

LIFE *at home*

FALL 2015

A SHOWCASE OF CANADIAN LIVING

London TOWNS IN Oakville

Spotlight

PATRICK LEHMAN
CHEF MIKE WARD

RENOVATING
WITH *Expert Help*

SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE
Green Buildings



Design by the Rules

It's falltime and everybody's in the renovating spirit. While it is common for homeowners to feel the need to overhaul their entire home, signing on for a total overhaul can be overwhelming. Choosing to take on smaller projects can still give you the satisfaction of achieving a beautiful renovation without consuming too much of your time, energy and money.

Start with creating a wish list for all of your desired home renovation projects, then prioritize by listing your top three most important projects. Most of the time, the top priorities for homeowners tend to be kitchens, bathroom, flooring and painting. These four projects will surely add the most value to your home. Having worked with many reputable Realtors throughout my career and having designed for HGTV's *Income Property* for nine years, I know firsthand that kitchens and bathrooms are the top projects that any homeowner should consider to increase the value of their home.

KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS

Whether you are going to tear it all out, or give your space a fresh update, the first thing to consider is layout. Ask yourself if the current layout is working for you. As always, it's wise to consult with an interior designer as they can offer expert advice on how to properly plan alternative options for your kitchen or bathroom and give you a layout that will provide proper flow and function based on your lifestyle. Once your layout is established, look for finishes and materials that will stand the test of time; pick colours that are elegant and appealing to a wide variety of tastes. When in doubt, white cabinetry is a classic choice and won't become outdated. Marble floors and countertops are an investment that will always pay for themselves. For a low cost but high impact update, pick some smart ceramic tiles for your walls and keep it classic with timeless chrome fixtures.

PAINT

Nothing says fresh like a new coat of paint, and it's recommended that a house should be refreshed every 5-7 years. If you are trying to sell, update or simply impress, a new coat of paint will go a long way. The once popular beige has now been replaced by a new trendy colour called 'greige'. The key to





picking the right grey is to ensure it has a warm undertone. Usually a brown undertone is a sure bet to guarantee that your colour doesn't feel too concrete-like.

LIGHTING

Bringing in a key light fixture is a quick fix that will create a lot of drama. Light fixtures not only add sparkle to a room, but also make the space feel warm and inviting. When selling a home, chandeliers can really elevate the look of your space and impress potential home buyers.

FLOORS

Updating your hardwood floors and tiles is a guaranteed investment to make your property look like new. Consult with a designer

or contractor to ensure that you understand the difference between solid wood, engineered and laminate floors. Choose colours wisely as trends come and go quickly, as in the case with reddish-toned woods that have now become less desirable to homebuyers. Medium brown and dark brown woods are still the right choice for a classic home, while whitewashed and natural oak floors are hot for modern and contemporary properties.

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 use their profound understanding of design to create stylishly smart spaces. Servicing clientele throughout Ontario & GTA. www.dvira.com @DVIRAdesigner

Whether you are ready to tackle a small renovation or a large overhaul, always research the project you wish to undertake prior to starting. Consider consulting with the right experts to get everything structured before you get started as it will help save you time, money and aggravation.



Renovating

WITH
EXPERT
HELP

by Dvira Ovadia

A savvy renovation always makes for a good return on your investment. Renovating your home can certainly be costly, but doing it right is more important than trying to save a few bucks by cutting corners.

Just like many of us, you too might be feeling the itch to start updating and bringing your space up to current times. When tackling a bathroom, kitchen or even a larger overhaul, one thing to remember is that it is always important to consult with experts. As a designer, I have had to rescue jobs gone wrong numerous times. In the end, the costly price of fixing mistakes winds up being much greater for the homeowner than consulting with a designer and doing it right from the beginning.

