfortable spending your dollars on the best you can afford.

The attention is in the details and it was the details that caused this renovation to be both a masterpiece and a gift to all involved. The Aquarian team love what they do and feel very privileged to have the opportunity to work on such beautiful homes. The only reason they are able to be as creative and artistic as they are is because of there amazing clients who allowed them creative liberty and trusted them with their situation. At the end of the day Aquarian staff takes tremendous pleasure in seeing this project or any project that they are working on turn into a exquisite dream home. Working with a family like Darren and Joyce and their two teenagers who live in such a beautiful space reminds us all of why we love what we do so much. It truly is a happy ending to a great story and the admiration of renovator and homeowner is mutual. As the happy family on the river bank settle back into their rejuvenated castle, surrounded by the great outdoors on one side and the North Saskatchewan River on the other, an aspect of Victorian philosophy comes to mind that when we live in a beautiful environment we are inspired to live a beautiful, more productive and fulfilled life which surely includes living happily ever after.



**MARIE SOPROVICH**  
**OWNER OF AQUARIAN RENOVATIONS;**  
**WRITER, VISIONARY, LEADER.**

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JUNE 19, 2013

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# A calmer home in 5 STEPS

by **RACHAEL KALINSKY**



**1 PREPARE YOUR ORGANIZING TOOLS.** Just like any project or recipe, we need the necessary tools or ingredients before we can get started. The same goes for getting organized.

**Here are my key ingredients for a successful de-cluttering session:**

- » Black bags for garbage
- » Blue bags or bin for recycling
- » Clear bags or recycled boxes for items to be donated
- » Two large bins or boxes:
  - › One to act as a “Maybe bin” for those items that you’re struggling to make a decision on
  - › The other to act as a “Relocate bin” for items that belong in another room – the key to staying focused is to not leave the room you’re working on until it’s complete
- » Marker and role of masking tape
  - › To label your bins or make reminder notes on items such as “replace button” or “return to store.”

It's time to  
**switch things up**



**2 KEEP ONLY THE ITEMS YOU USE OR LOVE.** Your possessions should either serve a purpose or reflect who you are, and everything should have its place. As you begin the de-cluttering process, you should unquestionably get rid of anything that's collecting dust, feels uncomfortable, doesn't fit, doesn't work, or creates a negative emotion – leaving only the items you use or love.

**3 START WITH YOUR STORAGE AREAS.** We in the organizing profession often advise our clients to pick an area and start small. While this is very true, I also suggest starting with storage areas such as the basement, garage, or that spare room that's become the "dumping ground."

Our storage areas are often the place where things we don't use or love end up, therefore they tend to be easier items to make decisions on and help us get into the de-cluttering groove.

Secondly, our storage areas are intended for items we don't use regularly, such as seasonal clothing, sporting gear, luggage and extra household supplies. Getting rid of the unnecessary makes space for the items that should filter into storage as we move onto de-cluttering the rest of the home.

**4 CREATE A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING.** Now that you've gotten rid of all the items you no longer use or love, it's

time to create a "home" for everything that's left. Install a hook to hang your keys as you walk in the door, use baskets to keep like items together, and dedicate a letter tray to consolidate incoming mail, bills to pay and notices to address. Having a home for everything will eliminate the piles from building up again.

**5 DEAL WITH IT NOW.** Once you've de-cluttered and set up systems for where things belong, it's important to get into the habit of always putting things back. It only takes a second to hang your keys as you walk in the door, put away the clean laundry, or put the kids books/toys back on the shelf. Doing it right away will save you time in the long run and eliminate that nagging and overwhelming feeling that occurs when things start to pile up.



**RACHAEL KALINSKY**

Rachael Kalinsky, Professional Organizer and Owner of Order in the House, takes pride in helping her clients live a more balanced life through the process of de-cluttering, creating customized solutions and encouraging positive habits to maintain an organized space. For more information visit [orderinthehouse.ca](http://orderinthehouse.ca)

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# DECO DELIGHT

I'm inspired by the upcoming remake of Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, which will be in theatres this month. I want to decorate my space with **art deco inspired** pieces from the glamorous age of the 1920s.

