

ISSUE 07 • 2022

CurbAppeal

TORONTO WEST

magazine.ca

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All in the FAMILY

By Jason Stacey | Photography by Stephani Buchman

Managing client expectations is a fundamental part of interior design. It's what's going to ensure your clients don't get overly frustrated when there are hurdles along the way, and it'll help you build a trusting relationship with them. But, as with any design project, working with clients can be a daunting task, and sometimes, relationships that start out great can end in disaster. It's a risky business and it becomes even riskier when the client is family.



That was one of the challenges interior designer Claire Jefford took on when she agreed to redesign her sister and brother-in-law's 1950s Burlington bungalow.





About CLAIRE JEFFORD

Whether she's guiding a homeowner through colour, fabric or furniture selections, presenting a fully custom 3D design plan, or coaching another interior design professional on how to bring a successful business to life, Claire is untiring in everything she does.

Her designs are stunning, tailored and timeless, and her energy is ridiculously contagious.

ClaireJefford.com



"Years ago they were thinking about moving into a larger home because they wanted a bigger kitchen and bathroom," remarked Claire. "With the design layout as it was, the functionality of the house did not meet their needs."

As an Interior Design Professional with over 10 years of experience in helping homeowners live beautifully, Claire could definitely see the potential.

"They loved the Burlington area and I knew that they could have what they desired if only they could see for themselves. So, I talked them into hiring my services and we created a vision with a completely new design plan in 3D."

The plan was to create a more functional and open kitchen, a spacious bathroom and a stunning dressing room with ample storage for her sister's clothes and organization solutions for shoes, jewelry and make up. After reviewing the 3D plan, the clients accepted all of Claire's recommendations. ►

“We eat, sleep and breath design,” remarked Claire. “It’s our job to carefully determine a client’s requirements for their home based on their lifestyle, and then design the best possible solution for them. I was happy they accepted my ideas and now it was time to get to work.”



The project began by gutting the entire main floor, turning this three bedroom bungalow into a two bedroom home. By eliminating one of the bedrooms and the living room, Claire and her team were able to design the home in a way that made it way more spacious and with plenty of storage.

“Taking out a living room from a main floor bungalow may sound crazy, but because I knew my clients so well and completely understood their lifestyle, this design made perfect sense.”





The main focus was designing a large, open kitchen that incorporated all of the clients' needs, especially taking into consideration that they are both avid cooks. Claire had many discussions with both the clients and her custom cabinet maker regarding the various cabinetry designs to ensure the best possible solution was made and no detail was overlooked.

The new kitchen now includes a large island with banquette seating at their eat-in kitchen table, as well as two additional counter height stools at the one end. One wall of custom cabinetry is dedicated to the smart organization of small kitchen appliances, the housing of all their pantry items, and a tea station.

For her sister's customized dressing room, they wanted the look to be soft and feminine which is why they selected a pink wallpaper, white and blush drapery fabric, and a bright white for the cabinetry.

"Knowing my sister the way I do, I had a good idea of what she wanted for her 'Girly Room'", added Claire. "and we had a lot of fun with it."

Claire designed this 'Girly Room' to include open hanging storage for clothes, drawers for under garments and shelving for accessories such as scarves and handbags. The custom designed spinning shoe rack in the corner is definitely a show stopper and conversation piece that houses over 70 pairs of shoes! The crystal chandelier and soft, pink hardware on the drawers add additional hits of 'bling' to the room.

With her cabinet maker, Claire designed a full length wall mirror that doubles as a home for all her sister's jewelry, done in a way that she can easily see each necklace and set of earrings to carefully select the best pieces to coordinate with her outfits.

In the end, the clients were absolutely thrilled with the final result. It exceeded their expectations and they are so happy they decided to stay in Burlington. Their house is now truly, their forever home! ♦