



A fluted waterfall wall made of oak creates a dramatic focal point in the front entryway. **OPPOSITE LEFT:** Organic exterior elements are inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style builds of the 1900s. **RIGHT:** Soaring ceiling heights create a bright entrance with natural light that lasts all day.



MUSKOKA INSPIRED

STORY **JOYCE GIONET** | PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

According to *National Geographic Traveler* magazine, Muskoka is one of the world's "must see places." The trend for recreating that laid-back Muskoka vibe in the city shows no sign of letting up. At one time, **Peter Giampuzzi**, owner of **Ornella Homes**, built maybe one home a year in the Muskoka-inspired style. Today this type of build makes up 80 per cent of his business.

FOR HOMEOWNERS Lorenzo and Lee, the neighbourhood was their priority. "Lee and I have always enjoyed Port Credit and wanted to be within walking distance of restaurants and the waterfront," says Lorenzo. "Although the location is one of our greatest enjoyments, the list of interior and exterior pleasures in our new home is vast."

Their building permit arrived at the same time as the pandemic, then things began shutting down in Ontario. Despite recurring lockdowns, strict on-site safety protocols and frustrating supply chain issues, the couple moved into their home in the summer of 2021.

Inspiration for the organic exterior comes from Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style builds of the 1900s. Peter points out the low roof pitch moving to flat at points, angled walls and exaggerated eaves. "We emphasized horizontal lines," he says. The exterior is covered in Owen Sound limestone, cut in varying lengths for a lovely horizontal flow. Each stone was tooled to a smooth, seamless finish. The tongue-and-groove roof cladding is a weatherproof PVC called Sagpiper made in Portugal. It intersects beautifully with the Iron Ore grey PVC soffits. *Continued on page 42*



modern spaces conducive to entertaining, with well-designed storage. Lorenzo and Lee had lived in the same house for over 20 years, so this new build was an opportunity to update and modernize the look of their new forever home, while keeping a few favourite pieces of furniture and lighting.” says Francy. “It’s difficult to pinpoint one thing I like the most about the house, maybe it’s the clean lines and warm tones,” she says. The repetition of finishes, colours and details deliver a flow that pleases the eye. To add texture, natural wood trim was often used in Prairie-style homes. Here, white oak appears on floors, millwork (**Magnum Millwork Inc.**) and ceiling treatments, like on the upper perimeter of skylights. Using the same species of wood provides continuity. Left unstained it’s a nice neutral base that allows furniture, lighting and decorative accents to pop. “Fluted panelling lends texture, warmth and dimensional shadowing to the main hall and stairwell,” says Francy. *Continued on page 44*



LEFT: The mudroom with floor-to-ceiling storage leads to the garage where car lifts keep everything spare and tidy. **BELOW LEFT:** The family’s repurposed dining table adds warmth to the modern aesthetic. **BELOW:** A galley-style butler’s pantry connects the kitchen to the dining room.



According to Peter, the challenge in designing contemporary and modern homes is the default tendency of greyscale colours, which can create a very cold home. All the wood accents give this house the warmth the homeowners wanted in this family home. “Designing a compact and efficient house that still feels open, airy and spacious is not easy,” Peter says. He gives kudos to **Richard Kossak**, owner of **New Age Design**, for his success pulling all the requirements together so beautifully in the architectural plans, and the homeowners in being so diligent and open minded in their design approach. “Lorenzo and Lee were very organized, they knew what they wanted, and then stepped back to let Richard do what he does best.”

Francy Kralik, owner of design firm **House Candy**, worked closely with Peter, tweaking layouts and detailing millwork, fixtures and finishes. “The goal was fresh

ABOVE: A fluted island skirt and matching fan hood complement the main living space. **LEFT:** Carrying the wood tones to the ceiling warms the space.





Floor-to-ceiling octagonal tile and glimmering brass elements create a luxe powder room. **RIGHT:** Sweet fur baby Sammie enjoys basking in the warmth by the windows.

