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30 Spectacular Rooms

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House & Home of the Month

On the
Cover

Attention to detail elevates a grand family home. Story, page 112. Photography by Stacey Brandford.



HOUSE & HOME OF THE MONTH

Designer Philip Mitchell created a refined but cosy living room in the home of Guido and Betty Doria by mixing classic antiques with eclectic artwork and collectibles. A backless daybed from Mitchell's own line of furniture doesn't block sightlines, creating a great sense of openness. **Velvet pillows**, Constantine; **grey throw**, Elte; **coffee table**, Primavera; **sofa**, Philip Mitchell Design Furniture.



Classic Composition

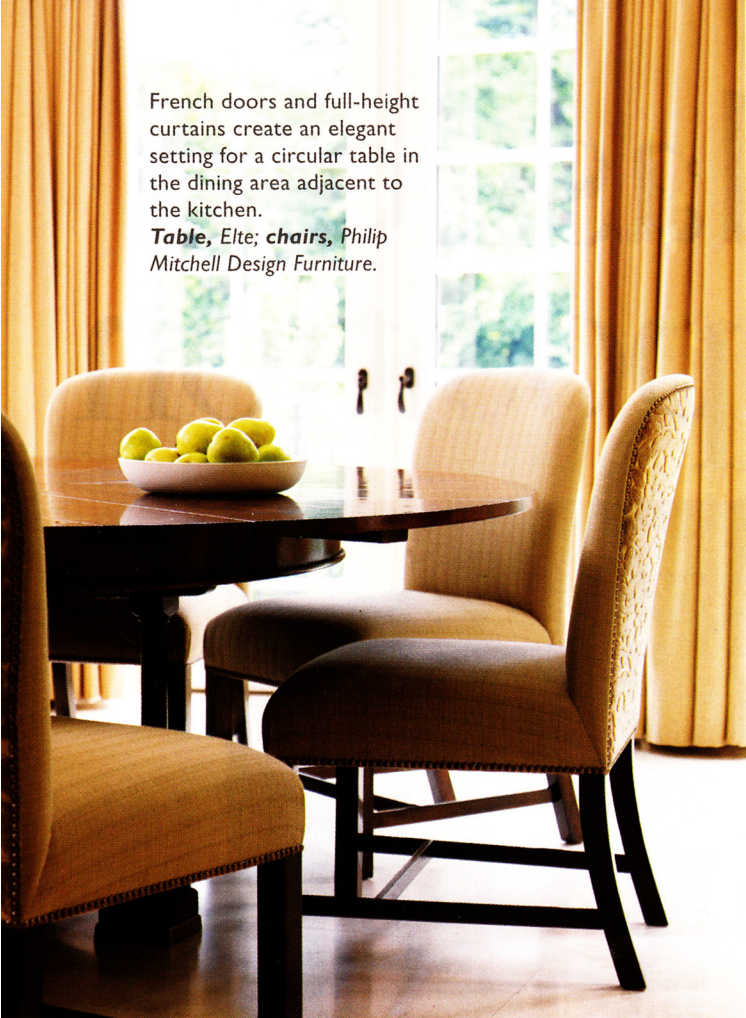


EXQUISITE CRAFTSMANSHIP
AND SYMMETRY HIT JUST
THE RIGHT NOTE IN THIS
GRACIOUS FAMILY HOME.

*By Catherine MacIntosh
Photography by Stacey Brandford*

French doors and full-height curtains create an elegant setting for a circular table in the dining area adjacent to the kitchen.

Table, Elte; chairs, Philip Mitchell Design Furniture.



Guido Doria knows kitchens. As the owner of Bellini Custom Cabinetry, he has been outfitting Toronto-area homes with handcrafted kitchen cabinetry for 24 years. In fact, he's been around building his entire life: the son of a builder, Guido worked in construction before starting up Bellini, which he named after the 19th-century Italian composer.

Guido and his wife, Betty, raised their children, Michael, 25, Adriana, 24 and Paul, 19, in a Toronto suburb, but always had an eye to one day move and build their dream home. Between 2003 and 2006, the couple worked with designer Philip Mitchell and design-build firm Ruben and Associates to do just that — the result, a 7,200-square-foot house nestled into a picturesque northwest Toronto neighbourhood. Although much larger than the Dorias' previous home, the new home's traditional design, detailed millwork, unique finishes and flowing floor plan ensure that it feels comfortable and warm. "I wanted a classic approach, something long-lasting with a formality to it, but not a house that feels like a showroom," says Guido. The home takes his ethos of high-quality, handcrafted construction to heart: Mitchell had every square foot crafted to their needs, including ensuites for each of the family's children, who live at home (Michael and Adriana have joined their parents working for Bellini and Paul is in university). Adapted from the design of a rambling French estate, their new house is a large but livable

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Coffer ceilings and one-of-a-kind cabinetry lend old world elegance to the large kitchen. The striking walnut island is topped with Belgian black marble and has two levels, providing separation between food prep and eating areas. **Cabinets**, Bellini Custom Cabinetry; **white plates**, Elte; **toaster**, white canister, spoons, Williams-Sonoma; **tea towels**, La Merceria.

OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT: Homeowners Betty and Guido Doria. Custom millwork and detailed marble floors set a formal tone in the home's round foyer. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Bold, modern artwork offers a pleasing counterbalance to the 1860s bureau and mirrored sconces off the foyer. **Black bowl**, Elte; **bureau**, Patina Antiques; **artwork**, Pl Fine Art.

In the library, classic wood panelling, low-level lighting, luxurious textiles and shades of muted blues deliver a traditional study aesthetic. The room's symmetry keeps it soothing. Solid throw pillows, grey throw, Elte; sofa, Philip Mitchell Design Furniture.





ABOVE LEFT: The principal ensuite opens onto the bedroom and a sitting area with a fireplace (not shown). Crystal light fixtures add old world charm. **Glass, tray, accessories, towels, Ginger's.**

ABOVE RIGHT: The pantry off the kitchen features pretty details like levered window latches and leaded-glass cabinet doors. **Watering can, Fresh.**

LEFT: Neutral tones and a plush headboard and sofa create a serene retreat in the principal bedroom. **Euro shams, coverlet, throw, Elte; sofa, headboard, Philip Mitchell Design.**

RIGHT: Handcrafted custom closets reminiscent of a Parisian hotel house smart storage. Pretty floral blinds and pillows soften the look. **Cabinets, Bellini Custom Cabinetry.**

BOTTOM LEFT: Classic architectural features mix easily with the modern artwork above the tub. **Tub accessories, towels, Ginger's.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: Palladian windows flood the elegant, curvaceous marble staircase with sunlight. **Marble, Ciot Marble & Granite.**



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CONTINUED FROM...

CLASSIC COMPOSITION

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family home perfect for entertaining and quiet, reflective moments.

Enlisting Mitchell, whom Guido had worked with on clients' homes, started as a casual phone call to seek some advice, but soon turned into a true collaboration. Both Mitchell and Guido are quick to credit the other for their talents. "We couldn't have envisioned this without Philip," says Guido. So casual and comfortable was their working relationship that Guido found himself even calling Mitchell to decide which type of mailbox to buy. Says Mitchell, "I really wanted to find out what they love, how they live, and then give them options." Bellini crafted all the millwork including the panelling, mouldings, built-ins, some furniture, and, of course, the kitchen.

Working with Ruben Benchitrit of Ruben and Associates, Mitchell designed the interiors to revolve around a centre axis. The grand foyer is detailed with columns, plaster panelling fashioned to look like wood, coffered ceilings, and luxe marble floors. "It's a classic, timeless mix," says Mitchell. His attention to symmetry and flow is best exemplified by the upstairs layout where, from the centre hallway, there are views through each room to the outside — the doorways and windows all align to maximize sightlines and natural light.

Mitchell chose unique furniture that reads as a lifelong collection, but in fact all the pieces were bought specifically for this house. When it came to artwork, Mitchell encouraged the Dorias to select works that they loved, including several by Canadian artists that they plan to one day pass down to their children. Naturally, a showstopping kitchen was a given — a Bellini opus — and with a large extended family, the couple wanted it to be sizeable and formal, but not too over-the-top. Painting the ceiling-height cabinets in a soft white keeps the look fresh and approachable. White Calacatta marble on the perimeter

counters, and a crema marfil floor bring to life the look and feel of a French estate. Drama is added with the dark walnut island and its Belgian black marble top. For a family whose lives centre around kitchens, it goes without saying that this is the heart of the home, as suited to casual weeknight dinners as it is to get-togethers of 10 or 12. Guido designed a new cabinet face for this kitchen, one he hasn't used in any other home. "I wanted it to be unique, but not totally off the page," he says.

In this grand home, Mitchell has managed to carve out niches of quiet space, perfect for smaller intimate gatherings — "the human quality" as he describes it. The window seat in the walk-in closet is a perfect example of his smart design: light floods the area, and a cosy bench provides a spot to contemplate the perfect outfit. But with such attention paid to the built-ins, finding just the right thing may not be an issue — everything has a spot. The couple's clothes were measured before construction to ensure a perfect fit.

Throughout the house, Mitchell used durable, yet luxurious looking fabrics that are easy to live with and care for. "Although it's grand and elaborate, it is really suitable to today's living," he says. A subdued, neutral palette enhances the effortless flow between rooms. Mitchell however made a dramatic departure in the moody library, rife with rich woods, and varied shades of blue in the upholstery and curtains, but connected it to the rest of the home with the custom millwork and gold-toned rug. Mitchell's eye for symmetry continues here with the balanced windows and furniture arrangement. Leaded glass doors on the bookshelves amp up the authentic library look.

Guido, who grew up in Italy, always knew that he wanted a marble staircase. "In Italy, marble is a more common material. In our house growing up, my dad built a marble staircase," he says. The Italian penchant for romance hasn't escaped him either; the couple moved into their made-to-measure dream house on their 25th wedding anniversary — a fitting present indeed. **H&H**