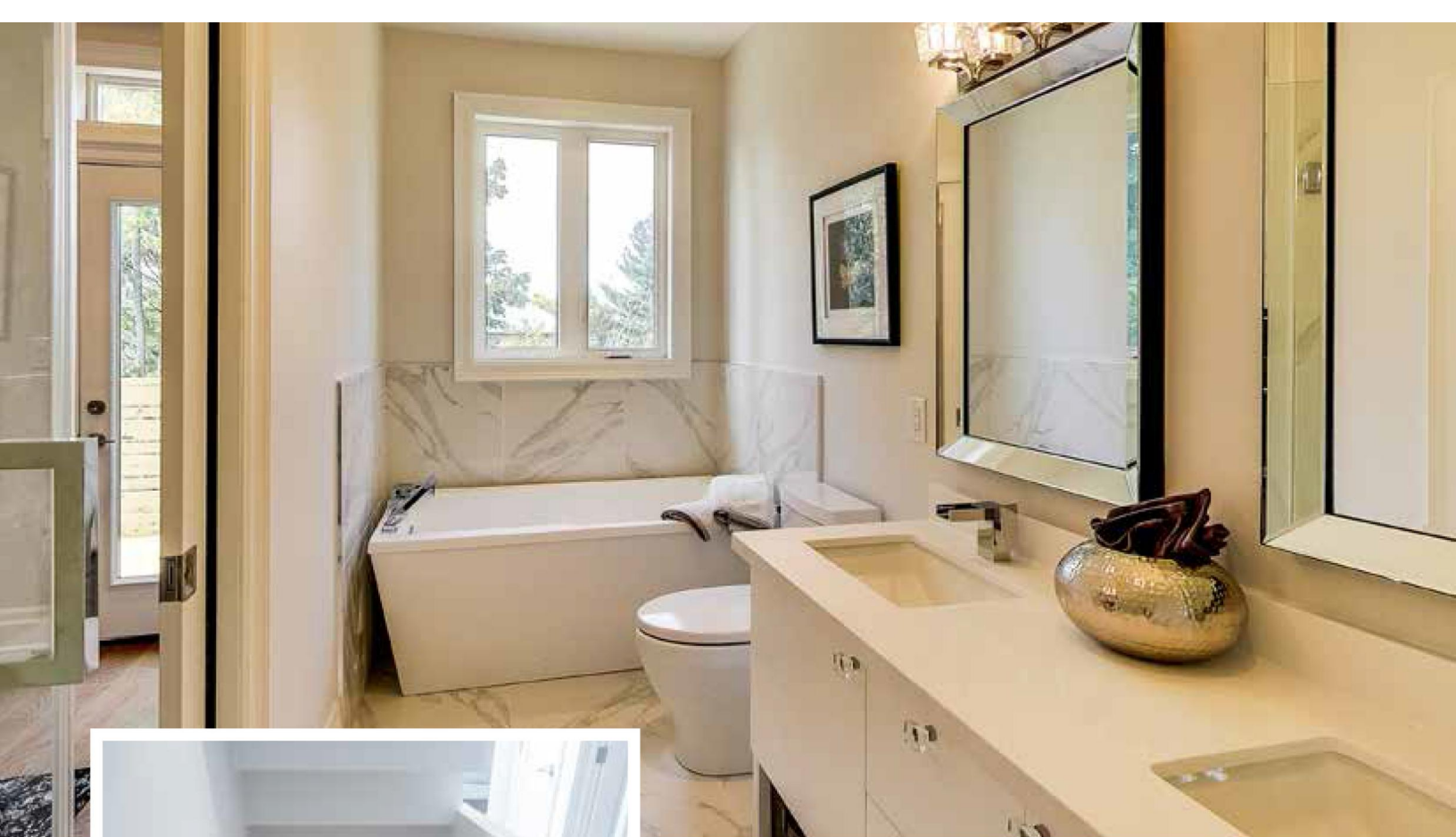
Whether large or small, when the itch to remodel hits you, always begin with careful planning to ensure that you get the most out of your renovation budget.

With more than a decade of projects under my belt, I can confidently state that maintaining focus on your design style and direction is absolutely key. Being consistent and following your desired path is exceptionally important to ensure that your project is seamless and less stressful.

Renovations can be scary territory for many, and there is no doubt that this process is tolling throughout all the stages, from sourcing products, making the right selections and



following through with the execution. By working with a designer, their responsibility is to consider the countless details that must be synchronised to perfectly choreograph that dreamy magazine look. An experienced designer will also prepare you for the process and will introduce you to the right tradespeople for your project. Designers will also have a great bank of resources and a close network of suppliers where they can obtain superior discounts and custom-made items for your personalized space.



