

preventing the unexpected...

Many homeowners think about getting a full home inspection before purchasing a home. But what about before a major home renovation? It can **pay to inspect** before beginning any renovation. **> P.6**



Make the most of the reno

After the home renovation is complete, the old furniture and interior décor may not really match the new look. This is when the professionals – **home stagers and interior designers** – can help homeowners maximize their newly renovated living space with stylish furniture and finishings that won't necessarily cost a lot more money. **» p.5**

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Tom Bakker Design's Tom Bakker relaxes at a South Surrey home where his company completed a major renovation. When a home starts getting older, it may be necessary to rebuild entirely, but smaller renovations can make vast improvements to the home, inside and out, as well. *Martin Knowles photo*



change it up

Rebuild: repairs only go so far

Metro Vancouver renovator makes it as easy as possible for his clients

MAGGIE CALLOWAY

The home is outdated, old and tired. The 1970s may seem like yesterday but it's 35 to 40 years ago. Maybe the kids are gone and it's time for the homeowners to rethink the way they use their

living space. The remnants from the '70s can be embarrassing and even if the trend setters say revisiting the era is in, it is definitely time for a change.

There is no question it's a big decision to embark on a major renovation.

When a house reaches around 35 years of age, there is a lot to change in order to bring the mechanics of the home up to date and more energy-efficient.

But when the homeowners love their neighbourhood and want to stay in a place where 'everybody knows your name,' then a renovation is definitely worth considering.

The first job is to find a designer and contractor who take the time to fully understand the family's dynamic, needs, and dreams. Homeown-

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Cater to your kitchen

TRICIA LESLIE

One definition of a kitchen describes it as simply, "a room or an area equipped for preparing and cooking food."

But it is so much more than that.

Sure, the tempting smells that waft throughout the entire house after a cookie-baking session, or prior to a meal, are indicative that food preparation is indeed, important to this part of the home.

But the kitchen is also – often – the heart of the home.

It's the warm, safe refuge where kids take their troubles to Mom.

It's where tweens and teens hang out after school or sports or shopping.

It becomes the centre of every party and social event ever held in the home and, as all of these things, it is related to or part of countless memories as the family grows together.

This could be why so many homeowners focus on the kitchen when planning home renovations.

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'It has to be functional as well as aesthetic'

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is important," she says.

Stewart and the Concept To Design team always get to know the homeowners and their respective lifestyles before starting any job.

This helps them to add personal items to the home office space – artifacts, trophies, certificates, objets d'art, etc.

Once they get to know the clients, they know which personal items should likely be purposefully displayed.

And homeowners don't necessarily need to shop at big box stores to get office chairs, pen holders, or other office necessities, Stewart adds.

Desk chairs can be funky and multifunctional, she says, for use as a desk chair or an extra seat when company arrives. And the pen holder?

"It can be anything from special boxes – a favourite special box – to a flower pot to an antique," Stewart says.

"The idea is to incorporate (the homeowners') hobbies into the work-space."

From traditional, conventional comfort to contemporary, minimalist chic, Stewart and her colleagues at Concept To Design can design it.

The goal is always to shape a space the homeowners will use and enjoy, she says.

"When a customer says they just absolutely love being in the space we've created for them ... that's the most satisfying," Stewart says.

"That's the whole point."



Concept to Design principal Carolyn Lino Stewart says whether large or small, home offices can be individual, comfortable and functional. Having items such as trophies, certificates, or collectables on display adds a personal touch.



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