by **SARA DUCK**



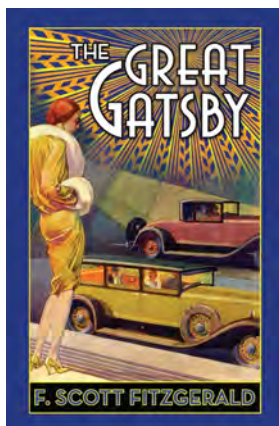
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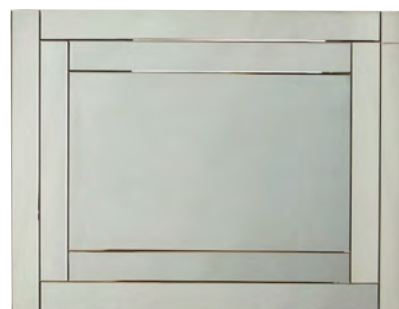
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2 Lismore Essence Saucer Champagne  
by Waterford Wedgwood.  
\$235 FOR SET OF TWO. VISIT [THEBAY.COM](http://THEBAY.COM)

3 Fleming Chair.  
\$1,995. VISIT [ELTE.COM](http://ELTE.COM)

4 The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald.  
\$10. VISIT [CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA](http://CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA)

5 Hayworth Mirror and Vanity.  
\$260-\$490. VISIT [PIER1.CA](http://PIER1.CA)

6 Mirror.  
\$80. VISIT [BOUCLAIR.COM](http://BOUCLAIR.COM)

# OUTDOOR LIVING

MAY - JUNE 2013

SPRING  
SPRUCE-UP  
SAFETY  
CHECKLIST

VIBRANT  
*spring* **colours**

# Spring spruce-up safety checklist

**WINTER IS OVER. SPRING HAS SPRUNG.** Time to dust off the annual chore list. Before you roll up your sleeves and tackle the dirty work, though, you should review (and save) this spring safety checklist, compiled with input from our friends at the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). It will ensure your seasonal spruce-up is a blooming good time—and not a bundle of accidents waiting to happen.

» If electrical work is in your plans, consult a licensed electrical contractor. They will ensure your spring-renovation projects are completed in a safe manner, consistent with codes, protecting you and your family from electrical shock and fire hazards. Licensed electrical contractors are the only ones who you can legally hire to do such work in your home in Ontario.

» Spring is the perfect time to build something new, but you may be in for a shock if you aren't aware of underground hazards. Check with your local utility companies to mark underground electrical wires or gas and water mains before you start any digging. Avoid doing any work directly under or beside these areas. Remember: Always call before you dig.

» With flowers soon to bloom, your green thumb is likely itching. Be sure to plant large shrubs and trees at least three feet (one metre) away from hydro poles, powerlines and other utility equipment. Keeping clear access to utility poles allows professionals to safely perform inspections and repairs – and will prevent much bigger headaches down the road.

» Before entertaining in your backyard, make sure your outdoor recreation routine involves a thorough inspection of your yard. If there are tree limbs within three metres of powerlines anywhere on your property, contact a professional to clear them. Do not attempt to do it yourself.

» What better time than spring to dust off your barbecue, outdoor appliances and garden and power tools? Before you use them, check if any of the electrical cords have cracked or frayed, or if plugs have broken. If so, repair or replace the tool.



BEFORE YOU ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES AND TACKLE THE DIRTY WORK, THOUGH, YOU SHOULD REVIEW (AND SAVE) THIS SPRING SAFETY CHECKLIST, COMPILED WITH INPUT FROM OUR FRIENDS AT THE ELECTRICAL SAFETY AUTHORITY.

» Never stand on wet floors or moist grass when using electrical tools. Wear rubber-soled shoes when using them, as the wet ground can conduct electricity. Keep your outdoor tools unplugged in a safe and dry area when not in use.

» If you'll be doing any outdoor cleaning or maintenance using a ladder, watch out for overhead wires. Placing any ladder near powerlines is dangerous, even if it's not metal. Be aware of where powerlines are located—and keep at least 10 feet (about three metres) away.

Once you've checked all the items off your spring-cleaning list, sit back, relax and enjoy the season!

**For even more tips on how to stay safe around your home, please visit [powerlinesafety.ca](http://powerlinesafety.ca)**

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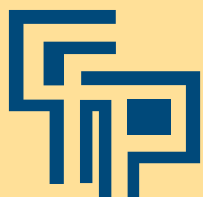
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# VIBRANT spring colours

by **USHEDA AKBAR-SHANKS**

"Mary, Mary, quite contrary.  
How does your garden grow?  
With silver bells and cockle shells  
and pretty maids all in a row!"

(OLD ENGLISH NURSERY RHYME, C. 1744)

IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHICH COMBINATIONS WILL WORK WELL TOGETHER, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK THE GREENHOUSE STAFF. I HAVE LEARNED QUITE A BIT BY SIMPLY ASKING AND LISTENING.

## WHAT A HAPPY FEELING IT

conjures to think about spring gardening again! Spring is the best time to start planning our potted arrangements. Whether you are an experienced pro or an enthusiastic novice, adding colourful plants to brighten up your home is very easy.

