

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Builder creates homes using up-and-coming materials that others are yet to discover

BY JULIE GEDEON // PHOTOGRAPHY: ROBERT HOLOWKA // STYLING: VANESSA SUPPA

DESIGN

ROSE BARROSO IS CONSTANTLY UPPING HER GAME as she builds contemporary homes in Toronto. “I look for materials that aren’t yet being used by others,” says Barroso, who is a builder and designer and the founder of the eponymously named Barroso Homes.

A case in point: to create a bow curve in the upper façade of a home in Humber Valley, her team precision-cut panels of glass-fibre-reinforced concrete. The fibreC is normally used to cast the exterior walls of apartment or office buildings. “It looks great and won’t need any maintenance,” Barroso says.

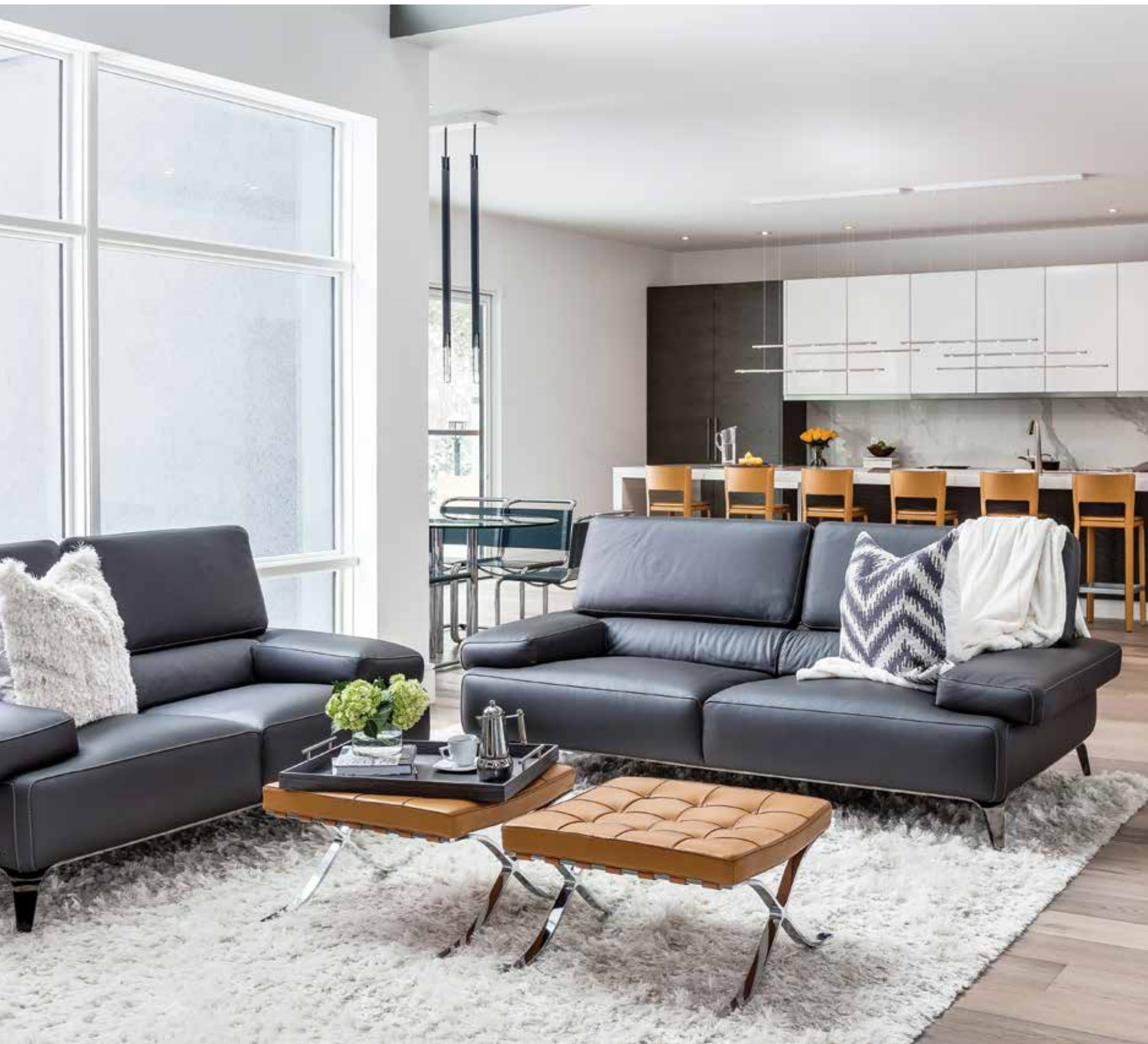
She further characterized the home’s exterior by framing the portico with cedar slats on black stucco. “The windows open inwards so they can be cleaned,” she says. A mahogany door is made grander with glass sidelites and concrete stepped framing.