Peter is particularly proud of the “waterfall of oak,” a lovely run of panelling that goes from basement to second floor. In the kitchen, fluting was used on the island and range hood. “We have European roots, so the kitchen is the epicentre of our home,” Lorenzo says. “The common area that encompasses kitchen and great room encourages terrific family interactions.” The pair wanted a traditional kitchen – no lacquered or highly polished finishes; it needed to be warm and inviting for entertaining. The outcome is a lovely blend of natural wood and white. Peter bulked up the range hood, ribbed cabinet doors and millwork and added fluting to the island. The island’s panels are push-front cabinets. The island surface is white quartz. Tiles throughout were sourced from **Ciot**.

Walls of windows were common in Prairie houses. Frank Lloyd Wright designed for minimal separation between interiors and the natural world outside. The windows in this great room are floor-to-ceiling. Each window weighs about 1,200 pounds. They were installed by **Ostaco Windows and Doors**. Lorenzo and Lee put a great deal of thought into their backyard – one of the home’s most impressive features. The great room’s expanse of glass showcases its beautiful symmetry.

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The dark, dramatic fireplace is classic and stands the test of time.

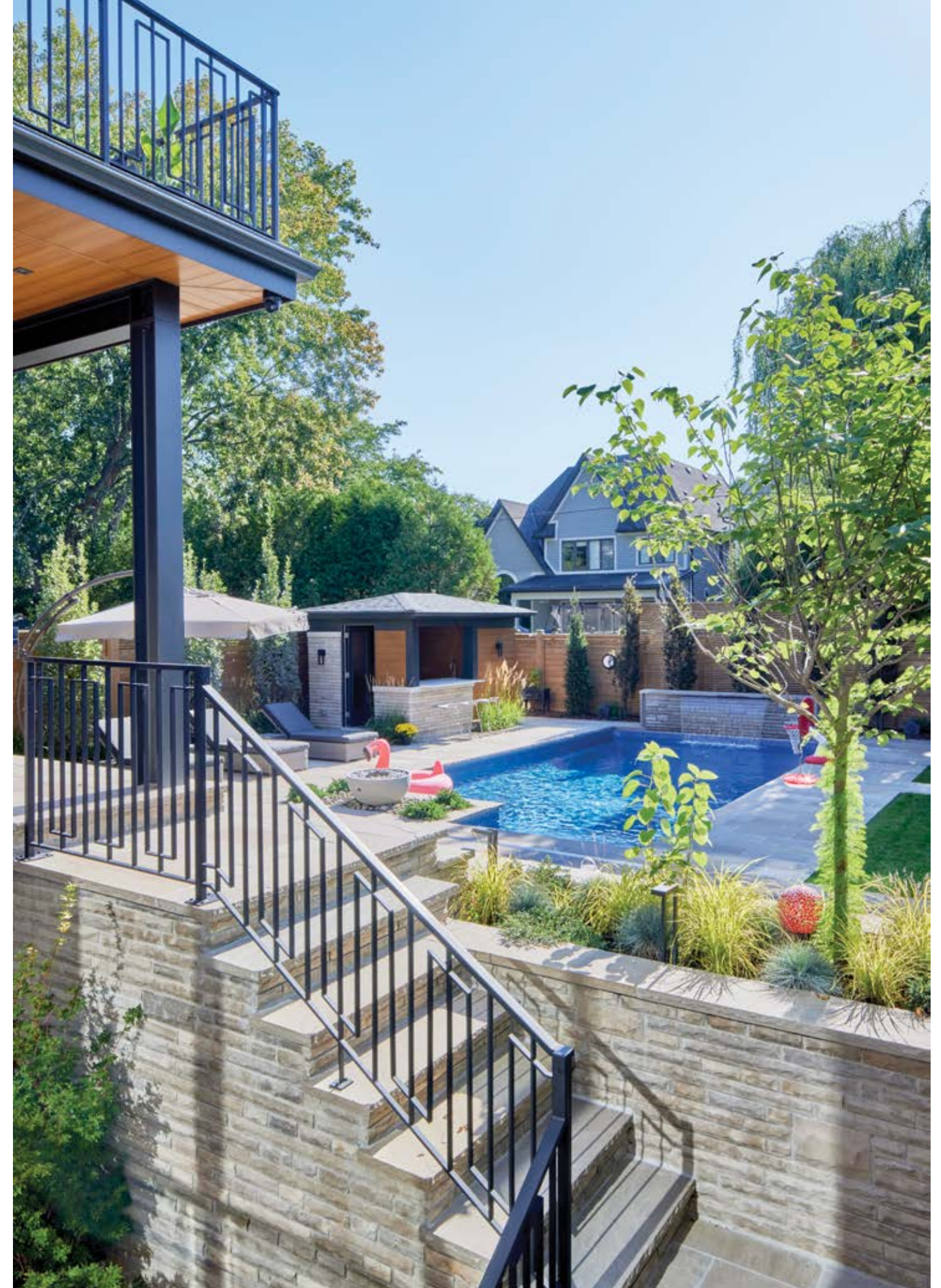


Varying ceiling heights add visual interest and flood the main floor with additional light.



The elevation in the rear of the house is quite steep, however clever design features have softened it – an extended covered porch, raised and flared flower boxes lead the way down to the gorgeous pool, waterfall feature and outdoor bar. **Backyard Getaways** did the installation. It's a space that will grow more beautiful and private with time as plantings mature. *Continued on page 48*