### Basic Tips for Container Gardening.

#### 1. CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

Creative visualization has been used as a relaxation technique for ages. It is also a quick and easy way to manifest your container planting. In the blink of an eye one can be transported to gardening heaven! Close your eyes for a moment and visualize your favorite colours this year. Is it bright and bold or an array of pastels? Do you see eye-catching contrasts or monotone themes?

#### 2. GO SHOPPING

Once your creative pictures have taken hold in your mind's eye, it is time to head over to your local greenhouse. Translate the colours into actual plants which will fit the colour scheme. Do not complicate things by focusing on Latin names or scientific terminology. To micro

manage this project will kill the spontaneity. Too much knowledge will enable procrastination to creep in. Go with the flow and think in terms of "quick and easy". A few pots should take a couple of hours to complete, including the shopping!

#### 3. SIZE, SHAPE AND LOCATION

Decide ahead of time what the size, shape and colour of your plant pots will be, especially if it is flanking your front elevation. Your largest pots will definitely look good here. Try to coordinate your pot colours with your stone/brick work, siding and trim colours. For houses having darker exterior colours, keep the pots close in colour to this. The same can be said for lighter colours. Walkways, front porch steps and verandahs are good locations for pots. A semi-sheltered spot is preferable in the likely event of a rain shower. Balance your shapes by mixing a few different sizes and shapes together for an eye-catching mix. If your elevation is modern and elongated, then use elongated pots, and so on.

#### 4. ADD LAYERS AND TEXTURE.

If you have read my articles on Interior decor, I always emphasize layering and texture. The same holds true for gardening. Use the three colour rule to add interest and dimension, otherwise your basket will look boring and cheap! Start with three different plants. Use tall grassy plants in the centre of the pot, or rear of a flower bed. Place other interesting plants in the middle, and lastly, drape the vines and cascading plants over the sides of the pot where there is more room to flourish.



### 5. STRIKING COLOUR COMBINATIONS

If you are not sure which combinations will work well together, please do not hesitate to ask the greenhouse staff. I have learned quite a bit by simply asking and listening. Some of these people are walking encyclopedias when it comes to gardening!

### Some Plant Considerations Are:

#### › Colour, colour, colour

Will you use different shades of the same hue like purples and lilacs for instance? Some striking colour combinations are purples, reds, oranges coupled with greens of the added foliage. Whites, yellows and blues go well together. Always add at least two or three decorative leafy plants. This adds much needed complexity and can be used to cover bare 'patches'. Fill up your flower beds 'gaps' with many a splendored leafy concoction for an amazingly professional finish.

DECIDE AHEAD OF TIME  
WHAT THE SIZE, SHAPE AND  
COLOUR OF YOUR PLANT  
POTS WILL BE, ESPECIALLY  
IF IT IS FLANKING YOUR  
FRONT ELEVATION.





BEAUTIFY YOUR WORLD BY ADDING VIBRANT COLOUR AND COMPLEX TEXTURES TO YOUR LANDSCAPE DESIGN. POTTED ARRANGEMENTS ARE FUN AND EASY TO CREATE. A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOREVER, AND WHEN THIS SEASON IS OVER YOU CAN START OVER AGAIN NEXT SEASON.

› **Hardiness (especially in early spring)**

Wisely choose plants that will withstand our cooler spring days. Add the rest in late spring.

› **Annual or perennial**

By all means mix the two types. Remember nothing lasts forever, and half the joy of gardening is selecting new annuals each year!

› **Low growing, tall, bushy**

Some plants will outgrow the pot very rapidly, but can always be transplanted to a bigger pot, or a flower bed.

› **Compact, vines, cascading, fast growing, Frequency of blooms (one period or perpetual)**

For instance some decorative roses will bloom all season long, and into late fall, while others only bloom once. Some plants will start their bloom early in the season, while others may bloom much later in July. Mixing different blooming types will ensure a pretty garden.

› **Attraction for butterflies, hummingbirds etc.**

› **Fragrance**

› **Drought, heat tolerance, shade loving**

Beautify your world by adding vibrant colour and complex textures to your landscape design. Potted arrangements are fun and easy to create. A thing of beauty is a joy forever, and when this season is over you can start over again next season. Take pride in your creative gardening efforts and you will definitely feel a sense of accomplishment to last all season long!



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# Renovations of Excellence

**“THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTION FOR EXPERIENCE”**

by **SALINA YARA HALABI**



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**AFTER | BASEMENT RENOVATIONS**

# Decoding the code

by MICHAEL NYIKES



**Q I had a good question posed by a loyal reader who asks if carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are mandatory in houses.**

**A** In a word, yes. The 2006 Alberta Building Code contains provisions requiring for carbon monoxide alarms to be installed in all new residential construction containing a fuel-burning appliance, a solid-fuel-burning appliance or a storage garage.

