


NEW HOMES & CONDOS

Setting a table that delights your guests



JAMIE ALEXANDER
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DETAILS**

Our homes are often a natural extension of our personal decor preferences and style, bringing to life everything we love in a space and defining how we live in it.

Having friends over for dinner and entertaining, for example, are popular 2017 trends that couldn't be hotter right now. After all, why not?

Beautifully designed appliances, cabinetry, furniture and finishes enable homeowners to create a custom dining experience for themselves, their family and their guests right in the comfort of their own four walls.

As homeowners move away from individual rooms and opt for open-concept living and dining, we're seeing the for-

mal dining room giving way to a kitchen with high design sensibility and elevated style.

The result is a dining atmosphere with complimentary decor details right down to what's on the dining table itself.

Spotted recently at CanGift's Toronto Gift Fair, the largest trade show for housewares, gifts and decor in the country, we love how these tabletop trends fit perfectly into the way more and more of our clients are dining at home right now:

Just as we're seeing marble growing in popularity in everything from kitchen countertops to bathroom tile, marble is making its mark on the table in the form of serving boards.

Any good cheese-loving Canadian will attest to these beauties, like the one we saw

from Caravan, as a requirement in any respectable home.

The rise of charcuterie along with a revived culinary interest in pickled and fermented vegetables, and small batch mustards has also helped to fuel to this tabletop trend.

Which leads us to the second trend — communal and self-serve food on the table. Casual, family-style dining isn't just reserved for week-night suppers with the kids.

Imagine a festive dinner table set with beautiful bottles of olive oils, balsamic vinegars and fresh baguettes, inviting guests to pour, taste and enjoy themselves.

The Montreal-based manufacturer, Zoe, is producing exceptional oils and vinegars out of Greece where their family orchard is located. Bottles on the table are no longer taboo — and these ones are pretty, too!

The layered look is definitely in. Traditionally, placemats took the place of tablecloths — and visa versa — with the introduction of chargers adding an additional layer to the table.

No longer simply functional, placemats come in all shapes, patterns and sizes, and can be used in tandem with tablecloths and chargers to create a certain look for a meal or simply used on their own.

Square, circular, rectangular — they all work. And we love the leaf motif of these gold and silver ones from Harman. Imagine a series of them overlapping down the length of a table. How stunning with printed and patterned disposable napkins (which we're also seeing as a trend).

Mixed metals have made their way to dishware. We fell in love with the Vera Wang collection and would use specific pieces as statement pieces on the table or the entire collection all at once.

Vera Wang also introduced marble dishware at CanGift as well as a set that has a bespoke, hand-painted quality, and as well as stunning glass stemware with a modern and ethereal look.

However you choose to set your table this season, remember that it's the good company and conversation that matters most. Bon appetite!



A nicely set table along with beautiful bottles of olive oils and balsamic vinegars is a great way to invite guests to pour, taste and enjoy themselves.

— *Jamie Alexander is an award-winning designer and co-owner of Peloso Alexander Interiors,* *a design firm dedicated to bringing beautiful spaces to life. Visit www.pelosoalexander.com.*

Do you need a coffee bar in the bedroom?



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If you're like me, you aren't fully awake until you've had a cup of freshly brewed, hot coffee.

To go without it is like a nightmare (especially for those who have to deal with me).

It's not just the taste that captivates, it's the routine of drinking something hot to stimulate the senses and prepare me for the day.

Drive-thru or walk in, ordering coffee is as much a part of my daily routine as walking my dog, Baxter.

But it's not just me, our taste for coffee never wavers. It's why the market is inundated with specialty coffee brands and new coffee shops continue to pop up.

I was lying in bed one morning thinking how amazing it would be to just snap my fingers and have a hot cup of coffee appear.

I looked over at Baxter, who yawned — clearly not reading my mind, and realized there was a zero chance of training him to fetch coffee, so I thought of the next best thing.

One of the best parts of vacationing is staying in a hotel with an in-room coffee station.

Everything you need to make coffee is on hand, right down to the cream and sugar. You just put the water in the coffee maker, add the packet of coffee grounds and turn it on. You don't even have to leave your room.

It used to be considered a luxury, now it's in every hotel room. So why not have one your own bedroom?

Whether it's a space for coffee, tea or some breakfast snacks, a coffee bar for your bedroom may not be all that far-fetched.

Wake up and smell the coffee in your own bedroom. You can create that getaway in your master bedroom. Whether you have a whole suite or a small, cozy bedroom, you can turn the room into a dream space that will also help kick-start your morning.

After all, that's what the master bedroom has evolved into; a suite within the larger context of the house. So here's how to save a trip to the kitchen!

Today's coffee makers make it easy and convenient to brew that cuppa joe, almost anywhere. A small table near an outlet with a couple of mugs, spoons and selections of sugar may be all you need.

If your bedroom connects to a bathroom, it's easy to, fill the coffee maker or kettle.

Take it to the next level by adding a mini fridge for milk, cream, juice and water.

A sink in the bedroom? Why not! A sink in the bedroom will transform your whole life. OK, that may be an exaggeration but it can certainly transform your bedroom. So if you're ready to fully commit to a coffee bar, a sink will make all the difference. It's convenient for filling kettles and coffee makers and cleaning up afterwards.

Of course, you'll need a countertop for the sink and drawers and cabinets for storage and before you know it you'll have a coffee bar.

No, you still want your bedroom to be a bedroom and not look like another section of your kitchen. A well-designed coffee bar can help you accomplish this.

A bar fridge in the bedroom? Of course!

If you're ready to kick it up another notch, consider installing a bar fridge. Wine in the bedroom?

Well, not for breakfast but if your bedroom is your space to retreat, why not have wine

chilling at the right temperature? Another option is to install a refrigerator drawer like one offered by Sub Zero. You can store cold beverages with easy access.

Create a Coffee Corner. Lastly, add your own touch to your coffee bar. I'm a huge proponent of designing your space with your personal style in mind.

Create a coffee corner in your bedroom with a comfy chair so you can relax with your

morning newspaper or during the evenings with wine.

No matter how you do it, a coffee bar will instill luxury and comfort in your bedroom oasis. At least, until I can teach the dog how to make coffee.

— *Award-winning designer and TV personality Jane Lockhart is one of Canada's leading experts in the world of design. Visit www.janelockhart.com.*



Create a cozy corner in your bedroom with a comfy chair so you can relax with a coffee and your morning newspaper or during the evenings with a glass of wine.