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COLOUR

It's not next year's hot hue, it's more timeless than that
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FOR SALE

Check out these country properties for sale
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THE
EGLINTON
YONGE AT HEART

NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION.
SUITES FROM THE HIGH-\$200S.



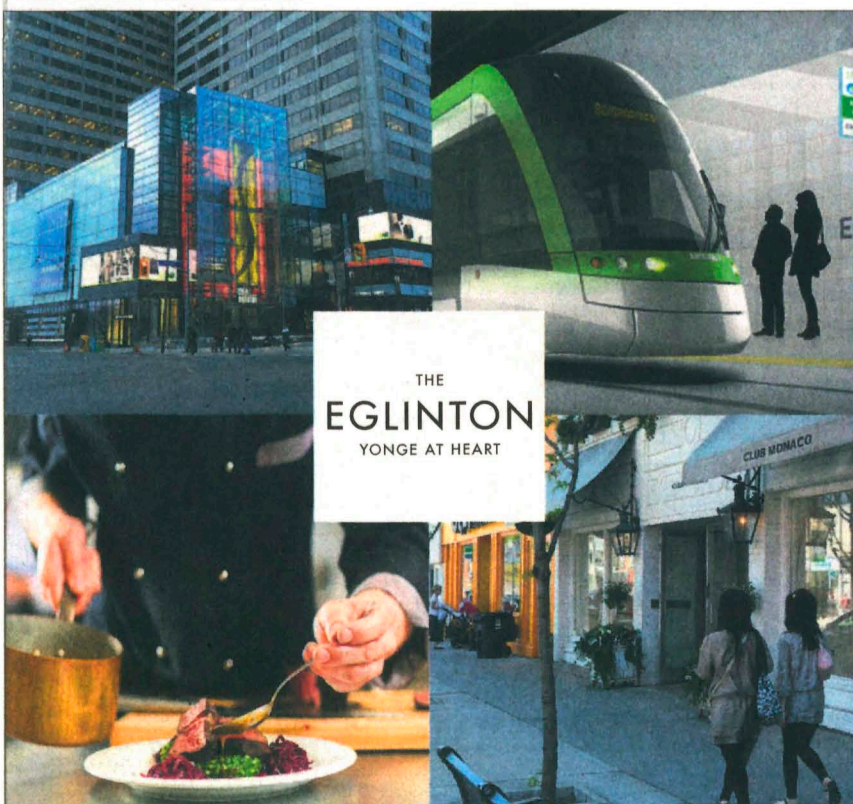
WEALTH of DETAIL

CECCONI SIMONE LEAVES AN IMPRINT
ON EACH SPACE THEY DESIGN.
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JOY VON TIEDEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY

"We think of design for the masses.... We want people to be aware of what constitutes good design and how to look for it," Anna Simone says.

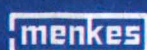
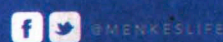


THE
EGLINTON
YONGE AT HEART

THE EGLINTON NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

Suites from the high-\$200s. The Eglinton truly is Yonge at heart. Here, at the vibrant and rapidly growing junction of Yonge and Eglinton, discover some of the most desirable shopping, dining and entertainment options to grace the streets of Toronto. Plus, The Eglinton is ideally situated steps from Eglinton subway and the future Crosstown LRT.