Where a fuel-burning appliance is installed in a suite of residential occupancy, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed:

- » Inside each bedroom, or
- » Outside each bedroom, within 5m of each bedroom door.

Where a fuel-burning appliance is installed in a service room that is not in a suite of residential occupancy, each suite that shares a wall or a floor/ceiling assembly with the service room shall have a carbon monoxide alarm installed:

- » Inside each bedroom or outside each bedroom within 5m of each bedroom door, and
- » In the service room.

Where a solid-fuel-burning appliance is installed in a suite of residential occupancy, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed:

- » On or near the ceiling in the room containing the solid-fuel-burning appliance.

Each suite that shares a wall or floor/ceiling assembly with a storage garage or that is adjacent to an attic or crawl space to which the storage garage is also adjacent, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed:

- » Inside each bedroom, or
- » Outside each bedroom, within 5m of each bedroom door.

It is important to note that in addition to being a certified product, CO alarms must be mechanically fixed to a surface at a height recommended by the manufacturer, and have no disconnect switch between the over-current device and the CO alarm when the CO alarm is powered by the dwelling unit's electrical system.

Both battery operated alarms and alarms that are connected to the dwelling unit's electrical system are acceptable. The average lifespan of CO alarms varies. There are several models on the market with many different features such as indicators to let the user know when they need to be replaced or power supply backups. Check your model to ensure that it has the features you need.

**Future Decoding the Code columns will continue to answer readers' questions about how the provincial building code affects their projects. Email your questions to me at [decodingthecode@gmail.com](mailto:decodingthecode@gmail.com). Be sure to include which city you live in, as well as your phone number in case I need to follow up with you.**



## MICHAEL NYIKES

Michael is a nationally recognized speaker, columnist, and leading industry expert on building codes, residential construction, building envelope science, and environmental design. He can be reached at [decodingthecode@gmail.com](mailto:decodingthecode@gmail.com)

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# RenoMark

## Pricing your renovation for success!

**“PRICES – IT IS UNWISE TO PAY TOO MUCH. IT’S WORSE TO**

pay too little. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing it was bought to do. The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot. It can’t be done. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it is well to add something for the risk you run. And if you do that, you will have enough to pay for something better. There is hardly anything in the world that someone can’t make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and people who consider price alone are this man’s lawful prey.” John Ruskin (1819 – 1900)

Home renovation reality TV shows have sparked a real interest in renovating and have made “experts” of many. It

is true that the average consumer has access to more resources than ever before and can become a very savvy buyer. Being informed about your purchases, especially the big ones, is a very important goal. The market is flooded with materials to help homeowners get excited about design, product choice, colours, textures and the fun you are going to have impressing all your friends in your newly renovated spaces. The buzz of creating a renovation sells and the media has done a top notch job on capturing the audience with this idea. One thing that is sorrowfully lacking however is the realistic pricing that ultimately comes with a renovation that is priced for reality and for success. Being realistic about the actual costs involved is often thought of as the “least fun” part of a renovation. Talking about the numbers, however, is so important and this essential money conversation





should be had right up front so that both the renovator and the homeowner are on the same page. We have all heard of renovation horror stories that started with a great price. If the lowest price is what you are looking for you are inviting trouble into your home. There are lots of reasons why the lowest price is a serious red flag! Did you know that many of the prices you hear on these “reality” shows only include the cost of product which is often reduced because of the product placement opportunity that the reality TV shows offer. Also many of these shows do not include the cost of labour or permitting because these too have been donated in exchange for the value of exposure provided by being on the show. A real world savvy buyer, doing their due diligence, will engage in some serious research when looking for a quality renovator and will not be caught up in the hype of Hollywood. RenoMark is a ready-made short list that offers a selection of established renovators and suppliers who will give you quality service, excellent workmanship, a fair and market-value price but most importantly, peace of mind. The bonus on this whole process, along with a good night sleep, is of course bragging rights for your stellar renovation.

#### **SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU PROSPECT A RENOVATOR INCLUDE:**

- › Do you offer design services, 3D renderings, blue prints or interior design service?
- › What level of supervision do you provide to assure job completion and management?
- › Do you provide a fixed price contract, a pre-construction meeting, guaranteed pricing, interior protection, job site cleanliness, regular meetings and a 2 year warranty?
- › What about taking care of permits and city inspections?
- › What are your policies and procedures for your subcontractors and who are they anyway?
- › Do you provide Workers Compensation clearances, have insurance and provide a project schedule that is updated weekly?
- › Do you have a list of past clients and subcontractors that I can call to do a reference check?
- › What about communication? How do I contact you if I have a concern or want to check in?