Barroso aided in the design of this 7,300-square-foot home for two busy doctors and their young children. She always differentiates the foyer flooring to create a unique welcoming space that’s practical for Canada’s weather. “The client and I agreed and chose porcelain slabs with a gold vein and framed



The foyer is both original and practical with its MaxFine porcelain floor slabs that have a delicate golden vein. The heated Fuzion Flooring in a wire-brushed red oak retains some of its natural knots. Barroso encourages all of her clients to install heated flooring to minimize dust and possible allergens.

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Lighting again doubles as art with the Viso Cubies in amber, clear and smoke tones suspended from the ceiling in the two-storey living room. The comfy leather sofas are from Roche Bobois.



them in the wire-brushed red oak flooring we installed elsewhere,” she says. “CasaLife had the cushioned bench custom-made for the client, to fit the wall and complement the front door.”

The homeowners call their new home Luminoso, a fitting name given the abundant natural light flowing through the living room’s expansive windows, well aided by the discreet recessed lighting installed throughout the home.

Fixtures double as art, such as the white linear profiles where the wall is painted the same grey as the staircase. An industrial edge is created by the stainless steel standoffs grasping the frameless glass with chrome railing caps, but it’s softened with the open risers stained in the floor’s darkest pigment.

A two-sided fireplace has a sedate setting in the living room where the backyard views steal the show anyway. Barroso bought the lot after falling in love with the multi-levelled

property that is adjacent to a treed ravine. “I immediately visualized a basement walk-out to a covered patio, sliding doors off the kitchen, and a pool with an integrated Jacuzzi,” she recalls. “My clients didn’t see it as readily, but trusted my vision and enthusiasm.”

Lighting again becomes art in the living room, where a collection of pendant lamps called Cubies, in amber, clear and smoke tones, draw the eye upward. The installation required a reinforced ceiling and a



Barroso nearly always calls on Perola Kitchens and Interiors to achieve the vision she has for a kitchen, as well as for other cabinetry. She chose Gaggenau appliances for their durability, and such conveniences as the way the doors open to one side on the wall ovens. Orange leather stools with brushed nickel: Palazzetti Modern Furniture.

transformer large enough to accommodate the 21 fixtures.

A chandelier provides the focal point in the dining room where the two-sided fireplace is also dressed to the nines in a shimmery multi-grey cladding called Laminam. Barroso put her clients in touch with Perola Kitchens & Interiors to have their favourite black dining table re-lacquered in white.

