

STORY **CAELI MAZARA** | PHOTOGRAPHY **KELLY HORKOFF**
FLOWERS **FASCINATION FLOWERS**

LABOUR OF *Love*



Touches of glam give the dining room visual interest.



Myla, 6, and Julia are no strangers to a good game of Go Fish. Acrylic on canvas artworks are by Hamilton artist Marina Randazzo. Benjamin Moore paint colour Stone complements the stone fireplace surround. **ABOVE:** Two-year-old Noah finds a seat, just the right height. The detail-rich staircase is by Amber Stairs & Railings Inc.

“I think everyone should build their own home once in their life,” says **Marco Pavone**, looking up at the front of the house that he and his wife Julia designed and built from the ground up.

At just over 3,300 square feet, the Pavones’ Stoney Creek creation is the result of two years searching for property, and another year-and-a-half of designs, permits, and labour. Marco and Julia oversaw it all, travelling back and forth from their previous home in Beamsville, upon which their new home is based.

“We liked our house in Beamsville,” says Julia. “This is kind of a larger version, and anything we didn’t like, we modified in this house.” In particular, they wanted more space and storage for their family of four.

The Pavones are quick to list the challenges and upsides of a new build. Getting permits was exacting and required navigation and expertise Marco and Julia had to learn on-the-go. They needed to ensure their hired workers were working to labour guidelines and in accordance with the Ontario building code, and that work was being completed to schedule. On the plus side, they say, Marco and Julia had the first and final say about their future home.

“I was in charge of getting the structure up,” Marco recalls, who

sourced the lumber from **Turkstra Lumber Company Ltd.** “Julia was in charge of all the trades, design and finish work – she did most of that. Some things we did ourselves, and some we had the tradesmen do. We hired everyone individually: our bricklayer (**VLF Construction**), plumber, electrician, painter – everybody was different. We found all the people we wanted to use. We were our own builders.”

In terms of design, Marco and Julia had a clear plan, which a Stoney Creek design firm helped them realize. “We didn’t like a huge, open, floor plan,” says Marco. “We kind of liked a more traditional style.” The house mixes elements of modern and classical, with a pleasing juxtaposition of corners and curves, for example, the **Amber Stairs & Railings Inc.** staircase. The engineered red oak floors call to mind a turn-of-the-century home with their burnished finish, as does a walk-in pantry off the kitchen that Julia says is one of her favourite rooms. Yet the large windows let in more light than usually seen in older houses, and a bell-shaped roof gives the house a decidedly modern touch from the outside. *Continued on page 22*



As chief decorator, Julia had a lot of space to fill. “I like mixing the rustic with the more classic,” she says, pointing out two dark grey sofas and their accompanying end tables, which have a distressed finish. A pair of armless white chairs, while being undoubtedly modern, have a Victorian flair. Above, a 12-foot ceiling by **B&M Mouldings Inc.** has been dropped to accommodate a coffered effect.

Julia chose a neutral palette from Benjamin Moore, and complemented the grey tones with touches of colour in the form of throws, pillows and paintings.

The dining room, framed in by three walls and a row of square pillars, has a recurring Eiffel Tower theme, from a cast iron model, to

a print above the buffet, to the thatched-pattern curtains. The room has a stately elegance, lit by a shimmering chandelier by **Elm Ridge Lighting & Interiors**, who also supplied the unique geometric chandeliers over the stairs and above the front entryway.

Julia found herself so in her element during the building, Marco says, that “contractors thought she was a contractor! People now ask why she doesn’t do it for a living.” In reply, Julia laughs and says she’d like some time off before undertaking another project.

The cabinetry was the final element to be finished, which the Pavones point out with special enthusiasm. They worked with **Dragan Vujcic** from **Laurentide Kitchens & Bath**, whose incredible eye impressed the Pavones from the start. *Continued on page 24*



A bold decision that paid off, Julia chose to incorporate dark cabinetry in the kitchen design, to create a furniture-like feel. Pirouette sheers from Girgenti Custom Window Treatments let in lots of light, showing off the quartzite countertop. **ABOVE:** Rick Sihra and Dragan Vujcic of Laurentide Kitchens & Bath.



LEFT AND BOTTOM LEFT: Julia carried the warm grey palette through both the master bedroom and en suite. **BELOW:** A walk-in closet to dream about! **BELOW RIGHT:** The mudroom provides ample storage for winter wear, although it seems a shame to cover the fabulous textured walls.



It was Dragan's suggestion that they open up the kitchen to the servery, adjacent to the pantry, to create a more spacious feel in the room.

"Dragan thought of everything," Julia says, sliding out an ornate corbel above the stove, behind which is a shelf of spices. "Everything is usable space."

Dragan also suggested raising half of the kitchen's island to show off another set of large corbels on either side of the breakfast bar. Julia was sold on the idea when she considered that the new design would make a nice buffet area for entertaining.

The kitchen is finished with two-tone cabinetry: a chocolate-coloured unit for the fridge and cream elsewhere, custom designed to fit the Wolf appliances.

Laurentide cabinetry can be found in almost every room in the house, from the mudroom (Julia's favourite room), to walk-in closets, bathrooms and the laundry room. They have been built, like the other elements of the home, to suit each individual space.

"I think it came down to what we wanted," Marco says. Their pride in their work is understated. But their beautiful home, put together piece by piece, is evidence of the commitment, compromise and artistry that went into this labour of love. **OH**

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