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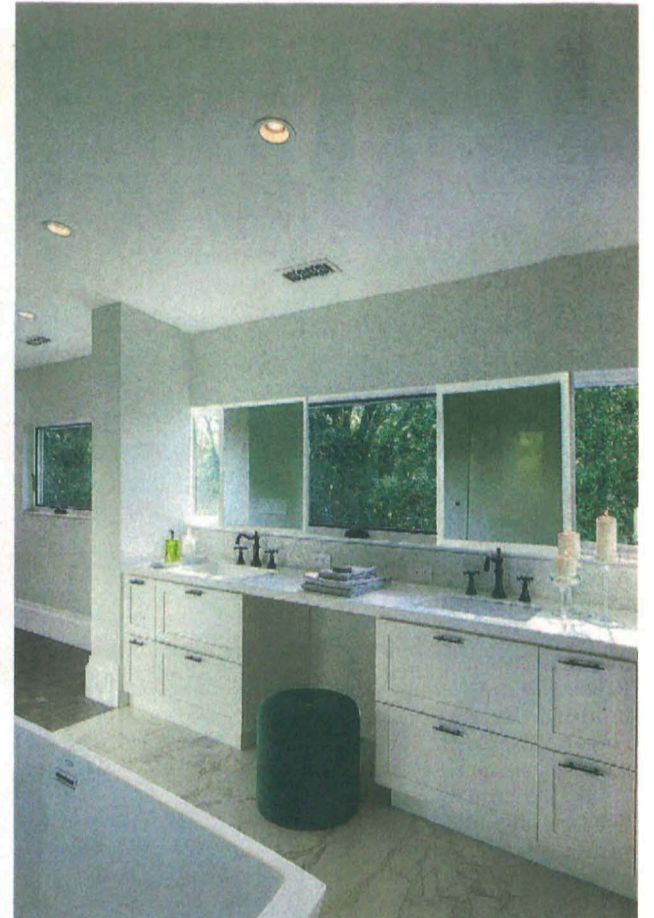
SURVEY SAYS

BUDGET, WHAT BUDGET? — AND OTHER RENO FIGURES

The 2016 Houzz&Home Canada survey is out, and with 23,800 respondents, it's a fair indication of how and why we remodel. Fifty-six per cent of millennial homeowners on Houzz.com (aged 25 to 34) renovated in 2015, versus 61 per cent of those 35 to 54 and 62 per cent of those 55 and up. But, millennials decorated more (76 per cent versus 67 and 60 per cent respectively). Their motivation was customizing a recently



bought home (52 versus 24 and 19 per cent). Forty-nine per cent of Canadian homeowners renovated to avoid moving out of their home; 33 per cent to stay in their neighbourhood. As ever, kitchens (29 per cent), master/bathroom (19 and 25) and living/family rooms (23) got the attention. Over 31 per cent had no budget in mind, and 29 per cent went over theirs. *National Post*



JOY VON TIEDEMANN PHOTOGRAPHY

Elaine Cecconi and Anna Simone recently embarked on a new venture, to create residential projects at a range of price points throughout Toronto. Current ventures include a project on Fallsview Avenue and this home on The Kingsway — technically a renovation, but so transformed it's practically a new build.

Pairing home with habitat

MARTHA UNIACKE BREEN

FROM FRONT AND BACK WINDOW-WALLS TO FRAMELESS CABINETRY, EACH DETAIL MATTERS

The design duo of Elaine Cecconi and Anna Simone has a reputation for clean, spare design that has made them a marquee name for a wide range of commercial interiors, from condo model suites to offices and retail establishments. But what happens when they turn their talents to private homes? It turns out that same subtle eye for detail makes for a classic, very inviting result.

Cecconi and Simone recently embarked on a new venture called Imprint Homes, partnering with structural engineering firm Picco Engineering and builder Coachwood Manor Homes to create residential projects at a range of price points throughout Toronto. Current ventures include a project on Fallsview Road and this home on The Kingsway — technically a renovation, but so transformed it's practically a new build.

Toronto is the No. 1 city in North America for new construction, but it often follows that the busier the sites are, the faster the trades work, and so less care goes into the building.

"So many builders go in, buy an older house, and then build these huge homes (on its site) that have no relationship with the neighbouring houses or the character of the street. We're very concerned about quality. We think of it as design for the masses; design should be for everyone, not just the one per cent. We want people to be aware of what constitutes good design and how to look for it; it's about much more than just price."

Currently for sale at about \$3.1 million, this particular home may not be exactly the house for

the 99 per cent. But the attention to detail and the sensibility with which it was designed is very instructive. Beneath there is a wealth of subtle details that don't necessarily jump out at you, but belie a level of thought — even reflection — that's impressive. It's quality in the sense that's described in the book *The Zen Of Motorcycle Maintenance*, where it becomes a philosophical construct: less about expensive objects than about a way of life.

