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# FAMILY-FRIENDLY

*A Nobleton home is designed to be as elegant as it is welcoming for its owners*

BY SARAH B. HOOD • PHOTOGRAPHY: STEPHANI BUCHMAN • STYLING: WILLIAM MACDONALD

**“SIMPLE BUT ELEGANT, CHILD-FRIENDLY,** timeless and bright.” These are the touchstone words that Robert and Sandra Dell’Elce kept returning to as they built and decorated their gracious new home in the village of Nobleton, just north of Toronto.

As a couple with three young children, “we wanted not to worry; it’s not a museum,” says Sandra Dell’Elce. “We entertain at least once a week, especially in the summer, and we like to eat home-cooked meals three times a day.” 🍷

DESIGN



*In the family room, decorative artist Victoria Pierce hand-stencilled the wall surrounding the fireplace in a motif that is echoed in the Robert Allen drapery fabric. Flanking the hearth, the recessed hutch contains figurines by Lladro, Swarovski and Precious Moments. The sofa was custom-made by Campio Furniture in Vaughan. French doors give access to the terrace.*



The Dell'Elces have a rare advantage over many couples who build their own home: Robert Dell'Elce works in the construction industry, and was able to call upon the skills of two family businesses: Fandor Homes and Nelmar Drywall. This made it easier for him to indulge in such detailed finishes as domed and coffered ceilings.

Built on a lot that backs onto protected natural woodland, the house is designed to take advantage of light and scenic views.

“Your perception is that you’re amongst the farmland and the rolling hills and the trees, and we have that exposure in almost every main room we use in the house,” says Robert.

For this reason, he located the main staircase at the back of the house instead of at the front entrance. “When you walk into the front of the house, you can see right back into the forest,” he says. “I didn’t want the staircase to be the focal point—although it’s beautiful. I wanted the front entrance to be open to the back of the house.”

*“It makes such a strong statement in that semi-circular window, which is quite large,” designer William MacDonald says of the Robert Allen fabric used to create the drapes. “A lot of people would put blinds in that window. People are afraid to put fabric in kitchens, but you want a kitchen to look beautiful and grand.” Dining table and chairs: Direct Interiors.*



The main foyer opens through archways to the living room on the right and the dining room on the left, with the kitchen behind it. Straight ahead is a family room with a 20-foot vaulted two-storey ceiling. “We have two Juliet balconies from the second floor that are closed off most of the time from kids,” says Robert. “We use barn doors with frosted glass to allow light to pass through to the second floor.”

He ensured that each space conforms to the needs of everyday family life. For

instance, he says, “our mudroom is massive, and you can’t get from the mudroom to the kitchen without stopping in the bathroom to wash your hands.

“One thing that I love the most about the house is the wine cellar,” he adds. Installed by Tuscan Cellars, it provides the capacity for about 800 bottles. “Sandra and I are both fans of Californian as well as Italian wine, so it’s something that we have fun with,” he says.

When construction was complete, 







*“We wanted not to worry; it’s not a museum. We entertain at least once a week, especially in the summer, and we like to eat home-cooked meals three times a day.”*

the couple turned to Toronto-based designer William MacDonald of WillMac Design to help them make the final decorating choices. “After the first meeting, it just worked. William caught my vision right away and he really knew how to bring out what we were thinking of,” says Sandra. “He did all the finishing; he brought everything together. He’s the reason for it coming together the way it has.”

“They have a very good eye for design,” says MacDonald. “They were very engaged, so we went shopping a lot; they wanted to be part of the whole process. At the beginning of the process, before I got to know them, we were working with a more diverse palette, but

then we settled down into something that was calmer, more tight. It had to be family-friendly for sure, but because the house is large, we wanted that fresh airiness running through it, almost like a house in the Hamptons.”

A dark oak floor from Weston Flooring Ltd. creates a grounded look on the main floor, apart from the kitchen, which has a travertine floor from York Marble. The rest of the decor, however, uses a palette made luminous by many tones of whites and greys.

“The house, although it can seem grand, is really one of the nicest family houses I’ve worked on,” MacDonald says. “When you’re there, you feel like you’re in a home, not a show home.”

*“In every room there are contemporary touches, but there are also traditional touches, so there’s a marriage of new and old,” says designer William MacDonald. The Wolf range, Sub-Zero fridges and Miele dishwasher contribute to the kitchen’s luxurious ambience. Cabinetry and island: Raywal Cabinets; marble top on island: York Marble; pendant lights: Union Lighting.*