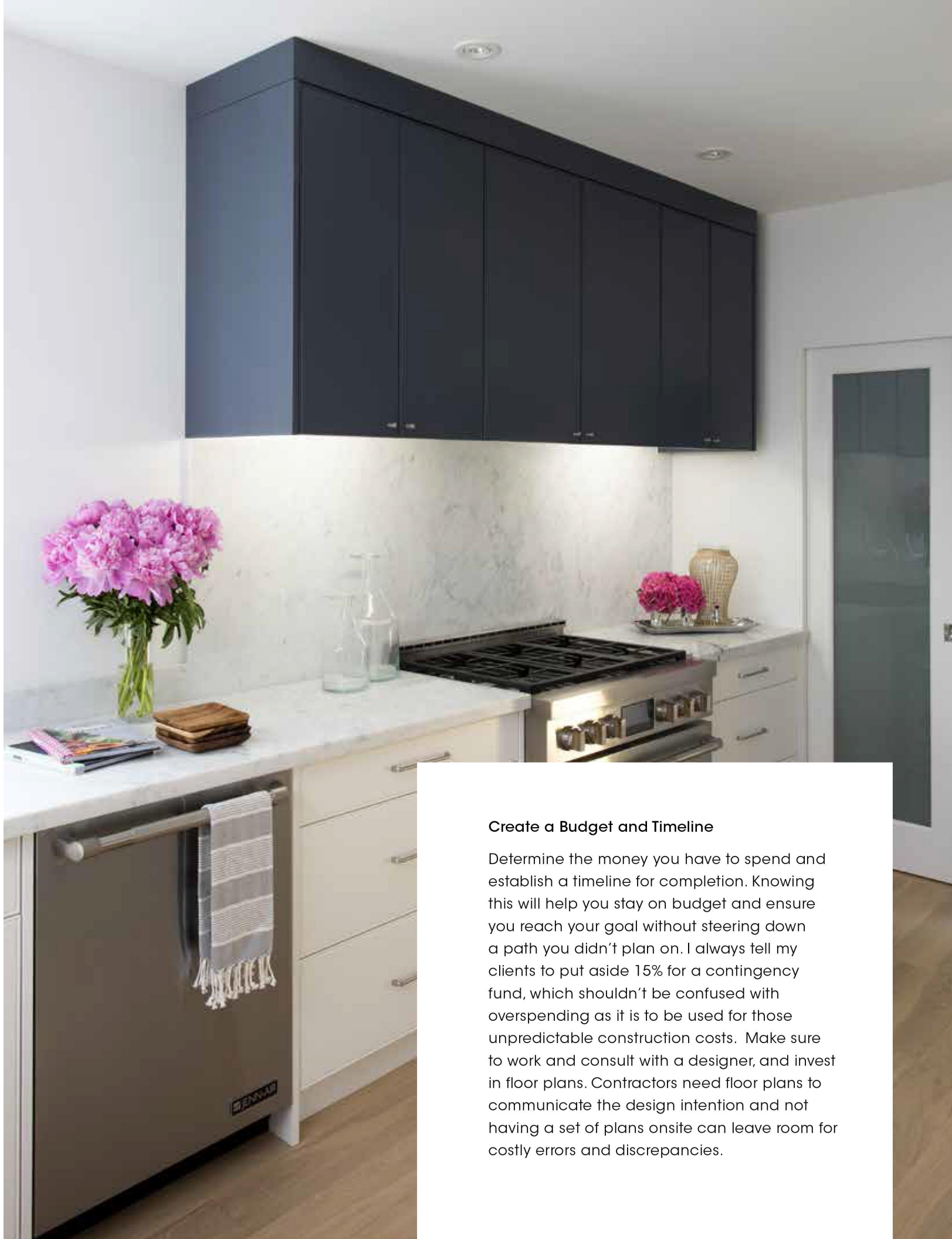
BEFORE ENTERING INTO A RENOVATION, GET YOURSELF IN GEAR BY FOLLOWING THESE FIVE STEPS:

Begin with Inspiration

Design inspiration can come from many creative sources such as an HGTV design show, magazines, nature or art. Even your favourite travel destination might inspire you to remodel. Create a stylebook and fill it with photos of your favourite images, decor and artwork. You can even browse the online portfolios of designers like me for inspirational remodelling ideas. Design sessions with an interior designer are a great opportunity to hone into your style and colour palette and also useful for learning important renovation tips.

Define Your Goals and Priorities

Create a list and prioritize all the projects you wish to complete, including any major repairs. No matter what size your renovation is, don't forget to consider all logistical details – from plumbing and electrical to your HVAC system.



Create a Budget and Timeline

Determine the money you have to spend and establish a timeline for completion. Knowing this will help you stay on budget and ensure you reach your goal without steering down a path you didn't plan on. I always tell my clients to put aside 15% for a contingency fund, which shouldn't be confused with overspending as it is to be used for those unpredictable construction costs. Make sure to work and consult with a designer, and invest in floor plans. Contractors need floor plans to communicate the design intention and not having a set of plans onsite can leave room for costly errors and discrepancies.



Find a Contractor

Interview at least 5 contractors and look for ones that work regularly in your neighbourhood.

Set Your Plan in Motion

Allow your vision to take shape by researching paint colours, furniture, lighting, accent pieces and anything else you would like to incorporate into the design of the space. Sometimes, choosing the right decor can be overwhelming. I often get called in to help with colour choices and the decor selection to match the client's budget and vision. A short design consultation can take a lot of stress off your plate and give you confidence in your selection.

EXTRA TIPS

- Before hiring a designer, do your research. Ask detailed questions about their background and experience and don't be afraid to ask to see pictures of previous projects to ensure that they're the right fit in terms of style and expectations.
- Prepare yourself for the process. Do extensive homework to get acquainted with what you are drawn to, what you don't like, what's in style now, etc.
- Don't work without a design plan and a scope of work. An experienced interior designer can create an aesthetic that suits your taste and develop a solid plan that works for you and your contractor.

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