

CITY RETREAT

Builder and couple create home that flows for entertaining and blends with the natural world outside

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FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS QUINCE FLOWERS

Low maintenance and unique materials were used in the building of this outdoor space, including fiber cement outdoor decking instead of cedar. The same wood veneer used at the front of the home was carried over to the walls and ceiling of this space - Prodema's wood veneer requires no staining or maintenance.





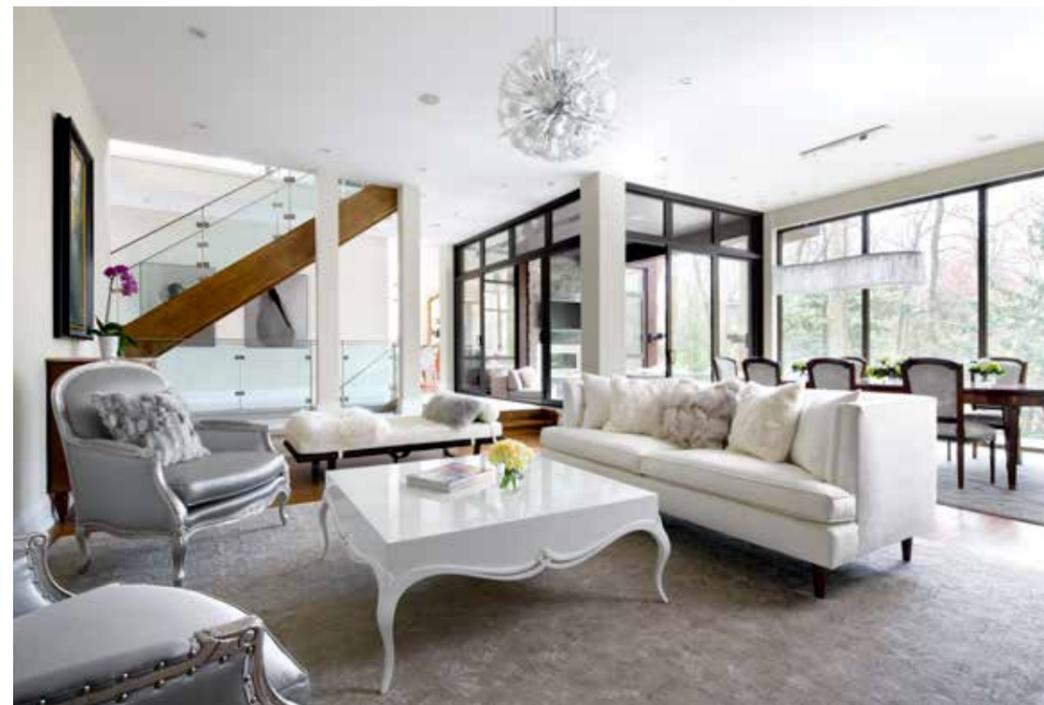
FOR ANY COUPLE, designing and building a new home, a conveniently located, gorgeous place that hits all the must-haves and really-wants, is never easy. And if, like Lori Siddons and Gordon Cheung, your family is blended (they have five children between them) and extended (they have three dogs), the challenge is even greater.

After spending months searching for the right location, this couple found a house under construction that would become their Muskoka retreat in the city. Eight months later, they have created a welcoming place where many come to eat, laugh and play, and none, not the builder who worked with them and not the stray cat who recently took up permanent residence in the back yard, wants to leave.

Along with their builder, Rose Barroso of Barroso Homes, Lori and Gordon undertook a project that increased the footprint, opened up the space, and let natural light flood through expanded doors and floor-to-ceiling windows. "Rose was very accommodating to our major design changes to her layout," says Lori. "We have become good friends through this process." 



"Fabrics tend to be my starting point. I had the chairs in both the living and dining room upholstered in the fabric I chose for them and I designed the rooms from there," says Lori. "The last thing to come were the rugs from W studio. They finished the space perfectly."



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Building great relationships with her clients is a source of pride for Barroso. Unlike most builders, she takes on only one project at a time, spending every day on site until it's finished. "Being flexible about change is an important relationship builder," says Barroso. "In the end, I want my clients happy. I still get calls from past buyers asking for my opinion on décor items they're considering for their home."

