

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON HARTOG

Sometimes a conversation about a kitchen renovation can lead to a whole new house. That's what happened to homeowners, Chris and Layna, who decided to start from scratch rather than invest in costly renovations.

"Your tastes change," says Chris, who was ready to make the move from his family's traditional home in Byron to a more contemporary, open-concept living space.

Over the years, Chris says he'd been inspired by homes built by his brother-in-law, **Bob Molinari**, President of **Jakenzi Design & Build Inc.** "We were exposed to some of the new styles, and had reached a point where it just didn't make sense to spend more time and money on our old house," Chris comments. *Continued on page 36*



LEFT: The main level's open interior pops with urban style thanks to industrial inspiration and dominant finishes of brick, wood, concrete and metal. Lots of built-ins and "hiding places" ensure a minimal, uncluttered look in the stand-out kitchen.
TOP: Jakenzi's Bob Molinari (left) and Andy Roth of Roth Design Inc. (right) enjoy coffee and a laugh with homeowner, Chris, in the sunny kitchen area that overlooks the backyard. Roth built the long rustic bench. **ABOVE:** Spare architecture and simple yet functional design details extend to the office, tucked neatly off the front foyer (rear wall in Deep Space by Benjamin Moore).



ABOVE: The dining table, designed and built by Roth, and Eames-style chairs make a stylish pairing, especially when framed by the brick feature wall. Painting by Biljana Vujicic. **RIGHT:** Sylvie Roth of Roth Design recycled a selection of old belts to create the funky hallway bench. **FAR RIGHT:** A handy bar with built-in sink, fridge and a sleek bank of upper storage cabinets serves both the dining and living areas. It also creates a comfortable visual division between the two spaces.



The couple decided to build their new dream home in Kilworth, just west of London. At 90-by-200 feet, their lot is considerably larger than anything available within the city limits. “You’d have to buy an old home to find a lot this big in London,” says Chris.

And although the exterior use of James Hardie® board (installed by **Amaral Home Improvements**), as well as stone (installed by **Pedro da Silva** of **PDS Construction**), gives the impression of a traditional suburban home, the interior has a decidedly modern and more urban feel.

At 3,100 sq. ft., the four-bedroom house provides plenty of room for the couple and their two children.

The ground floor living space is almost completely open, apart from a small and sunny home office, which features a custom-built desk by **Andy Roth** of **Roth Design Inc.** “Chris was looking for a desk to fit the space,” says Roth, whose one-of-a-kind creation features a walnut top and re-purposed metal filing cabinet for storage.

Roth also provided the home’s striking dining room table, which he built on spec several years ago from a cut of red maple. “The tree must be at least 150 years old,” says Chris. “Andy never found a space large enough for it, but we have a big extended family so it’s perfect for us.”

A reclaimed yellow-brick feature wall (supplied by **Patene Building Supplies Ltd.** and laid by PDS) helps define the dining area and pays homage to the past. “The very first home that we lived in was reclaimed brick, so we thought it would be cool to mix the old with the new,” Chris says.



ABOVE: An open, light-filled wood and glass stairway connects upper and lower levels with the main floor, while the living area is the home’s go-to relaxation centre with its peaceful grey and blue colour palette (Cloud Cover by Benjamin Moore on most main level walls). Sectional sofa from Austin and Taylor and painting over sofa by Vanessa Zita Vanderidder of London. **LEFT:** Roth designed and built the one-of-a-kind steel fireplace surround with an insert open to both inside and outside living spaces. The black surround nicely absorbs the big, black screen of the TV.



Open to the kitchen and great room, the dining room is used for entertaining and everyday meals, although the kids often prefer to eat at the kitchen’s large, concrete centre island, poured by Roth Design. The rest of the ultra-modern kitchen was designed and built by **G&S Woodworking**.

“I like to keep the countertops free from clutter,” says Chris, whose appliances and coffee station are cleverly hidden in a pullout cabinet.

A wall of windows, from **Golden Windows Ltd.**, fills the space with light and provides the perfect reading nook, thanks to a long wooden bench also designed by Roth Design. Its dark finish provides a visual contrast to the home’s white ash floors (**Townsend Lumber Inc.**), installed by **Gallerno Marble & Tile**. Used throughout both levels, the ash flooring “brightens up the space, and doesn’t show all the imperfections of day-to-day wear,” notes Chris.

The home’s great room is anchored by the fireplace, which features a steel surround designed and custom-built by Roth Design. “The great thing about Chris is he gave me a lot of freedom to create something beautiful,” says Roth, whose wife Sylvie contributed décor advice throughout the home. “He let me design it and do what I thought would look good in the space.”

A contemporary gas insert from **Orzech Heating & Cooling** completes the industrial look, which is softened by a comfortable corner sectional from **Austin & Taylor Home Furnishings Inc.** and a turquoise lounge chair from **EQ3**. “We no longer fight over the corner seat when we watch TV,” says Chris, with a laugh.

With entertaining in mind, Chris and Layna decided to replace a dividing wall with a sleek bar, designed by G&S. Featuring a stainless-

Continued on page 38



Organic finishes such as stone tile and a pebbled floor in the shower stall, plus the clean, lean lines of the vanity, add a spa-like vibe to the master bathroom. **LEFT:** The soaker tub cuts a serene silhouette. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Drop zone or handy spot to sit and put on shoes, Roth built the master bedroom bench with function in mind as well as artistry. Artwork by the owners' children adds punchy colour above the bed.



steel trough sink, a double-sided wine fridge from **Goemans Appliances** and overhead track lighting, the bar provides a natural focal point for the open space, as well as extra storage.

Floating stairs by **Pro-Stair & Railing Inc.** lead to the second floor. "We like the idea of clean lines and letting in lots of light from the large window on the landing," says Chris. Double doors lead to a spacious master bedroom. The home's modern, urban look continues with the use of barn doors (**County Heritage Forest Products Ltd.**), which slide open to reveal a large walk-in closet. Opaque glass inserts in the doors add an oriental hint to the room.

The en suite bathroom is an oasis of tranquility with its soaker tub and large glassed-in shower featuring a poured concrete bench and pebble floor, both by Roth Design.

The children's rooms, bathroom and a guest room are down the

hallway, which is filled with natural light thanks to a skylight and Sonotube from **Rona Moffatt and Powell**.

The family moved into their new home in October, and Chris and Layna hope they will enjoy it for years to come. "It was a great experience being involved in the building," Chris says. Working with Jakenzi Design & Build allowed the couple to make small adjustments throughout the process, he notes.

This is the kind of flexibility that has made Jakenzi one of London's preferred custom-home builders.

"We take the time to go through every detail with a customer," says Molinari. "I want to know what inspires people, what they envision, and we build from that. Building is truly a passion, and after 15 years I still love to see people's reactions when they see their vision come to life." **OH**

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