

HOME & DECOR

# embark

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THE  
STYLE  
ISSUE

Janette  
Ewen

SHARES HER TAKE ON STYLING A  
HOME AND CREATIVE INSPIRATION

LIFE IS 'SUITE'  
WHEN YOU'RE  
STAYING IN A  
HOTEL ROOM  
DESIGNED BY  
ALISON VICTORIA

.....  
DESIGNER WILL  
MACDONALD  
TALKS HOME  
LIGHTING TRENDS  
.....

FANTASTIC ART  
BY KATRINA  
SCHAMAN





# LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

BY WILLIAM MACDONALD

*With the busy reno season just around the corner and lots of us planning new design projects for 2016 I thought I would share with you a recent design tale that you may find illuminating.*

*In the early spring of this year my firm began working on an interior design project for a young family who had recently purchased very large house that was built in the mid 1920s. It lies in a well-heeled leafy enclave in the north end of the city. Although the layout, room sizes and style of the house is near perfection some of the practical components of the house needed immediate*

All the light fixtures, wiring, switch plates and outlets would have to be completely replaced. This is not a small job it involves an interior designer an architect a contractor subcontractors and of course client opinion. All the walls, ceilings baseboards, some original moldings would have to be either completely taken down or partially removed so as to install the new wires and other electrical necessities.

I was very happy, after initial discussions with my clients, to hear they wanted to update all of the lighting in the house. Most people don't understand the power of proper lighting. Lighting not only enhances the beauty of interior space but also provides a practical and necessary function. Good lighting can highlight architectural features, works of art, important carpets, table centers and other components of a well-designed room. It's always important to remember to incorporate into your overall budget a substantial portion for good lighting design and fixtures. Any

good designer will have a separate lighting plan to be used in conjunction with other design concepts for a home.

A good lighting plan for any home should include three key types of lighting, ambient lighting, task lighting and accent lighting.

**Ambient lighting provides an area with overall illumination. It radiates a comfortable level of brightness and allows you to see and walk about safely. In some spaces such as a mudroom, the ambient lighting also serves as the primary source of task lighting.** It can be accomplished with a dazzling chandelier, ceiling fixtures or wall-mounted fixtures a.k.a. sconces, track lighting or pots lights. Regarding pot lights. A tip when working with pot lights. If you think you have planned for enough add at least 4 to 6 more then you'll be just about right. People never install enough pot lights! And make sure



they are always on dimmers!!

Having a central source of ambient light in all rooms is key to a good lighting plan.

#### **Accent lighting adds drama to a room by creating visual interest.**

My two favorite types of accent lighting are picture lights that

enhance works of art. Whether they're from Sotheby's or a thrift store a picture light makes every piece of wall art look like a million bucks. My other favorite type of accent light is an up light. This type of light sits on the floor and shoots up toward the ceiling. As part of

an interior design scheme, it is used to add drama draw the eye to paintings, sculptures and other prized possessions. It can also be used to highlight the texture of a brick or stonewall or window treatments. To be effective, accent lighting requires at least three



times as much light on the focal point as the general lighting surrounding it. The lighting for this design project is complete and my clients and I are thrilled with the results. My clients have told me that the new lighting has changed their lives and how they live in their house. Proper planning, a realistic budget and a designer to help lead the way all came together to create the well lit space of their dreams. As I often state good lighting is the key to great design. Remember the types of lighting and how they can enhance not only your house but your whole life. If you're not sure what to do consult with a designer that can help you create what you need. Also check out a retailer like Royal Lighting in Toronto that not only can offer wide range of lighting products but has certified lighting professionals on hand.