



# THE WRIGHT inspiration

STORY **MELISSA CAMPEAU**  
 PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**  
 FLOWERS **FASCINATION FLOWERS**

When you build a house on Hamilton's Mountain Brow Boulevard with a breathtaking view of the city and the lake, it's natural that the landscape would play a big role in the home's design. *Continued on page 50*

**LEFT:** The great room features a fireplace surround with the same quartz as the kitchen island, creating continuity and a stunning pedestal over which to hang original artwork. **RIGHT:** Interior finishing contractor Emilio Violin of Violin Contracting. **BELOW:** The view from the front of the house looks over Hamilton's lower city and harbour.



The just-finished property on the Hamilton mountain, designed by **Frank Bandiera Architect Inc.**, is on the same site where the homeowners, a Hamilton couple and their four now-grown sons, have lived since 1996. As their children approached adulthood, the couple decided to tear down the original family home and create something built for the next chapter in their lives with the help of **Marcel Poirier Custom Built Homes** and **Emilio Violin** of **Violin Contracting**.

During the planning stages, the couple kept coming back to Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House in Buffalo. "Not that our house looks like a Frank Lloyd Wright design from the outside, but I was inspired by quite a few things at the Martin House," the homeowner says.

"First, the windows are such an important part of the Martin home," she notes. In Wright's design, ample, detailed glasswork makes for a light-filled home and also provides an interior focal point. The same is true in this home thanks to strikingly tall and carefully crafted windows by Kolbe Windows & Doors that run most of the length of the home's south side overlooking the backyard.

There's plenty of natural light in the bedroom, living room and kitchen for most of the day. Remote-controlled blinds from **Girgenti Custom Window Treatments** offer shade and privacy when needed. In each room, the windows blur the line between the pared-down, peaceful indoor space, with interior design by **Jan Speziale** and **Shannon Thompson** of **Barnard & Speziale**, and the sculpted backyard featuring

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A walnut island in the spacious but functional kitchen offsets the lighter coloured cabinetry. It also features a vegetable sink to help with meal preparation. **LEFT:** Ample counter space allows room for necessities without looking cluttered. **RIGHT:** Frank Bandiera is the home's architect. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** One of the homeowner's favourite kitchen features is the Wolf gas range, which allows him to indulge in his love of cooking.





A black walnut bar in the dining area makes entertaining a breeze and provides extra, elegant storage for glassware and wine. **RIGHT:** Mylene Farion, assistant manager of retail and art rental and sales at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. The AGH was the source of many of the paintings in the homeowners' collection. **FAR RIGHT:** Interior designer Jan Speziale of Barnard & Speziale.

*A dining table with room for 10 makes it easy to host the entire extended family on special occasions.*



a rock garden and vegetable patch designed by landscape architectural consultant **Lyn Glanfield Bravo** of **Lyn Glanfield Inc.** and built by **Dykstra Landscaping**.

“My oldest son has a friend in the Bruce Peninsula so he arranged for and trucked down 40 tons of these rocks,” the homeowner says about the weathered boulders in the rock garden. “They came with little plants and moss growing on them, which helps them look like they’ve been here forever.” He wanted to contribute to the project, she added, and has now started a business supplying it through **Wildewood and Stone**.

An outdoor kitchen, complete with pizza oven, and a deck that spans the length of the home’s backyard, which also features furniture by Toja, plus a nook for a fitness spa, helps to further blend the outdoors with the indoors.

So does the homeowners’ extensive collection of Canadian art, featuring bold and colourful natural or outdoor scenes. Much of the collection was purchased from the **Art Gallery of Hamilton** and local artists. Other works are on loan in the home with the help of **Mylene Farion** from the AGH.

Another hallmark of Wright’s Martin House, and something the family wanted to

capture in their new home, was a sense of craftsmanship and pared-down ornamentation. Interior finishing contractor Emilio Violin, who designed all the millwork in the house, says the Mountain Brow home is frill-free and intentional in much the same way. “Every line in here has a purpose,” Violin says. “There are clean, simple lines throughout the house, and each room has its own finishes and transitions.”

Also like the Martin house, this home embraces open-concept living. Where doors were needed, such as on bedrooms, they were sourced from **Turkstra Lumber** along with the trim throughout the home.

“We have a big extended family, and maybe the four boys will all have families of their own, one day,” the homeowner says. “We like to entertain and we tend to be something of a hub, so we wanted a space where everyone could be together, even when there are quite a few of us.”

The formal dining room was removed from one of the original floor plans in favour of a more casual eating area between the kitchen and the living room. The custom black walnut pedestal table by Millbank Family Furniture, however, lends a sense of occasion and is big enough that the entire extended family can usually take a seat around it. *Continued on page 54*

Wallpaper on the ceiling in the powder room adds a rich and intriguing element to the room.



**RIGHT:** Even in the powder room, no detail was overlooked, including providing enough wall space to feature some of the owner's collection of original artwork. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Original artwork features many outdoor and natural scenes painted by Canadian artists.

The kitchen, with its cabinetry by **Crescent Cabinet Co. Ltd.** and granite counters from **Granite By Design Ltd.**, is timeless and pared down. It was designed with function in mind and as the backdrop for everyday life as well as special gatherings. "The kitchen's always the spot where people end up," the homeowner notes. "I love that even if we're in here, we're still connected to whoever is in the family room. We had everyone here this past Christmas and for the first time I can remember, all the kids were in one place with the entire family. It was fantastic."

To help make open-concept living more practical, the family created a combination kitchen extension, similar to a butler's pantry, and mudroom. There's also a walk-in pantry in the nook and an oversize closet. "We built this home with lots of storage space," says the homeowner. "We did get rid of a lot of things when we moved to build the house, too, but we wanted to make sure we had a place for everything." In particular, that meant a spot on the main floor for everyday items. "In our old home we had a pantry in the lower level, but that gets a little harder to manage as you age," she adds.

The mudroom area is also the main access to and from the garage, with a discreet staircase down to the lower level. "The boys and their friends tend to come and go. With this side entrance and access to downstairs, they can have their own space and we can have privacy, too," the homeowner says.

It's also the perfect solution to the challenge of dirt tracked in from the garden, since the family will plant and grow a wide range of greenery and vegetables in the backyard. At the moment, one of the rooms in the lower level is serving as a temporary potting station until a mini greenhouse outside can be outfitted with geothermal heating, so there's lots of dirty foot traffic to keep tucked off to the side.



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The homeowners plan to add a coffee machine and build a deck off the master suite so they can enjoy coffee outside in the mornings without a trip to the kitchen.



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**LEFT:** The master en suite is a mix of elegance and functionality with plenty of mirrors and storage to help with primping and keeping things tidy. **BELOW:** Lots of glass elements add a spacious and airy feeling to the master en suite. **BOTTOM:** A large rain showerhead creates a relaxing experience in the shower while the handheld makes washing up even easier.



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Then again, blending the outside with the inside – even if it means bringing in a little dirt from the garden – was always one of the foundations in the home’s design. “We love this location and we put years of thought and research into how to make everything work the way we want it to,” the homeowner says. “It was worth it. It’s a pretty joyful thing to walk into your home and truly love everything about it.” **OH**



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