ABOVE: There's no need to leave the city when the backyard is a veritable retreat. **RIGHT:** An outdoor kitchen is conveniently located just outside the main floor under the covered porch. **OPPOSITE:** Lush landscaping makes the backyard serene and private.



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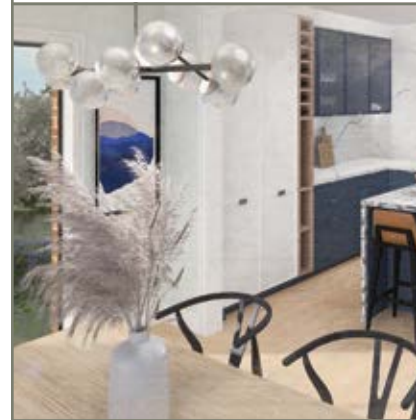
“Lee and I are so thankful to Richard, Peter and Francy for guiding us along the way to achieving our dream home.”

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RIGHT: The primary bedroom has a walkout to a private porch. **BELOW:** A zero-entry shower adds visual appeal and maximizes space. **BELOW RIGHT:** A light beachy hue adds a natural element to the en suite.



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Lorenzo calls the lower level the home's interior playground. "The bar and entertainment area, wine cellar and cigar room adjacent to the exterior walk-out have already given us great memories in a very short time. The home gym also makes exercising slightly more inviting on those non-so-called-motivated days," he says.

Lorenzo and Lee emphasized quality over quantity in the way they managed the home's interior and exterior spaces. Prior to beginning the build, they meticulously mapped out every room for proper placement of windows and light fixtures, including where each electrical outlet would go. Lorenzo likes to see wine. Even the mechanical room had a detailed plan.

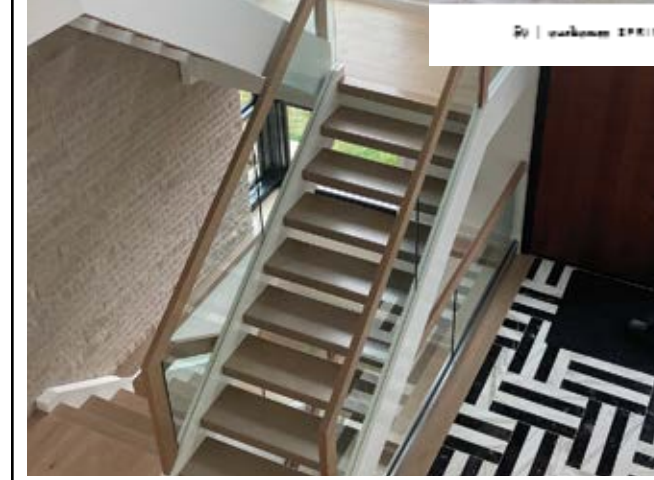
"Lorenzo and Lee had a very good idea of what they wanted, which was a huge help to us and to the trades," Peter says. "I don't think this house would have come out the way it did had the two of them not been so open and available in every aspect of the build." Lorenzo returns the compliment: "Lee and I are so thankful to Richard, Peter and Francy for guiding us along the way to achieving our dream home." ■