**When you hire a professional RenoMark renovator you can be assured that you are getting a renovator who works by a code of ethics, is going to give you a written contract, a minimal two year warranty on their work and the breathing space for one good night sleep after another. Call a RenoMark renovator today.**  
[www.renomark.ca/edmontonregion/home](http://www.renomark.ca/edmontonregion/home)

#### **A Few other resources to support you to be an educated consumer:**

- › Money Sense magazine, a Canadian Business publication has a great article on Home Renovation Reality Check. Well worth a read. <http://www.moneysense.ca/2013/02/15/home-renovation-reality-check/>
- › Canadian Home Builders guide to Residential Renovation Contracts.
- › <http://www.chba.ca/uploads/Tools%20for%20Builders/RenovationContracts2ndEd-Aug10.pdf>

Photos courtesy of HomeStyle Construction Ltd



#### **RENO MARK EDMONTON - WWW.RENO MARK.CA**

The program identifies those renovation contractors who have agreed to CHBA - Edmonton Region's code of ethics, as well as a renovation-specific code of conduct, they provide warranties, understand the value of customer service, and continually educate themselves regarding current trends, materials and regulations.

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by **CANDACE L. SMITH**



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Along with the spectacular 7000 sq. ft. Edmonton showroom, Payless is proud of their quick delivery including

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overnight delivery from their 40,000 sq.ft. Vancouver warehouse. Payless is serious about providing prompt installations by experienced artisans to further complement this exciting company. Payless Wholesale Flooring & Lighting is found everywhere from lavish estates to small condos and has one of the highest volume sales of high end products. “What we sell is what we use in our showrooms and in our own homes – real deals, on real products not knock offs,” Raj says emphatically.

“Luxury at a very affordable price,” is the philosophy Raj Gill believes and guarantees his customers regardless of whom they are – large commercial or the individual residential, lavish estate or downtown apartment. Payless Wholesale Flooring & Lighting Inc. treats everyone the same – whether you are a contractor or a home owner – fantastic products and installations, with unbelievable low pricing - 30-50% less than competitors!

Check out the Payless interactive website at [www.paylessfloors.ca](http://www.paylessfloors.ca) and take the guess work out of making a flooring decision. Filled with the magnificent and unique detailing of their superior products both the website and Payless catalogue concisely explain company policy, no guesswork for the client. These high end goods and pristine craftsmanship

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# CONCRETE EVIDENCE

We explore the *versatility of concrete* for your home

by **SHEILA HAHN**



**FOR YEARS HOMEOWNERS CONSIDERED USING CONCRETE** products for exterior use only. Well, times have certainly changed ... and so have the properties of concrete. Once relegated to commercial installations, concrete is continually finding its way into homes with leading edge design. The sleekness of concrete blends well with many of the modern and retro styles popular with so many architects and designers today. Concrete surfaces are commonly being used for residential flooring, kitchen countertops, tiles and furniture. To date, one of my favorite mediums to work with is concrete. Because of its fluid nature, the versatility of this product is endless. It conforms to almost

any shape and space, and can be colored, scored, textured, and embellished to mimic unique surfaces. The products that can be derived from concrete range from simple countertops to complex furniture and accessories (including vanities, dining tables, benches, beds, and seating).

Edmonton's own Urban Concrete has produced many concrete art forms ranging from fireplace panels and tables, to a great selection of oversized tiles. The key to this lighter weight concrete is using a product called GFRC – glass fiber reinforced concrete. The glass fiber reinforcement results in a product with much higher flexural and tensile strengths than normal concrete, allowing its use in thin-wall casting applications. With GFRC, concrete can be cast in thinner sections, making it as much as 75% lighter than similar pieces cast with traditional concrete. In addition, a piece of concrete made with GFRC is generally twice as strong as a piece that is made with traditional concrete reinforced with steel. This allows thinner pieces to be used in many situations, such as countertops, wall panels and decorative pieces. This lightweight, durable material can be cast into unlimited shapes, colors and textures and ultimately requires very low maintenance. The product is safe, energy efficient, weather and fire resistant. GFRC allows limitless design with what can be created, producing what would be considered to be sustainable art, every single time.

In a collaborative effort with Urban Concrete and Mod Studio, we wanted to explore the possibility of creating detailed wall panels that could be used in different combinations to create various patterns. We plunged forth in an attempt to design a concrete wall panel that was reflective of a modern zebra

IN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT WITH URBAN CONCRETE AND MOD STUDIO, WE WANTED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF CREATING DETAILED WALL PANELS THAT COULD BE USED IN DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS TO CREATE VARIOUS PATTERNS.

pattern. The intricacy of this pattern would have been a difficult task to produce using a traditional concrete mixture, but using the GFRC blend allowed the precise relief required to give the pattern not only dimension but stability.

