

WINTER 2016

Home

M A G A Z I N E

A SHOWCASE OF HOMES AND LIFESTYLES ACROSS CANADA



AUX ANCIENS
Canadiens p14

DISHING
WITH DESIGNER
DVIRA OVADIA
p22

THE COOLEST
CANADIAN WINTER
DESTINATIONS p6



DISHING WITH DESIGNER

Dvira Ovadia



Toronto-based celebrity and award-winning designer Dvira Ovadia, Principal of Dvira Interiors is known for her appearances and design work on various HGTV shows. Dvira and her team uses their profound understanding of design to create stylishly smart spaces. Servicing clientele throughout Ontario and Greater Toronto Area. dvira.com [@DVIRAdesigner](https://www.instagram.com/DVIRAdesigner)

Whether it was setting the table or decorating the family's living room, television personality and award-winning Toronto designer, Dvira Ovadia, had an artistic flair. "I was always trying to create beauty around me," she says.

From a young age, Dvira knew she'd be involved in design although she wasn't sure if she'd drift toward fashion or interior design. However, she never envisioned the phenomenal success that lay ahead.

As winner of Debbie Travis' design-based reality show, *From the Ground Up*, Dvira made her mark, becoming Chief Designer on the show. She went on to establish her own successful design firm and became well-known for her sophisticated and clever design work on successful TV shows such as HGTV's *Income Property* and *The Unsellables*.

Although Dvira is living her dream, she confesses that a career as a successful interior designer isn't always glamorous. She often has long days of meetings with architects and suppliers, troubleshooting with contractors on job sites, and visiting showrooms. And while being on TV is exciting and fulfilling, Dvira says it's also intense.

"It's fast-paced," she explains. "It is a combination of production and design and an infusion of insanity and craziness." Even so, Dvira loves it.

Part of her success stems from unique and creative designs based on the diversified cultural influences from her youth. She was born in Israel and descended from a Lithuanian mother and an Egyptian father. Dvira lived in Brussels, Belgium, and New York City before finally settling in Toronto.

"I love incorporating different cultures into a room with colours and finishes that are reminiscent of a certain country," she says.

Dvira encourages homeowners to do the same with pieces of art, tile, fabrics, and finishes. "When you have four blank walls and you add a beautiful tribal rug, it gives the room character. Being able to play on those types of elements really creates a lot of interest and brings a worldly appeal to any design."

Some of Dvira's favourite pieces in her own home include a set of reupholstered Rush Buboïs Togo sofas purchased in Brussels, a timeless coffee table made from solid wood trunks created by Vancouver artist Brent Comber, and artwork created by her mother who is an artist.



However, as Dvira is quick to point out, not every single object introduced into a room has to be unique or expensive. A house doesn't have to be filled with luxurious furnishings to create something special. It is all about finding the right balance and mix. For those on a budget, Dvira recommends mixing in pieces from stores like IKEA for an eclectic look.

Since the new year has started, what are Dvira's favorite new design elements? She suggests considering the following trends for 2016:

- Mixing metals is a way to add an expressive and modern element to a home. "Don't be afraid of mixing metals," she advises. "Just because you have silver in a room doesn't mean everything else has to be silver. You can bring in some gold or brass."
- Crisp white walls also make a strong statement. Drabby beige tones as well as blue and green tones that invoke a certain mood are giving way to fresh white walls. White creates a blank canvas and freedom for homeowners to express themselves with colourful and interesting finishes, materials, and furnishings.
- Smart home technology is the future of design. This includes smart lighting systems, heated floors, and energy-saving features. Automatic

features can make homeowners' lives easier while enhancing their lives, Dvira explains. For example, using a smartphone, homeowners can set the mood before entering a room with the right kind of light or music. Many of these smart systems are now more affordable.

Dvira is staying as busy as ever these days, often managing six to 12 projects at a time. However, one of those projects is personal. Dvira and her husband are completely renovating an older home they recently purchased. "My most difficult client is my husband," she jokes. Dvira recently purchased a gorgeous pair of Egyptian doors at a local store that imports salvaged materials from different countries. The doors will be installed between rooms as a decorative touch.

Another project near and dear to her heart is a youth centre that is scheduled to be completed in 2018. Dvira designed the architecture and interior and is adding homey elements to make the children feel loved and at home.

So what's next for Dvira with her boundless energy and excitement for all things design? You'll just have to stay tuned to find out.

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