

These are a few of my favourite things



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Raindrops on roses are nice but I've come up with a list of my favourite design things (and some pet peeves!). It's a reminder to me that although I can be picky about some things, it's important to keep things in perspective.

Same goes for holiday gift-giving. I'm often asked advice on gift choices for the design savvy people on my list, so I've come up with a holiday gift guide.

We've discovered wonderful, locally-sourced gift ideas, or we provide the links to order online. But first, a little design ditty. Sing it to the tune of *The Sound of Music's* "My Favourite Things".

*White coloured uppers
and dark island kitchens
A backsplash that sparkles,
bullnose counter edges
Large apron sinks in a
cool stainless steel
These are ideas that for
me seal the deal.*

*Area rugs large enough
for all seating*

*Lampshade seams turned
to the wall (worth
repeating)
Wall art that's hung at
the height of your eyes
(The higher you
hang them the
more I despise!)*

*When the curtains
Form a puddle
Or don't meet the floor
I simply remember,
it's only design
And then I can't
be so sore.*

This year don't stress out over finding that perfect gift. There are great options close to home.

On my way into my local LCBO I looked up and lo and behold was a gift that made me laugh out loud. Writer's Tears Cooper Pot Irish Whiskey just seemed perfectly named. The gift package includes two glasses, presumably so your emotional scribe doesn't have to drink alone. A good deal under \$50.00.

You can save the bees and give the gift of Canadian, hand-embroidered cocktail napkins in a bee motif from Lip Service. They're 100% cotton, finished and hemstitched by hand. A set of four is \$60 and 10% will



Hand-embroidered cocktail napkin in a bee motif from Lip Service. (www.lipservice.com)

be donated to Save Our Bees through the Canadian Honey Council. Visit www.lipservicenapkins.com

Kare (pronounced Caray) is a new favourite interior design store in Toronto. This fabulous and unique store concept is based in Munich Germany and this is its only North American location.

Cherry Stools come in a rainbow of rich jewel tones with brass on the base. At only \$129, each you can find someone on your list who will enjoy this multi-purpose piece of furniture.

They also carry a whimsi-



Cherry Stools come in a rainbow of rich jewel tones with brass on the base. From Kare. (www.kare-design.com.)

cal line of porcelain French Bull Dogs with lovely gold wings for \$59.00 each. Kare is located at 553 Queen St. W. or check them out online at www.kare-design.com.

If you're looking for a fun, free experience for the family and you happen to be downtown there are a number of storefront windows and displays that are truly outstanding.

From the silver stat-

ues fishing for diamonds among the stars at Tiffany's to Holt Renfrew's polar bears "bearing" gifts, this year's theme is creativity on steroids!

From Hudson's Bay's animated snow globes to walking through the larger than life, Christmas table at Loblaws at Maple Leaf Gardens, there's a whole tour waiting for you.

I have a few more favourites that you can check out at www.janelockhart.com/blog featuring interesting gift ideas from around the city and online for just about everyone on your list. Happy shopping!

— Jane Lockhart is a celebrity designer, TV personality and leading expert in the world of design. Visit www.janelockhart.com.

This winter, add a little luxury to your life



RED BARRINUEVO
STYLISHLY
LIVING

We've all seen home prices increase and square footage decrease. For some time, many young homebuyers joined the mass exodus to larger suburban homes. But the draw of urban living is back with renewed interest.

Many homebuyers are gladly sacrificing some square footage for city-centre conveniences. And even the smallest of homes are fully loaded with some pretty luxe upgrades that mean living large.

One such small luxury is a heated floor. Bathrooms often become the focus of this upgrade. A heated tile floor does just the trick. Heated floors are an understated but totally amazing way to bring luxury to your everyday. Try in

unconventional areas like an entrance foyer, living room.

Next kitchens, this is where you'll find my next fave luxury upgrade for the modern home, large or small: a chef's kitchen. It doesn't have to be spacious to make a big splash, but it does have to be functional and stylish.

A true gourmand's paradise is all about having the right appliances, and a pretty backdrop to work in. Creating a cooking zone and adding in high quality ovens from Italian luxury brand Superiore will offer a striking feature and a great way to infuse impactful colour into any kitchen. You can choose red, cream, brown or black, and pair it with a jewelry gold, polished chrome or bronze trim.

Home automation is another one high on the millennials' list of luxuries — anything that can reduce your daily stress and get a job done without much effort is desired. From automated

lighting, to window coverings, to thermostats and security systems, the options are truly endless.

A home spa is right up there on the list of luxurious home upgrades. The bathroom is a popular space for high-impact renovations, since its typically smaller scale means you can likely splurge on more beautiful finishes and fixtures without going into the red.

The "luxury" is all in your finishing selections. Your countertop and backsplash choices have to be on point to evoke a look of true luxury. Meet with a professional tile supplier like CIOT who has access to a variety of latest products and can inform you on what's best for your requirements.

As your focal point, I often like to add in a wonderful sculptural soaker tub from lux brands like Victoria + Albert or steam showers — both offer ultimate in big luxuries for any small bath space.

A "specialty room" of some sort is a great addition to any home. This upgrade is specifically geared toward you and your interests. It doesn't require a large room, or even a room for that matter!

Often times, even a well thought-out corner will suffice. This can be a scotch bar, a library, a meditation area, a gaming nook... the options are endless.

Living luxuriously is possible in any sized space. Research and look to your own lifestyle to determine the best upgrades you'll most appreciate. Then, go ahead and splurge a little.

If you choose well, your upgrades will enhance how you live each day, and pay off when it comes time to sell.

— Red Barrinuevo is a Toronto-based interior designer known for creating stylish yet functional spaces. Visit www.redesign4more.com.



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