Urban Concrete completely captivated our attention when they produced a table using a wood/concrete combination. The fusion of both organic materials combined to form interesting textures and movement that transformed a typical functional piece of furniture into an art piece that can be enjoyed for many years to come.

Incorporating natural elements such as wood, metal, concrete and glass into your design plans is a fantastic way to create high impact in any room of your home. Keeping an open mind to the endless possibilities of this versatile product (such as concrete) will allow any homeowner to create very specific designs without sacrificing style, both in the interior and exterior of your home.



**SHEILA HAHN**

Sheila is a design consultant who produces a functional and innovative furniture and accessory line. [www.kohon.ca](http://www.kohon.ca) or [www.skonsolide.com](http://www.skonsolide.com) 780.428.6230

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by **CANDACE L. SMITH**

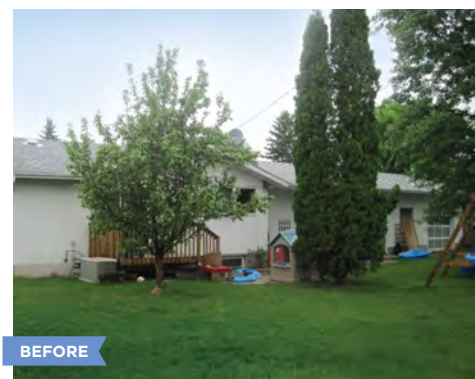
What do you do when your family grows and your home in your beloved neighbourhood no longer meets its needs? You call a trusted professional RenoMark renovator like Serenity Contracting and Design Inc. This company that has earned a reputation in the Edmonton market strictly through referrals. Originally started as renovation specialists, they have grown to be a custom home builder extraordinaire, bringing residential landmarks to the Edmonton housing scene for years.

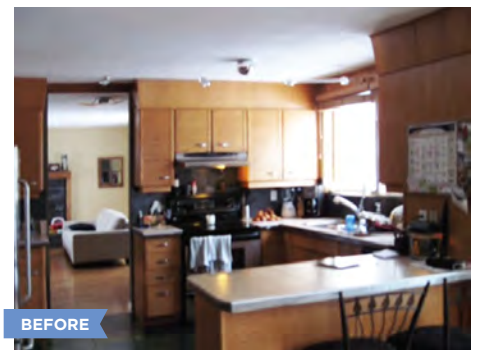
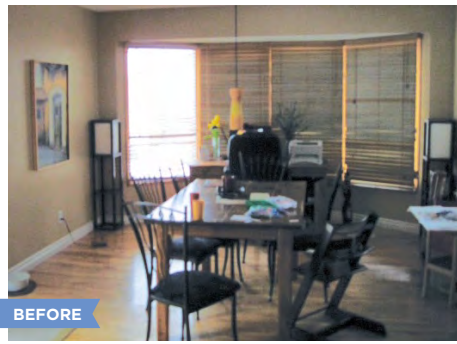
The Moreau's are such a family with three children all under six years. They were looking to find a living solution for the long term while still maintaining the look and feel of a bungalow. They were in love with the existing mature neighbourhood, but the house was no longer practical and needed a living space to complement their hectic lifestyle. That is when the Moreau's and the team at Serenity Contracting became involved in the process to give them their forever home. The vision of the project began in the spring of 2012 with the initial architectural, interior designs and construction starting in the fall.

The project involved changing a small, traditional 1960's bungalow in Rio Terrace into a spacious, modern living space with transitional design elements incorporated throughout. What made this renovation unique was that virtually every part of the house was extensively reconfigured from the inside out. Several internal walls were removed to create an open concept design and over 1,500 square feet of custom framed living space was added to the main floor and basement.

One exciting key interior feature of this home is the dramatic vaulted ceiling in the kitchen area which blends the foot print of the original house with the addition maximizing the glorious, natural light exposure from the windows further accenting the unique features..

All custom cabinetry is Serenity 'in house built' by a team of expert, skilled tradesmen. The





THE MOREAU'S  
FINISHED HOME  
BY SERENITY  
CONTRACTING  
AND DESIGN INC.  
IS UNBELIEVABLE!  
WHAT BEGAN AS A  
SMALL BUNGALOW  
BURSTING AT THE  
SEAMS, FINISHED  
AS A SPECTACULAR  
HOME GUARANTEED  
TO FILL ALL  
THE NEEDS AND  
WANTS OF ANY  
FAMILY FOR YEARS  
TO COME.

kitchen cabinets in particular are a combination of white lacquered maple cabinetry with ample, scratch and stain resistant quartz countertops – perfect for family meal preparation. There is a large (9' x 4') centerpiece island with a butcher block countertop and stained alder finish. High end stainless steel appliances balance out the kitchen to make it a focal point in the home for entertaining, for fun and for function.

