

love MODERN

FOR THIS WILLOWDALE CUSTOM HOME,
IT'S COOL TO BE MODERN.

STORY CATALINA MARGULIS
PHOTOGRAPHY VALERIE WILCOX

Metal finishes add interest
in the living room.



LEFT: The dining table was painted a beautiful deep blue. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Designtheory mavens Adolphina and Leanne worked with the homeowners to create a calm, soothing place to call home. **RIGHT:** Soft chevron patterned wallpaper in the powder room adds personality. **BELOW:** The two-sided fireplace is a beautiful focal point on the main floor.

The armchairs were reupholstered for a modern feel.



PHOTO: DAVID PROC

Working on a home with a blank slate and a carte blanche invitation from the homeowners was a dream project for dynamic design duo **Adolphina Karachok** and **Leanne Tamaro**, principal designers of **Designtheory** in Toronto.

The modern, custom home is just one of the many new and revamped properties quickly taking over the Willowdale neighbourhood of North York. "It's a residential neighbourhood that over the last couple of years has completely transformed," says Leanne. "There are

barely any of the original homes left; all of the homes are being demolished and rebuilt with traditional, transitional and modern homes that are anywhere from 3,500 to 5,000 square feet. It's an area that's growing very quickly."

At 4,500 square feet, this contemporary, multi-level home features four bedrooms. "Each bedroom has its own bathroom and walk-in closet," says Leanne, who notes the addition of a nanny suite in the basement.

"The homeowners are a young, professional couple. They lived in the neighbourhood but decided to move homes because they wanted a modern aesthetic and wanted a house they could customize and would be able to grow into," says Leanne. *Continued on page 32*



“SOMETHING WE LOVE TO DO IN ALL THE SPACES WE WORK IN IS MIX METALS FOR A MORE INTERESTING, LAYERED LOOK.”



The home was already being constructed when the homeowners brought in Designtheory. “We loved the use of walnut, the modern custom millwork, the open, floating staircase with glass railings, the high ceilings, the large windows, the beautiful linear fireplaces and modern finishes,” says Leanne. “It was a great backdrop to work with.”

The only stipulation the homeowners gave was that they wanted the space to feel warm. The result: a calm, soothing palette and plenty of texture and pattern in throw pillows, area rugs and furnishings to make the space anything but boring.

One of the spaces the designers were most excited about was the room on the other side of the living and dining room, which is separated by a fireplace partition. “The challenge in this part of the house is that we have three rooms open to each other,” says Adolphina. “Everything has to be treated in its own way but still have a cohesive flow.”

To achieve that, they selected a palette that would work throughout the main floor and varied the textures and patterns in the three spaces.

In the den, backless sofas and floating walnut shelves, which also appear in the family room, give the room purpose and personality. “The homeowners were unsure how to use this room. The idea is that when they have kids, it can transition into a piano room,” says Leanne. “For the time being, it’s a great entertaining space and place to have cocktails and relax after dinner.”

In the dining room, the homeowners wanted to use their existing table and chairs. “Instead of getting something new, we decided to paint the table a deep blue, and used that as our starting point,” says Adolphina. “Then, instead of reupholstering all the dining room chairs, we selected new fabric for the two armchairs, to give the room that modern feel. We softened the space by adding drapery that blends into the wall, a beautiful simple white linen that doesn’t stand out but adds visual softness.”

In the living room, metal finishes add interest. “Something we love to do in all the spaces we work in is mix metals for a more interesting, layered look,” says Leanne.

In the kitchen, soft grey bar stools tie into the main-floor colour scheme. A breakfast area features a white glass table and Eiffel chairs in navy and taupe. The Capiz chandelier from **West Elm** imparts bling.

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TOP: The sleek lines in the kitchen are softened by the upholstered bar stools. **RIGHT:** Eiffel chairs add a touch of modernity to the breakfast area. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** Floating walnut shelves add warmth to the family room. **TOP RIGHT:** The built-ins are beautiful and functional. **BOTTOM:** The continuation of warm panelling creates a cohesive space.



feature

In the main floor powder room, gold chevron wallpaper makes a statement. “We love wallpaper in a powder room; it’s the perfect area to add interest,” says Leanne.

In the master bedroom, wall sconces were moved for better positioning. Chevron from the main floor powder room reappears in the master bedroom area rug and bedding. “We used a grey, soft blue and blush pink combination for this space that turned out really calming and beautiful,” says Adolphina.

The basement boasts high, 10-foot ceilings, making it nice and bright – perfect for the rec area and exercise room. The use of navy blue carries from upstairs with pops of orange to brighten the space.

In the mudroom that leads to the garage, Leanne and Adolphina designed a leather-like cushion for the bench. “It’s a high-quality vinyl that looks just like leather but provides durability and washability,” says Leanne.

After a year of planning, the project finished in October 2016 with a big reveal. “We arranged to have the homeowners leave the house while we installed everything in one day,” says Leanne. “When they came home, they returned to a completely finished space. They were thrilled.” *Continued on page 36*



“WE USED A GREY, SOFT BLUE AND BLUSH PINK COMBINATION FOR THIS SPACE THAT TURNED OUT REALLY CALMING AND BEAUTIFUL.”



ABOVE: Pale pink is a lovely addition to this bedroom. **LEFT & FAR LEFT:** Streamlined vanities allow for the details in the wallpaper and tile to shine through. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The master bedroom is serene with a grey, soft blue and blush pink palette. **BOTTOM:** A floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace takes advantage of the ceiling height.





“Given our home is more contemporary, I wanted the interior to reflect that – something that’s clean and modern, but without feeling too cold, which is how I find contemporary homes can be sometimes,” says the homeowner. “Leanne and Adolphina really took what we described to another level. They used rich colours and materials that make the home feel warm and homey. Rooms have different themes to them but use recurring colours to tie everything together. They were also able to make use of a lot of our existing furniture from our previous home, which was fantastic,” she says.

“My favourite part about the home is the warmth we created out of a cool space,” says Adolphina. “It feels luxurious, but also livable.”

Modern, yet cosy, the home is perfect for this growing family. **OH**



TOP: Pops of orange liven the recreation room. **LEFT:** The mudroom keeps things organized and efficient. **RIGHT:** The bar adds comfort and convenience for entertaining or casual evening fun.

A custom bench cushion has the look of leather with the functionality of vinyl.

“LEANNE AND ADOLPHINA REALLY TOOK WHAT WE DESCRIBED TO ANOTHER LEVEL. THEY USED RICH COLOURS AND MATERIALS THAT MAKE THE HOME FEEL WARM AND HOMEY.”



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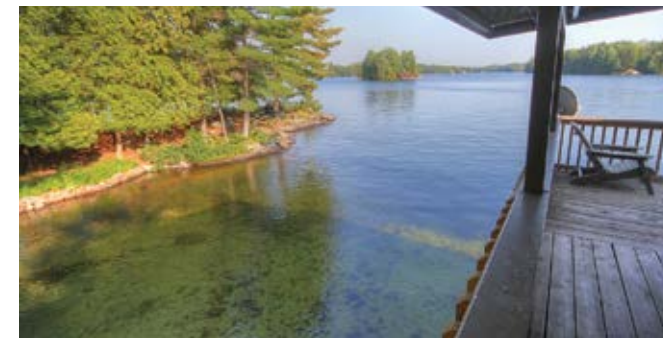
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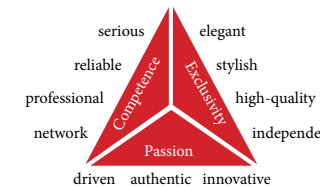


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