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# View to a Thrill

The interior of this cottage in Muskoka, Ontario, draws on the unpretentious beauty of its lakeside setting.

TEXT CHRISTY WRIGHT | PHOTOGRAPHY WEST OF MAIN

**G**ood design is about enhancing a home's best features: in this case, the view," says Sascha LaFleur, co-founder and principal senior designer at Ottawa-based West of Main. Her design brief was to furnish the brand-new, 4,000-square-foot space so it would appeal to city slickers seeking a lakeside getaway. Sascha's key elements – calm colours, natural fabrics, tactile textures – are numerous, but the effect is singular. "It's timeless and cozy," she says. "The decor flatters the natural beauty of the setting and the pieces are meant to be used and become softened with age, making them even more beautiful."

## Wide Open

The luxury of an expansive space (the ceilings here peak at 19 feet) is not without its design challenges. "It's not a bad problem to have," says Sascha, "but I had to create warmth in this spacious area." She relied on rugs to define zones – a faded Persian style demarcates the dining area; a light plush one, the living. A variety of layered furnishings soften the space and help absorb sound for better acoustics, while properly scaled furniture lends impact without distracting from the beautiful sightlines. Sascha's tip: "Ensure furniture is proportioned to the space. Go large in a big room, small in cozy areas."



## Brick by Brick

While there's no denying the luxurious aspects of this dream kitchen – the millwork, ample custom storage, dual Wolf ranges – it is undeniably warm and welcoming. "The architect left the brick exposed to bring in more warmth, texture and visual drama to the design," says Sascha. "It's also a warm contrast to the high ceilings and helps create a cozier environment." Simple island barstools ensure the window is the focal point, and introduce a dash of black for a contemporary effect and continuity with the dining chairs.



## Green Scene

"For high-traffic family homes like this one, I like to use slip-covers that are durable and practical for all-season living," says Sascha. "They're easy-to-clean and pre-washed linen, so you can pop them in the laundry as needed." The sofas' squishy cushions and soft lines are smartly contrasted by the black-framed chairs. "The armchairs provide more structure and balance to the room, and we used a relaxed casual linen look for the sofas." The designer punctuated the overall pale palette with a colour from right outside the window: green. "Select cushions are in green to reference the outdoor views, and the fresh greenery

and houseplants are something I continued throughout the home." The black spotlights are an unexpected element that deliver an elevated rustic touch.

## Warm Glow

The main-floor sunroom takes its design cue from more traditional cottages and was lined with cedar to give it a warm glow. "When the sun sets, this room has the most beautiful atmosphere," says Sascha. She carefully selected the furniture and decor to complement the room. "The use of flowy linens, slouchy cushions, reclaimed wood and iron are repeated from the other spaces so there is continuity," says the designer.

"Adding the tray coffee table let me create a larger seating area and also provided the opportunity to pull in ottomans or a bench, which is handy for a large family." The cedar inspired the warmer colour palette of terracotta and periwinkle, and the soft hues highlight the cedar's richness.

## Glass Act

The use of interior glass walls is in sync with the floor-to-ceiling windows, merging the inside and out, and allowing the stunning views to be enjoyed from every angle. The black iron staircase leads to a lower-level home theatre, additional bedrooms and a walkout to the lake.



**DESIGN (INTERIOR),** Sascha LaFleur, West of Main. **ARCHITECTURE,** Muskoka Lumber. **BUILDER,** Northpoint Custom Homes. **WALL PAINT,** Chantilly Lace OC-65, Benjamin Moore. All **FURNITURE** and **ACCESSORIES,** West of Main.