The warmth of rich, walnut hardwood and accents of porcelain tile flooring blend throughout the common areas of the main floor. This long lasting, durable, yet easy to maintain, flooring will meet all expectations - from beauty to purpose.

The new ensuite's spacious and luxurious, custom ceramic shower with 10 mm frameless glass gives new meaning to elegance.

The Mud room features custom cabinetry with a stained alder and white personal lockers for each member of the family - no more clutter and delightful to look at!

The basement redevelopment includes a complete reconfigure that added 500 sq ft to include an exercise room and media room for Friday night movies and popcorn. Large flex area, 4th bedroom complete with full bathroom and new laundry area is perfect for teens or guests.

To perfectly wrap up this outstanding recreation is the overhauled exterior. Featuring earth toned Hardy Panel Siding with cedar accents to complete the transitional look giving style and personality to the exterior while still fitting into the neighbourhood.

The Moreau's finished home by Serenity Contracting and Design Inc. is unbelievable! What began as a small bungalow bursting at the seams, finished as a spectacular home guaranteed to fill all the needs and wants of any family for years to come. Not only will these dramatic improvements fit the needs of this growing family but will also work for aging family members in the future. All in all, a serene experience...

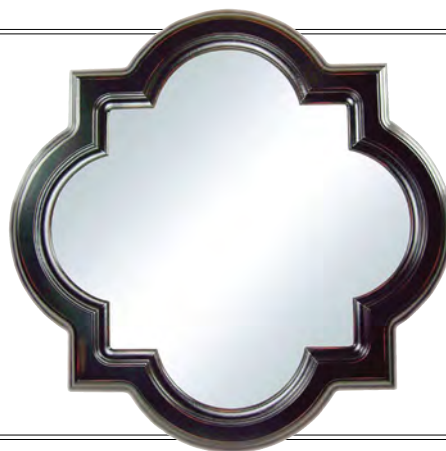
AHHHH...

# BATHING BEAUTY

## Parisian-inspired toilet



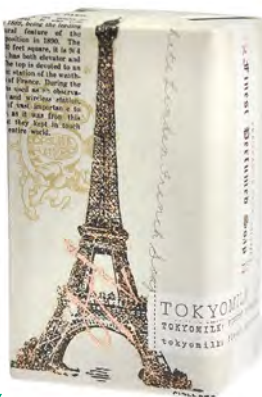
ONE



TWO



THREE



FOUR



FIVE



SIX



SEVEN

**ONE** Black Bridget Kilim Rug. \$145 for 2ft-by-3ft. Visit [jonathanadler.com](http://jonathanadler.com) **TWO** Quatrefoil Octagon Framed Mirror. \$80. Visit [lowes.ca](http://lowes.ca) **THREE** Heritage 6 Light Iron and Crystal Chandelier. \$190. Visit [homedepot.ca](http://homedepot.ca) **FOUR** Tour Eiffel No. 14 soap. \$11. Visit [tokyo-milk.com](http://tokyo-milk.com) **FIVE** Avanti Rosie White Bath Towels. From \$14 to \$25. Visit [bedbathandbeyond.ca](http://bedbathandbeyond.ca) **SIX** Iron works historic freestanding bath with biscuit exterior. \$6,978. Visit [kohler.com](http://kohler.com) **SEVEN** Allison Floor Storage. \$239. Visit [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com)

UNWIND AND RELAX IN A PERSONALIZED BATHROOM OASIS.

by SARA DUCK

## Eclectic Boho bathroom



ONE



TWO



THREE



FOUR



FIVE



SIX



SEVEN



EIGHT

**ONE** Textured Stripe Rug. \$23. Visit [pier1.ca](http://pier1.ca) **TWO** ASUNDEN Basket with Lid. \$20 for set of two. Visit [ikea.ca](http://ikea.ca) **THREE** HGLint Pendant Lamp. \$369. Visit [crateandbarrel.ca](http://crateandbarrel.ca) **FOUR** Shared History Soap in Grapefruit Lemongrass. \$9. Visit [drakegeneralstore.ca](http://drakegeneralstore.ca) **FIVE** SKÅRET Bath Towel in Multicolour. \$5. Visit [ikea.ca](http://ikea.ca) **SIX** Freestanding Bathtub. \$899. Visit [rona.ca](http://rona.ca) **SEVEN** Fretwork Wall Mirror. \$299. Visit [westelm.com](http://westelm.com)



**SHELL BUSEY: ASK A PRO**

# Selecting & buying **paint or stain**

by **SHELL BUSEY**

## THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

introduced regulations aimed at protecting the environment and the health of Canadians from the effects of air pollution. These regulations reduced the amount of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) that were allowable in alkyd paints, varnishes and wood stains. As of September 2012, paint retailers are no longer able to sell items that do not comply with the new regulations. Most manufacturers have been able to create water based products of a similar or better quality to replace the previously sold alkyd oil based products.

