

# celebrityspaces

## A home with history and heart

Every design should tell a story and reflect the homeowner's personality, says Lisa Kooistra

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To Lisa Kooistra, interior design is more than just a job, it's a labour of love, passion and lifestyle. The downtown Burlington designer specializes in highly personalized designs that echo a client's character. "We really get to know the families and create a personalized well-designed home for them."

Kooistra says her interest in design started in about grade six. "My grandfather built me my first doll house, I knew at that point that I loved interiors. I would spend all my earned money on new furniture from different doll house stores."

Design became a continuing passion for Kooistra and would eventually lead to her founding her own interior design company.

"I come from a large family of entrepreneurs and always envisioned having my own design firm. This passion continued through my studies, interning and experience in the design industry."

In being creative, "the reward comes in seeing the design process play out" but says she also "enjoys the internal sourcing and planning process that goes into my designs."

Kooistra recently spoke to Celebrity Spaces at her Burlington home.

**Q: How would you describe your home in one word or two words?**

**A:** Tranquil and timeless (with a nod to Scandinavian style.)

**Q: Tell us about your home?**

**A:** We live in a 1870 century home located in the heart of downtown Burlington. We plan to add a mid-century style addition on the older home to mix old and new. We decided to re-vamp the main floor, and this is the original part of the home that won't get touched. We moved in four years ago.

We love the lifestyle of living downtown and being able to walk everywhere. What caught our eye about this property was the size of the lot and the overall charm and history of the home. The house has a great story as was originally the main farmhouse on this Street.

**Q: What attracted you to this home?**

**A:** The charm and eclectic curb appeal. The idea of living downtown and being able to add to the house as our family grows was ideal.



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**Designer Lisa Kooistra describes her style as tranquil and timeless with a nod to Scandinavian.”**

**Q: Who shares this home with you?**

**A:** My husband, Ryan who owns a renovation firm, our three-year-old daughter and our four-year-old French bull dog — Albert.

**Q: What is your favourite room or area of your home and why?**

**A:** The family room is my favourite part of the home. We have 12' ceilings in our home with a main floor that is very open concept. We got to tackle many design challenges like the fireplace and adding elements like drapery to bring warmth to the space.

**Q: How would you describe your personal decorating style?**

**A:** I love open bright spaces. Our overall look is derived from a Scandinavian, mid-century modern aesthetic. Mixing neutral tones, texture and layering with unique pieces and artwork is something we love.

**Q: What is your fondest memory**

**from being in your current home?**

**A:** The best memory was bringing our daughter home to this house and making this unique century home into our own: Painting all the walls white to accent the original pine flooring, buying new furniture to fit our look and lifestyle and re-vamping the main floor. We have big plans for this house and were looking forward to adding on and creating a family home to grow into. The plan is to add a very unique modern addition onto the existing home to create a juxtaposition of new and old!

**Q: What's the one item in this house you can't live without?**

**A:** One main thing that made me fall in love with this house was the crawling hydrangea that wraps up the entire side of the house. It is old and unique and is stunning. It adds all the charm, and if something happened to it, I would be very upset.

I also like to include items from my travels. We have collected many things throughout our travels, and they are what helps tell the story of our home. We have a very old cuckoo clock in our entry from an old antique store in Germany, vintage rugs from PEI, suitcases, and dishware from Italy.

**Q: Weekends at home, what are we most likely to find you doing?**

**A:** Fridays is pizza night! We try to create traditions for ourselves and our daughter. We have a pizza oven in our backyard where we cook and spend time together. We also have a large vegetable garden that keeps us eating veggies almost all summer. We love to entertain and hang out with family. My family all lives in a close vicinity or in the downtown core of Burlington. Getting together and making memories is something that is special to us. Bike rides, swimming, sports, cooking, and relaxing is mostly what you'll find us doing.

**Q: If your walls could talk, what would they say?**

**A:** I would love to know! I think all the time the stories this house holds from the 1870s to current times. I would never want to disturb the existing home and look forward to our renovation plans complimenting those existing memories. All I can hope is that our walls would today tell the story of two people living out their hopes and dreams — while raising a family and distilling the same values that we were taught.



"Mixing neutral tones, texture and layering with unique pieces and artwork is something we love to do," says Kooistra.



Adding elements like a fireplace and drapery bring warmth to the space.