

CANADA'S

# style *at* home

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR  
WORK-  
AT-HOME  
SPACES

the *NEW*  
modern  
country  
kitchen!

STAINLESS STEEL  
MEETS RAW WOOD

*get*  
organized  
with  
*style!*

our picks:  
*hottest* KITCHEN  
MUST-HAVES

*tip* think  
beyond  
the walls  
display art  
on tables,  
shelves  
and floors

Linda McCartney *Life in Photographs*

COLOURFUL CONTEMPORARY

Homeowner Marina Farrow came up with this pretty solution to stop her dogs from digging up the flowerbeds: an aluminium tub filled with a variety of perennials.

DESIGN, CONTRACTING, Blake Farrow Project Management, blakefarrowproject.ca; Baby Seal Black 2119-30 EXTERIOR PAINT, Benjamin Moore.

# COME together

TEXT CHRISTY WRIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHY ROBIN STUBBERT

STYLING CHRISTINE HANLON

It's all about family, friends and indoor-outdoor living at Marina and Blake Farrow's residence near Collingwood, Ont.

Sometimes it takes a faraway place to remind us of what matters close to home. That was the case for custom-home builder Blake Farrow of Blake Farrow Project Management and his wife, Marina, a designer who co-owns design studio and retail store Farrow Arcato Design. "Three years ago we took our kids, Kyle, Jake and Olivia [now 21, 19 and 12 respectively], on a beach vacation," says Blake. "We spent every day outside, swimming, kiteboarding

The 10-foot-long dining table is on wheels, "so we can move it outside [through the glass bifold doors] for a dinner party or push it aside for one of our huge get-togethers," says Marina.

Simply White OC-117 WALL PAINT (throughout), Benjamin Moore; glass BIFOLD DOORS, NanaWall; custom DINING TABLE, DINING CHAIRS, upholstered END CHAIRS, OUTDOOR FURNITURE, Farrow Arcato Design; OUTDOOR UMBRELLA, Squire John's.



and hanging out together." Not wanting the idyllic family time to end with the vacation, the couple decided to rejig their real estate. "We lived in Collingwood [Ont.], where our businesses are located, but our trip reminded us that the long-term plan was to have some land where we could connect as a family," he says. "As soon as we got home, Marina called our real estate agent and said, 'Find us a place in the country.'" It was serendipitous, as a listing for a 1970s two-storey house on three and a half acres popped up while they were on the phone. "We put in an offer that moment," says Marina. "The house is a mile from town but feels like a world away."

It was also a world away from move-in ready, with a cracked foundation, rotted roof and wildly overgrown lot, but the couple was already envisioning a space that would reflect their lifestyle. "We like things simple, not over the top," says Marina. "We wouldn't be comfortable in a home where things have to be kept perfect." Given their professions, they were able to parlay those laid-back preferences into bricks and mortar – or in this case, barnboard. "I immediately imagined a barn," says Blake. "Its clean shape lends itself to casual living."

Ease for university students Kyle and Jake to come home and visit also dictated Blake's ingenious plan: Gut and rebuild the original 1,300-square-foot structure as a modern barn with three bedrooms, a bathroom and a large living area for their sons and link it with a hallway to a new house for themselves and Olivia. "This set-up is perfect for the guys," says Blake. "They have their own space where they can hang with their buddies. When they're back at school, we close it off to save energy."

Blake, Marina and Olivia lived in the "boys' barn" during the six months it took to build the 3,000-square-foot main barn, an energy-efficient two-bedroom house with an open-concept main level. It features radiant-heat polished concrete floors (low maintenance and perfect for the family's Bernese mountain dogs, Heidi and Rosie) and a show-stopping 26-foot-long wall of glass bifold doors that merge the dining area with the outdoor deck. Decor wise, the couple's no-fuss approach is conveyed with crisp white walls, uncovered windows and furniture fitted with wheels for impromptu placement inside and out – a

**OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT & BELOW** Marina designed the kitchen's 18-foot-long Caesarstone-topped island with two levels and different seating options at each.

The slipcovered bench is on wheels and can easily slide into place at the dining table to accommodate extra guests.

**CABINETS, BENCH, STOOLS, PENDANT LIGHTS**, Farrow Arcano Design; **COUNTERTOPS**, Georgian Granite Works; **BACK-SPLASH TILES**, Saitillo Imports.

**OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT** The home's exterior features vertically positioned barnboard painted charcoal grey.

**LANDSCAPING**, Vogel Landscapes Design & Consulting Group.

**OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT** The pizzazz of a canary yellow gas range energizes the kitchen with a jolt of colour against the grainy oak cabinetry.

**APPLIANCES**, Macdonald's Brand-Source Furniture & Appliances.

“Our house is *A COOL SPACE* where we celebrate family and friends.”



**RIGHT** A stone-clad hall links the new barn (in the foreground) to the renovated original building.

**FAR RIGHT** The living room's firewood storage opens to an exterior shed so it can be loaded from the outside.

**BELOW** Proponents of fuss-free comfort, the couple designed the living room with real life in mind. The fireplace, a hotly in-demand spot for lounging in front of during the cold months, is fitted with a simple yet dramatic rusted-metal facade.

**SOFAS, SIDECHAIRS, COFFEE TABLE,** Farrow Arcaro Design.



“We wouldn't **BE COMFORTABLE** in a home where things have to be kept perfect.”

big thing, given how much time they spend outside. “It's like a mini resort here,” says Blake. “We have a pool, trails to explore, frogs to catch – we even added a zip line. Our house is a cool space where we celebrate family and friends.” And where far-away vacations now seem superfluous.

**OPPOSITE, TOP** “I love to create new looks for our bed with colour and texture,” says Marina. Her affinity for both is reinforced by the bench covered with an antique Turkish rug.

**HEADBOARD, BENCH, NIGHTSTAND,** custom; **CONSOLE, BEDDING, SCONCES, TOSS CUSHIONS,** Farrow Arcaro Design; **FLOORING,** Gannon's Hardwood Flooring.

**OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT** The heated fibre-glass salt-water pool is framed on one side by a row of apple red Muskoka chairs. The vintage sign, an antiques market find, is a favourite item. “It makes the house feel relaxed and lived in, and I love decorating outside walls,” says Marina.

**MUSKOKA CHAIRS,** Squire John's.

**OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT** “When Blake saw this vintage French poster at a store in New York City, he fell in love with ‘the girl’ and asked to bring her home with us,” says Marina with a laugh. “In fact, the front entrance was designed to accommodate her.” The rattan loveseat, a piece the couple's had for years, was painted cobalt blue to match the artwork.

**FLOOR TILES,** Stone Tile International.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