RIGHT: A cigar room is a great space to lounge and entertain. **BELOW LEFT:** The cellar beautifully organizes and showcases a wine collection. **BELOW CENTER:** The lower level is the common area is a great place to lounge. **BELOW RIGHT:** There are no excuses when the gym is just close away.



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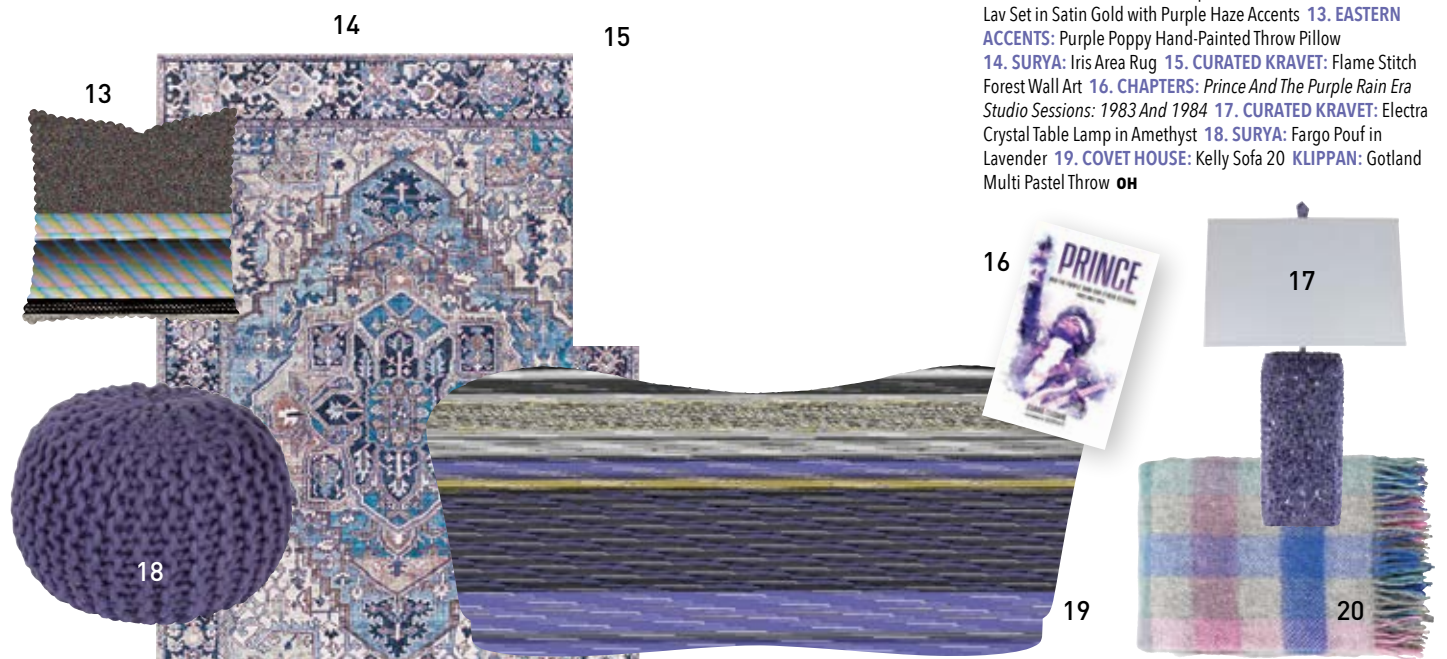


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