

CONDO LIVING



As the details start to come together in both the furnishings and the accessories, your excitement will increase.



It's the design elements used that give a space its charm.

It's all in the details



JAMIE ALEXANDER
**DESIGNING
WITH STYLE**

Trying to get anything done with a group involved is difficult. What you can end up with is a weak version of the first good idea. Some argue that is why government is flawed. This is sort of what happens when a house is renovated by many different owners.

When houses are first built, there is a vision. You may not like it but a vision did exist. The main rooms all have a size that makes sense with the rest of the house and the finishing details are consistent. As various owners renovate, they add their personal stamp.

Trouble is, defining "taste" is like defining "love". There is a method to looking at a house you're going to renovate to keep the details consistent. Your choices are to knock the house down and start again or renovate in parts.

If you renovate in what I call the "bit by bit" method, you choose a part of the house and renovate. The next year, you

choose a new area that needs redoing and attack that.

Undoubtedly, there will be some parts of the house you like, and they will remain the same except for paint and minor repairs. This is when things start to go wrong.

If you are using the "bit by bit" method, make sure you take some detailed pictures before you start. Then you can begin to plan and budget for the renovation with the idea of the original house in mind.

The love for "open concept" sometimes means the charm and detail are removed. Many vintage homes in areas like Leaside and Riverdale, for example, have smaller principal rooms the size of walk-in closets in Richmond Hill. The houses were designed that way to deal with the heating problems of the time.

Heating is no longer an issue and we now want the feeling of space but the details of a house are what make it charming —

much in the same way that the accessories around a sofa make a room feel charming.

Our presentation at the National Home Show will help to make this clear as we take one sofa and use it in three different room settings. Each one of the rooms is distinctly different because of the details that are used around the sofa including paint, wallpaper, trim moulds, art and accessories. It is the follow through of the elements that make the rooms feel "designed" and gives the space its charm.

Some homage has to be paid to the original vision. If you increase the size of a room that has detail from the original house — whether it's the wainscoting, the baseboards or the crown moulding — it is important to extend that detail into the renovated space. Don't go to a big box store and get something that doesn't fit; have the same detail made to finish the space.

As the details start to come together in both the hard surfaces, furnishings and accessories, your excitement will increase. We all like the details but inconsistencies are irritating.

Make sure you budget for

these elements in the renovation planning. Sometimes, unfortunately, the budget is eaten up by other parts of the reno, and the details get added on the cheap. The same thing happens on the next reno. This is a mistake. Details pull a whole project together.

You wouldn't wear a tuxedo with a pair of house slippers would you? If you're going to dress up a room, get the details right. Join us at the home show style spots and presentations. No slippers there!

— *Jamie Alexander is co-founder and principal of Peloso Alexander Interiors and has been in the business of design for almost two decades. With design partner Glen Peloso, they recently launched a new furniture collection with Canadian manufacture Van Gogh Designs. Visit PelosoAlexander.com, [@jamielalexander](https://twitter.com/jamielalexander) or go to [glenandjamie Facebook.com/Alexander-interiors-design](https://www.facebook.com/glenandjamie). See him on the main stage at the National Home Show on Friday, March 21 at 2 p.m. or on Saturday, March 22 at 1 p.m.*



There is a method to renovating a house and it's important to keep the details consistent.