## STEP 1 CHOOSE THE GLOSS

Gloss is the amount of “shine” the paint has when it dries, ranging from flat (no gloss) to high gloss.

Flat to low gloss finishes are the most popular paints and stains for siding and fences. Gloss paints are

popular for doors, railings and trim and on areas exposed to high traffic or abrasion. Gloss and semi-gloss finishes are tough and durable and are characterized by a sheen that results in a cool, crisp finish that reflects light.

## STEP 2 CHOOSE THE PAINT TYPE

Paints are designed to be used on certain surfaces and to perform well under different conditions.

› **Latex** (water based) Easy to apply & clean-up, low odour, quick drying, durable, can be applied to partially moist surfaces, resists peeling & chalking, flexible. Second coats can be applied within 2-4 hours of the first coat. Available in many glosses and sheens. Ideal for siding, fences, stucco, masonry.

› **Enamel** A glossy finish that is tough, durable, smooth and impact resistant.

Enamel finishes are available for a wide variety of surfaces including metal, pipes, etc.

› **Wood Stains** Paints cover the surface but stains soak in and allow the natural texture of wood to show. Stains are popular for textured wood surfaces. Ideal for wood siding, shingles, shakes and fences.

THE TWO KEY FACTORS IN PRIMER SELECTION ARE ADHESION TO THE SURFACE AND COMPATIBILITY WITH THE TOPCOAT. THE PAINT YOU CHOOSE WILL USUALLY IDENTIFY A RECOMMENDED TYPE OF PRIMER ON THE LABEL.

› **Solid Colour Stains** Penetrate and cover the natural grain of wood but allow the natural texture of the wood to show. Use on new wood or previously stained surfaces.

› **Semi Transparent Stains** Penetrates the surface of the wood to protect and colour while letting the natural grain and texture show. Ideal for new wood or over previous semi-transparent stained surfaces.

› **Specialty Paints** For decks, driveways, machinery, masonry, rusty surfaces. Be sure to choose the right type of paint.

### **STEP 3 CHOOSE PRIMERS**

Primers seal the surface and help form a tight bond between the topcoat and underlying surface material. Primers should be applied to surfaces that have never been painted and areas that are bare or have been patched. There are products that are considered '2 in 1', serving the purpose of both a primer and paint

The two key factors in primer selection are adhesion to the surface and compatibility with the topcoat. The paint you choose will usually identify a recommended type of primer on the label.

### **STEP 4 FINALIZE AND SELECT YOUR COLOURS**

### **STEP 5 BUY YOUR TOOLS AND MATERIALS**

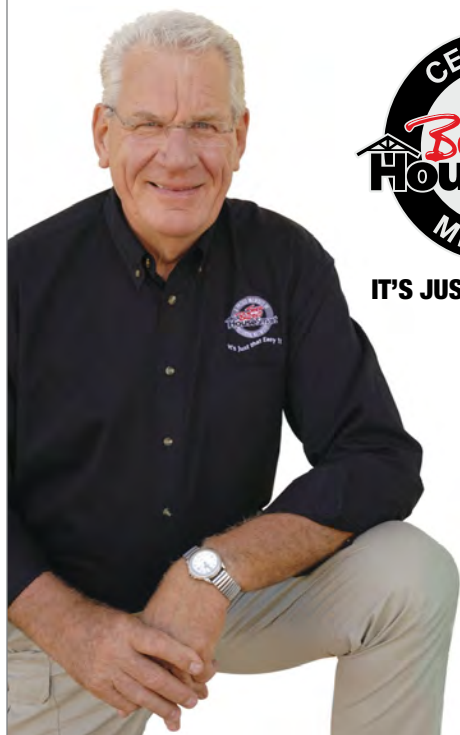
Make sure you buy the best quality tools that you can afford. Top quality tools will save application time and achieve better results. Most jobs can be done with a few quality tools including 1 or 2 premium brushes, a sturdy paint tray that can be attached to a ladder and 1 or 2 good rollers. Check with your paint store to see what tools they recommend for use with the products you have purchased.

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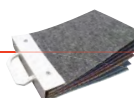
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