Barroso Homes are designed to incorporate top-of-the-line features. In the home she built for Lori and Gordon, high-efficiency windows, coated in a protective layer invisible to the eye,

reduces heat coming in and protects paintwork and floors from fading. Radiant floor heating eliminates the need for forced air, and Control4's home automation allows the couple to control the temperature, music, and lighting by computer. "We create unique residences that are truly exceptional in quality and detail," says Barroso. "We've been building and renovating homes for 15 years and we consider the entire reality: the value of the home, both now and future, and the surroundings."

When each job is complete, the builder installs a plaque on the façade of each home

bearing the Barroso name, date of build, and the name she has chosen for the home. This project has been christened the Sentinelle House and is a merger of both builder's and homeowner's extensive experience. 

"We've had parties for close to 75 people and a lot of them were hanging out here in the kitchen," says Lori. "I love to cook and it's great having the room for people to be around me when I do." The large, open kitchen features a marble wall with matching counter tops, state-of-the-art appliances, and engineered maple hardwood floors.



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The couple love to support Canadian artists and buy most of their artwork from Engine Gallery and Thompson Landry Gallery in Toronto.



A muted colour scheme and low-level sectional were chosen to allow the room to feel as if it were wrapped around the home's occupants. The antique French dresser and Eames chair are favourites of Lori's.

Before becoming an interior designer, Lori worked as an international model. In the fashion world, she developed a keen eye for colour, fabric pairings, and beautiful things. This experience allowed her to transition seamlessly into her second career as an interior designer; she's now partner of Interior Chic Design. And her fashion expertise isn't forgotten. There is a high-gloss mannequin on display in the open concept closet that gets regular wardrobe changes.

Lori made all the interior design decisions for the home including the flooring, marble, paint colours, lighting fixtures, and furniture as well as kitchen and bathroom design. “I believe a home should reflect the personality of the owners,” says Lori. She credits Gordon as her inspiration for their home's design.

“Everyday with Gordon feels like a vacation,” says Lori. “No matter how exhausted he is from work, Gordon is always smiling and always taking care of family and the dogs first. I wanted the surroundings to reflect all the things he brings to my life - love, harmony and tranquility.”



With the couple's love for wine and entertaining, it's no surprise that the home also has a 1,600-bottle wine cellar.

“Every morning, birds singing and the pecking of a woodpecker wake us up,” says Lori. “And the fireplace keeps us cozy on cold nights. The mannequin was purchased for this exact spot and can be seen through the window by people on the patio below. At night we’ve had people over who think it’s me.”

Lori’s love for contrast between clean, modern lines and softer antique pieces is also displayed in every room. “When Lori told me her vision, I knew unequivocally that she was spot on,” says Gordon. “As my soul mate, I have complete trust and faith in her abilities.”

The house was designed for entertaining with flow that integrates the architecture, interior and exterior. With a blended family and an open policy of visiting, there’s a constant parade of teenagers and spontaneous parties. “People from our start-up companies are also like family to us and we host many

business functions, including networking parties and fund-raising meetings for the various charities we support,” says Lori. Two charities in particular are close to their hearts: The Oceana Ball, which raises money for the Herbie Fund and supports Canadian fashion and art, and the Mississauga and Etobicoke Humane Society.

The house was designed by Ali Malek-Zadeh of Urbanscape Group and Barroso Homes and is reminiscent of a Frank Lloyd Wright structure. Taking cues from nature with the use of wood-accent cladding and stone for the façade,

the home appears to sink into the foliage, pulling it back into the ravine behind. The back of the house is visible from the front door. “Ali is a true talent as passersby stop and stare at the house all the time,” says Lori.

And it’s not just the interior of the home that boasts special attention to detail. Off the main floor is one of three outdoor seating areas. The Tornado Room is named after one of the couple’s medical device companies, Tornado Medical Systems. “This is my favourite outdoor space,” says Lori. There are outdoor “Tornado torches” with spinning flames and

a television above a two-way fireplace, visible from the family room. Overhead heaters allow three-season use of this room for cigar smoking and entertainment. Its elevation gives it a breathtaking view of the ravine and the infinity pool, currently being built.

When asked which room is the couple’s favourite, the answer is easy for them – their master bedroom. The south wall of the room is the entire back of the house with wall-to-wall windows and soaring 14-foot ceilings, giving a spectacular view of the ravine. “It’s like a wall of art with different paintings every season,” says

Lori. Framed within those windows is often a view of red-tail hawks, deer, and foxes who’ve made themselves a small den. “We know how lucky we are to have what we have, but it would mean nothing without family and friends in our lives to share it with,” says Lori. 🐾

Floating vanities in pure white marble with glass finish, and a sunken tub in the same pristine stone, dominate the master bath.

