LUXURY BOUTIQUE

STORY WALTER FRANCZYK | PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY



ON A QUIET LEAFY STREET, SHADED BY LOFTY MAPLES, ELISE BOYER TRANSFORMED A RED BRICK VICTORIAN-ERA HOME INTO A COMPELLING EXAMPLE OF ARTFUL DESIGN AND HER STORE'S FINEST FURNITURE AND FINISHES.

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LEFT: A front foyer table tucks below the stairway to the home's second floo . **ABo VE:** Framed mirrors and art buttress the wooden buffet with a distressed finish in the dining room. **BELO W LEFT:** Efficient use of space is a hallmark of this home renovation. **BELO W RIGHT:** A new main-floor powder room is wallpapered with green images of leaping deer.



"This is a crowning achievement for me. Everything that I love is in here," says Elise, the owner and operator of **Veranda**, a large home furniture and accessories store in downtown Bracebridge and a go-to destination and source for designers, homeowners and cottagers. Her newly-opened **Veranda Guest House** showcases things she likes and what suits the house.

Elise roamed a meandering path to home design. As an elite high school athlete, she wanted to be a physical education teacher. But a meagre job market for phys-ed teachers at the time steered her into studying social work at Laurentian University. When she realized social work wasn't her calling, she started her first business, a french fry shop. She later became one of Ontario Hydro's first female electrical forestry apprentices, flying by helicopter and motoring by snowmobile to remote job sites where she cleared trees and bush from below transmission lines.

All the while, she nurtured a creative instinct, making crafts in her own private shop and poring over European home fashion magazines. Eventually, she opened Veranda, a home furniture and décor store in Huntsville. It's now in the heart of downtown Bracebridge.

Built in the 1880s, her twostorey guest house sits on a hill in a quiet neighbourhood of mature maple trees and some of the town's oldest and prettiest homes. "I love Kimberley Avenue," Elise says. She bought the home as soon as it came on the market last fall. "I wanted to ensure this house was going to be preserved and looking good."

The transformation took careful planning, curating and renovation. Elise started by selecting wall coverings and a colour palette using **Benjamin Moore** Balboa Mist. She chose rugs, drapes, furnishings, beds and fabrics. She describes them as sophisticated and modern with old world sensibilities. "I had that all selected right away." Continued on page 64



ourhomes Fall 2023 | 63





Rebuilding the house was a substantial undertaking, with much of the work done by **Alex** and **Jeremy Hymers** of **A & J Painting Co.** who had worked with Elise at her store and personal home for years. "I had the great fortune of utilizing A & J Painting. They poured their heart and soul into this project and worked right through," says Elise. "They can do anything and they're so nice, versatile, reliable."

The team stripped the walls to bare studs, tearing out floors and ceilings. "We opened spaces, we relocated the staircase, the powder room and basement access. We added crown mouldings, all new window trim and baseboards," Elise says. They upgraded the electrical service and replaced the original knob and tube wiring. "All the plumbing was redone from scratch as well."

Northern Electric & Maintenance wired the house. E Z Flow Plumbing connected waterworks to the new kitchen, powder room and two en suites while Clean & Cozy Heating installed the new furnace, ductwork and air conditioning. Once most construction was finished, Elise hired Daniel Gallant, a professional installer, to apply her wallcoverings. "There was nobody in his way – everything was ready for him," she says. "All the trades had ease of movement, which is sometimes not the case." Continued on page 66



Just steps from the dining room, the breakfast room holds a kitchen island from the Veranda collection, armchairs and a settee. Marble flooring extends from the kitchen into the breakfast space.

• PPo SiTE: Culinary equipment from Brown's Appliances augments kitchen cabinetry and counters by the Northern Kitchen Studio at Bracebridge RONA.



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LEFT: As in most
19th century homes,
the kitchen was built
separately from the
structure of the main
house. The door on
the left leads to a
three-season Muskoka
room. BELO W: The
well-furnished Muskoka
room is also a great
place in which to enjoy
the morning sun.