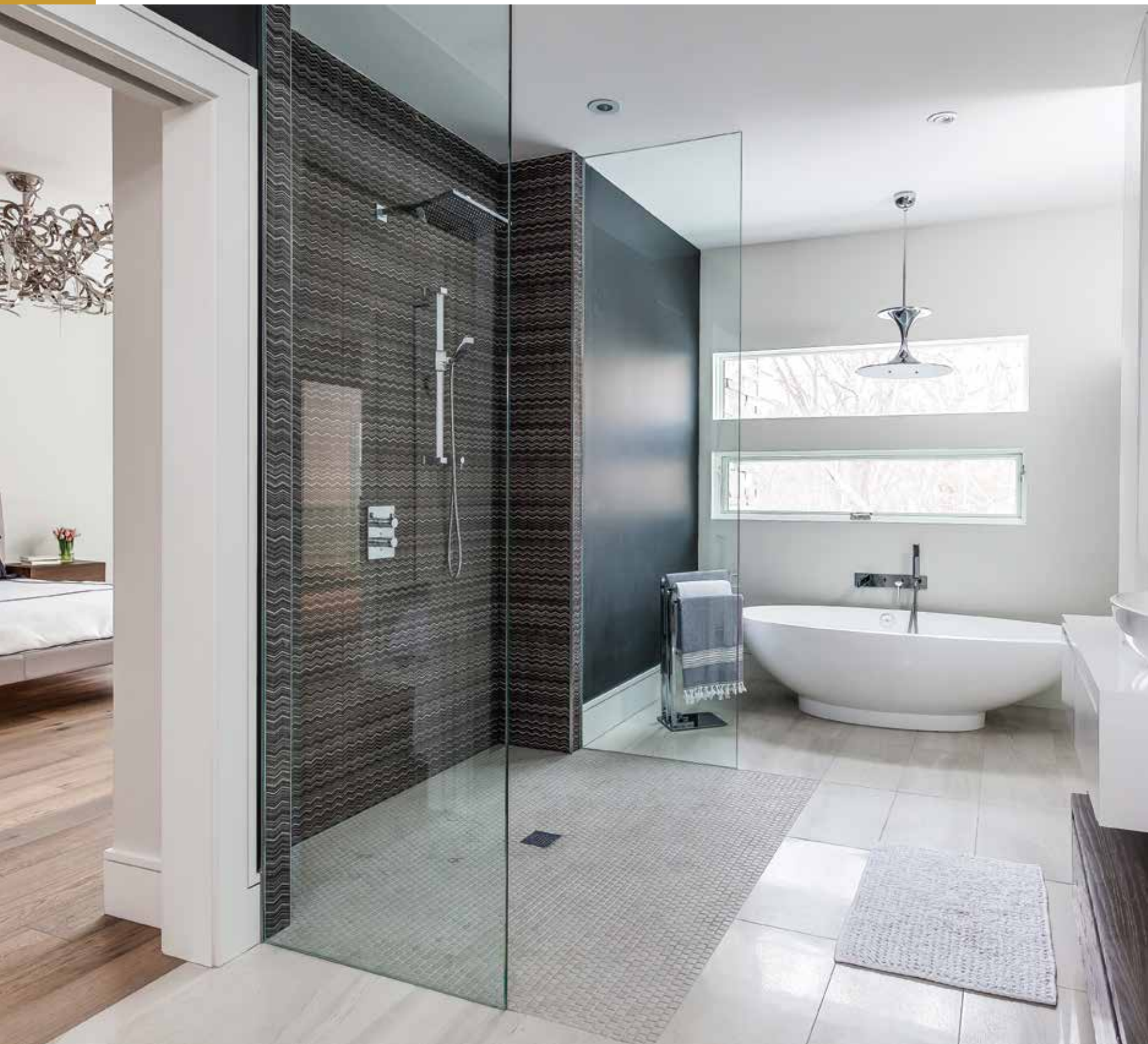
Linear lighting takes centre-stage over the kitchen island. “My client wanted something really different, so so I advised her to visit AM Studio, a lighting place I fell in love with years ago, where she found these rows of decorative LED lights,” Barroso says. “I love how they intriguingly fill the space without hindering sight lines.”

White-lacquered cabinetry is made brighter by the grey ash veneer elsewhere. Porcelain slabs provide a marble-like look on the backsplash and island. The cost is lower than marble while the practicality is higher. Steel reinforcement prevents the porcelain from bowing along the lengthy island that becomes the hub of every gathering. “It really lends

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I like to think gives me an edge.”*



The Napoli-style freestanding tub and sinks from Victoria + Albert provide a bright contrast to the various styles and sizes of Céragrès wall and floor tiles.



The double-door entrance and chandelier add glamorous touches to the large walk-in closet.

itself to the charcuterie trays that the homeowners often set out," Barroso says.

It wasn't easy, but the Barroso team managed to get the range hoods that the homeowner bought installed into the upper cabinetry. "We had to make a cavity in the wall for it and put filler behind the counter so that it would extend out a bit farther," Barroso says.

Upstairs, the master bedroom is expansive with its double doors to a walk-in closet that features the same cabinetry finishes as the kitchen. An elaborate chrome lighting fixture above the bed commands attention while a chandelier from the couple's previous house bedazzles the closet.

A pocket door seamlessly opens to a large ensuite bathroom where a grey and white colour palette creates a soothing ambience. The chrome light fixture above the freestanding tub has an opaque cover so the bulb doesn't show. "That's the kind of attention to detail I like to think gives me an edge," Barroso says. ➤