

RUE

MAGAZINE YOUR PATHWAY TO STYLISH LIVING

The
**ENDURING
ALLURE
of
NATE
BERKUS**

(P. 46)

STEP INSIDE:
**A HOME
DESIGNED**
*for COMFORT
and CONNECTION*

**LOOK GOOD,
FEEL GOOD**
*THE POWER of
PERSONAL DESIGN*

HAPPY PLACE
CARA WOODHOUSE'S
WHIMSICAL
HAMPTONS HOME

SHOP & STYLE
OUR FAVORITE
FINDS *of the YEAR*

***BOLD
MEETS
BEAUTIFUL***

A CELEBRATION OF INTENTIONAL LIVING



A WARM RETURN

A TORONTO COUPLE TRADED GLOBE-TROTTING FOR A

FOREVER HOME DESIGNED FOR COMFORT AND CONNECTION.

STORY BY
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INTERIOR DESIGN BY
DESIGN STATE

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STYLING BY
NO.2 COLLECTION

The family room features a custom upholstered Louis Interiors sectional and a Restoration Hardware coffee table, both atop a rug by Avenue Rugs.



The entryway complements the original wood door with a custom upholstered ottoman from Louis Interiors. Meanwhile, an oval mirror from Crate and Barrel hangs over a custom, curved floating console with a reeded-wood front.

When a retired couple moved back to Toronto after years overseas, they were ready to settle into “their final house to grow old in,” says interior designer Elyssa Maldoff, principal designer of Design State. The only problem? They hadn’t found the home yet.

They had, however, discovered Elyssa and her design team through Instagram. After a few conversations, both parties knew they were aligned in style and values. It was a match made in designer-client heaven. “We’ll call you when we find the right house,” they told Elyssa.

After months of house-hunting, they finally did. Elyssa had her hands full at that exact moment—she was in the hospital, actively in labor with her daughter—but that didn’t delay the project. The couple placed full trust in Elyssa to make their dream home a reality. “They were drawn to our aesthetic and gave us creative freedom to reimagine their space,” says Elyssa. “For them, this wasn’t just about design; it was about creating a space that felt deeply personal.”

The home they found—a traditional property in Etobicoke, just outside of Toronto—offered a blank slate for Elyssa and her team. “It felt very builder basic,” she recalls. Still, there was plenty to love, including an abundance of windows, a couple of fireplaces, and a not-so-open layout, perfect for the pair who loved to entertain but preferred more intimate spaces. “It felt charming beyond what the surface-level design was,” she says.

Throughout the design process, one question guided every decision: How will this space make the couple feel? “They wanted it to feel intimate and calm,” says Elyssa. Each selection, from custom furniture to layered linens, was made to evoke a sensory response, creating a home that balances beauty with thoughtfulness—and one that reflects the couple’s character. “Many of the pieces, whether in the lighting, furniture, or decor, carry personal significance and were chosen to spark a feeling of connection, nostalgia, and joy,” Elyssa says.

Though it’s now just the two of them living there, the homeowners’ two daughters—one in New York, the other

in London—visit regularly. Entertaining was also top of mind. They envisioned inviting friends over for a glass of wine, while surrounded by meaningful, conversation-sparking pieces. To achieve a calming space for the couple and guests alike—one that would allow both objects and people to be prominent—Elyssa committed to a quiet, earthy palette. Most of the home is painted Benjamin Moore’s Dove Wing, a luminous white with silvery undertones that acts as a versatile backdrop.

The heartbeat of the home lies in the kitchen, which centers around a striking focal point: a custom metal island, fully clad in antique brass. Other elements, like the marble backsplash and glass cabinetry, were kept intentionally simple to let the island shine. Turn the opposite direction, and you’re greeted by a bold eggplant-hued coffee bar and a cozy breakfast nook that features a vibrant, patterned banquette. Striking artwork, which was curated by art consultant Laura Mann of Pearl Rowe, is also featured throughout the home, further layering texture with stories.

The family room, with its soaring ceilings, prioritizes comfort. “This is where they watch TV, where they come after dinner with their friends for a more casual area to relax,” Elyssa explains. She added a pair of white oak French doors and enhanced the existing paneling by painting the upper section Farrow & Ball’s Light Gray. A new French limestone mantel completed the cookie-cutter-to-curated transformation.

Serenity led the way in the primary bedroom. Soft curves are seen throughout, especially in the custom upholstered headboard from Louis Interiors and Restoration Hardware nightstands, while textural wallpaper from Phillip Jeffries adds subtle dimension to the walls, creating a restful, layered retreat.

The overall result is a forever home that reflects both Elyssa’s aesthetic and her clients’ worldly lives well-lived. “By blending vintage pieces with modern elements and layering textures and materials,” Elyssa says, “we created a home that feels rich in story and soul.”



The powder bathroom packs a punch of personality with wallpaper from Season Paper, a tulip-shaped wall sconce from In Common With, and an oval mirror from France & Son Canada. The washstand, topped with Carrara marble and detailed with polished nickel legs and faucet, is from Gingers.



In the dining room, Maiden Home chairs surround a custom table, all centered under a Murano glass fixture from 1stDibs. Phillip Jeffries wallpaper adds texture and highlights the custom sideboard and artwork curated by art consultant Laura Mann of Pearl Rowe.



The coffee station's eggplant-hued mahogany cabinets coordinate with a Calacatta Viola marble countertop and backsplash, while glassware is stored behind brass-wired mesh cabinet fronts.

The primary bedroom is anchored by a custom upholstered bed frame and headboard from Louis Interiors, layered atop a rug by Elta. Flanking the bed are Restoration Hardware nightstands and three-armed sconces from Universal Lighting.

The living room serves as a cozy conversation area, where guests gather around the limestone fireplace, lit by sconces from Universal Lighting, and relax on a reupholstered vintage Danish chair from 1stDibs.



Sunlight and a pendant by Post Company work in tandem to illuminate the breakfast nook, which also features a custom table, chairs from Elte, and a custom upholstered banquette.