Alex and Jeremy helped Elise choose baseboards and trim, bringing her samples supplied by **Muskoka Lumber**. "I wanted it to look like the original baseboards with the same rounded detail they had in the 1800s. We chose things that looked like the period," she says. They repurposed the home's original doors. **Muskoka Workshop** built some new wooden shutters flanking the windows. They were painted Benjamin Moore Salamander, a deep rich black, blue and green tone richly accenting the red brick's exterior. **Modern Home Carpet o ne** supplied the new oak flooring throughout the main spaces and marble for the kitchen and upper bathrooms.

Northern Kitchen Studio at Bracebridge Ro NA furnished bathroom vanities and new cabinetry in the kitchen where Brown's Appliances provided all the modern cooking, cooling and culinary equipment. Elise brought in one of Veranda's kitchen islands in the breakfast room, adjacent to the kitchen and furnished the space with a settee, armchairs and stools. The kitchen door opens to a bright, airy Muskoka room, which catches the morning sun at the back of house. "I wanted it to be botanical, fresh," Elise says. The other side of the kitchen opens to a formal dining room, furnished with a wooden table, flanked by leather chairs and bookended with large wingback chairs. "I wanted luxurious drapes in each window," Elise adds.

Continued on page 68



New Builds or Renovations









"Because I have the advantage of a large store, a large warehouse and a great deal of inventory, I have my pick of what I could put in here. I ordered some new items for this house, but a lot of things, I already had," Elise says. In the wellappointed living room at the front of the house, arched display cabinets, backed with gold mirrors straddle a south-facing window.

Continued on page 70

ABo VE & RIGHT: Luxurious fabric drapes the front bedroom windows overlooking Kimberley Avenue. The king-size bed is dressed in French linens and duvets. To P RiGHT: Each bedroom has an en suite with a shower.







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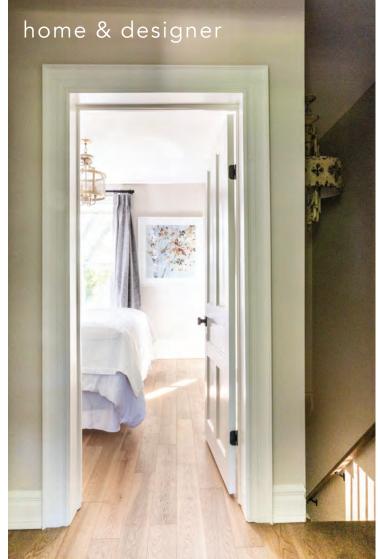
As a Muskokan and cottager on Browning Island, I enjoy the intimate atmosphere of nature and infinite inspiration an island provides. Expansive water views and tall pines swaying in the cross breezes are among the joys of my water-access retreat. In downtown Bracebridge, my four curated showrooms are filled with a vast inventory of timeless items that you will love for both your home and cottage. Take advantage of our complimentary design services with Laura. My large warehouse can provide unlimited free customer storage for all of your purchases. My website lists our entire collection of in-stock products. With over 20 years as owner/operator, I'm proud that superior customer service and competitive pricing has become a VERANDA hallmark.



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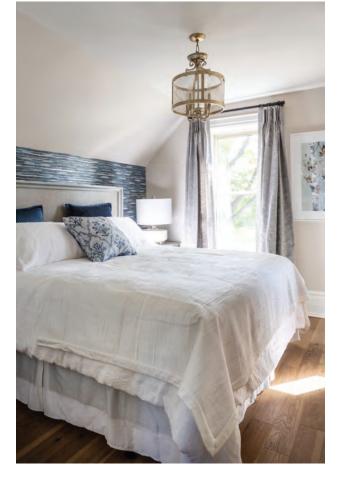
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LEFT & BELo W: On the east side of the home, this well-appointed bedroom catches the early morning sunshine. Bo TTo M LEFT: Wall coverings are essential to the distinctive look of each room in the home, including this en suite.







LOCAL SOURCE GUIDE

• A & J Painting Co. • Benjamin Moore • Brown's Appliances • Clean & Cozy Heating • E Z Flow Plumbing • Daniel Gallant • Modern Home Carpet One • Muskoka Lumber • Muskoka Spray Foam Insulation • Muskoka Workshop • Northern Breeze Painting Ltd. • Northern Electric & Maintenance • Northern Kitchen Studio • One Fourth Painting • Veranda

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