The process starts with the front elevation of the house, whose flat façade and mansard roof harmonize peacefully with its older neighbours. The metal roof, Simone points out, might cost four times as much as typical asphalt shingles, but will last a lifetime, making it the better bargain in the long run. Other high-quality materials, such as the stone driveway pavers, granite-slab steps and facings of a special narrow brick with matching mortar, were chosen as much for their durability as their beauty. "We focused on things that are hard to change, such as the roof, the windows and hard-scaping, to make those more sympathetic to the streetscape."

But there's no need to duplicate the past. Instead of a standard front door with a portico, you enter through the farthest-left of a bank of windows that spans the entire main floor front wall, and immediately arrive in the space: a long open room that breaks into living, dining and family room, lit by a corresponding wide set of windows overlooking the back garden.

Rhyming front and back window-walls fill the whole space with a sense of nature and sunlight — the mature trees in this leafy neighbourhood had a marked influence on the placement of windows all through the house — yet there's a clear sense of division between centres. Living and family areas have identical fireplaces, while the dining area is set off by shallow protrusions in the wall profile on each side (in place of actual walls), and by a marvellous light fixture made

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of pendants of varying sizes over the table. The looping wires seem to add a rebuttal to all the cool, orderly lines in the room.

The skill of the design here isn't apparent until you start to look for it. Traditional woodwork, including crown mouldings, pedimented fireplace surrounds and deep baseboards, and engineered hardwood floors give it an elegant air, and are all perfectly joined. And one of the advantages to working with a structural engineer from the earliest days of planning, Simone points out, is they were able to consider exactly where all the

lighting would be placed to best effect, right down to suitable places to hang artwork. In the dining room she also points out in passing, a thoughtful touch: Corian windowsills throughout the house. "We've all opened the windows on a hot day then forgotten to close them when it rains, which wrecks a typical wooden windowsill. But Corian is indestructible."

The beadboard cabinetry in the kitchen is frameless, another feat of clever joinery, and imparts a kind of upcountry warmth. This room is a textbook application of the five basic rules of design, she explains: harmony, rhythm, scale, proportion and balance. Appliances (except for the cooktop, placed exactly in the centre of the back counter) are hidden behind the flow of cabinets; library pulls, handles, and faucets are all in the same deep oil-rubbed bronze, contrasting attractively with all the white and grey.

But the single most beautiful element in the room (and perhaps, the whole house), is a huge walnut butcher-block counter atop the island in the centre. "It's practical as well as beautiful," she says. "You can work on it, even cut on it, and just oil out the scratches." It's a form of sculpture as much as a working piece.

At the foot of the stairs, the powder room betrays a little touch of wit: one-inch white ceramic hex tiles dotted with black ones, an icon of 1920s Toronto bathrooms — except these ones cover the walls, not the floor. Elsewhere, the entire house is fin-

ished in the same pale-grey wall colour, with white trim and traditional oil-rubbed bronze hardware. "It helps to make the house feel pulled together," she observes. "Especially with so much openness, different coloured walls can look very awkward. Colour looks best when it comes from what you put into the room: artwork, pillows and accessories."

From a wide, bright upper hallway, each of the bedrooms features its own ensuite, even the nursery. Up here, you get a real sense of how the designers worked with the greenery outside to give the house its air of being almost "in" the treetops. This is particularly true in the second bedroom. Overlooking a big old maple tree on the front lawn, a single bank of windows carries on without a break into the adjoining bathroom, creating a delightfully leafy blur.

Under the roof, the master suite's slanted eaves humanize this sophisticated room and its accompanying ensuite. This led to another practical decision: whereas other bathrooms in the house feature tiling that is carefully planned to minimize cuts and partial tiles — another subtle indicator of quality — the plot thickens when the ceiling isn't flat. The solution was a variation on the tiny-hex-tile theme, but in porcelain instead of ceramic, for a quiet finish that picks up the soft colour of the walls elsewhere.

"I love the indoor-outdoor feeling of the house," Simone says. "No matter where you are in the home, your sightlines are never interrupted; there's never any sense of disorder anywhere. It isn't every day that I go into an environment and just don't want to leave. But I just want to experience this house."

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