

Decorator Tim Lam summons splashes of colour, a fresh mix of furnishings and pops of panache to give a Vaughan, Ont., new-build a joyous makeover.

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New DIGS



If decor is a mood booster, then this space is positively ecstatic. Before this stylish suburban townhouse was redecorated by Tim Lam, the Toronto-based style enthusiast behind the Design Maze blog, the feels here were baseline blah. "It was a cookie-cutter townhouse," says Tim. "Think 2,500 square feet of beige." The no-drama space was completely out of step with its new owner's M.O. "She's a young professional and first-time homebuyer with a modern aesthetic, but she also loves edgy hits of vintage," says the decorator.

The jumping off point for the decor – the owner's Murano glass wall sconces that now hang in her home office – ticked both boxes. "They're actual vintage pieces but still have a cool, contemporary feel," says Tim. They set the tone for the rest of the office, which incorporates just the right amount of feminine charm. "I wanted that femininity – this is a young woman's home – but I wanted it to look grown-up, not girly." Enter the most gorgeous wallpaper and don't be fooled by its "Ballroom Beige" moniker. "It's actually a very delicate blush shade that adds beautiful colour, subtle texture and depth." Take that, bland.

DESIGN, Tim Lam, designmaze-tim.blogspot.com; **TOSS CUSHION & DRAPERY SEWING** (throughout), Wesley Seto Design.



OPPOSITE Acting as an artful visual vignette, the office has high-impact oomph from the sophisticated brass and glass desk to the vibrant work of art. "It's made of hand-painted laser-cut wood," says decorator Tim Lam. "I love how bold it looks against the wallpaper and the creative energy it exudes – perfect for a work space."

WALLPAPER, Crown; **DESK,** Scout Design Studio; ribbon **ARTWORK,** Angela Chrusciaki Blehm; **VASE** (holding pencils) Kotn; silver **BOX, TRAY, PENCILS,** HomeSense; **STATIONERY,** Merchant of York.

LEFT The owner repurposed one of the home's bedrooms as her office so space abounds, leaving room for a chic sitting area. Tim treated the two different-sized windows as one, hanging drapery on the outer edges only and adding artwork in between them in an unexpected way.

SETTEE, Avenue Road; **SIDE TABLE,** Sunday Antique Market; **DRAPERY ROD,** RH; **RUG,** CB2; Chanel **PRINT, GREEN TOSS CUSHION, THROW,** glass **VASE,** HomeSense.

ABOVE A stunning Lucite and metal bookshelf, a whimsical two-toned fringed stool with hidden storage within and a no-fuss faux fig tree are perfect office ideas to steal. "I love how bookshelves provide spaces for open display of beautiful and playful objects, books and artwork," says Tim.

STOOL, Marshalls; **BOOKSHELF, BASKETS, TREE,** HomeSense; wooden **PLATE,** Haeven Studio.



LEFT Tim chose a round table for this light and airy corner of the kitchen. “Its size makes it easy to move around and the shape means it’s easy to tuck in the chairs neatly by the window.” The pendant is a vintage find that Tim sprayed white.

DINING TABLE, Gfurn; **DINING CHAIRS**, Avenue Road; **ROMAN SHADE TRIM**, Tonic Living; **TABLETOP ACCESSORIES**, HomeSense.

BELOW Tim (pictured) rejuvenated the original floor tiles with a geometric runner. “I like how it feels modern and edgy against the Shaker-style cabinetry.” The floating sideboard – the one construction addition to the kitchen – offers loads of extra storage space and hides the microwave.

RUNNER, The Rug Company; **PRINT**, Alanna Cavanagh; **CUTTING BOARDS**, white **TRAY**, HomeSense.

Tim continued his transformative talents in the kitchen. “I can’t over-stress the fact that you don’t need to spend a lot of money to redo a kitchen,” he says. Fixed elements and big-ticket expenses, such as the flooring, countertops and cabinetry, remained the same here, with the addition of a small floating credenza and one slight tweak. “I had the heavy-looking dark-brown cabinets sprayed white and added new brushed brass pulls.” Inexpensive subway tiles and Scandi pale wood accents amp up the new airiness, while soft accessories – patterned rugs and a Roman shade – weave in appealing texture.

The savvy combo of disparate elements means this new build now has nuance; a fact all the more impressive given that the rooms were part of a six-week online makeover challenge. Tim says, “It is possible to reimagine any space in a short amount of time – without renovating or spending a fortune.” And that’s something that makes the owner of these zingy new digs happy indeed.



TOP LEFT The key redesign of the kitchen was a facelift of existing cabinets from espresso to white. It immediately enlivened everything, even the original beige counters and flooring.

Wooden **TRAY**, Mjöl; **BOWL**, Indigo; **UTENSILS**, **UTENSIL HOLDER**, **POT**, HomeSense.

TOP RIGHT “I extended the subway tiles up to the ceiling on the exposed wall,” says Tim. “It looks sophisticated and ties in nicely with the backsplash.” The smart budget balancing throughout meant that Tim could splurge on the kitchen island stools, which were handmade in Toronto.

White Dove OC-17 **CABINETRY PAINT**, Benjamin Moore. **CABINETRY PAINTING**, Benjamin Furniture Refinishing; **CABINETRY HARDWARE**, Upper Canada Specialty Hardware; **BACKSPLASH TILES**, Creekside Tile.