



BLING ON SUMMER

Outdoor decor is flashy and fun

See Pages G3 &amp; G4

# LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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## AROUND THE HOUSE

### Transform any corner into a workstation

**TIP** • With living space at a premium and more people working from home, creative approaches are needed to blend an office into any room in the house.

According to styleathome.com, allotting a whole room to an office can often be an impractical waste of space. Depending on your home's space situation, whether you have children and what kind of work environment you need (whether you need quiet or can tolerate some noise), STYLE at HOME magazine makes the following suggestions as to how to incorporate an office into other key rooms in a home.

■ **Living/family room:** By furnishing with a small desk or table, and stashing supplies in decorative boxes — or other creative hideaways — on nearby bookshelves, one of the key relaxation rooms in any home can be turned into an impromptu office. Your best bet is to avoid bulky computer equipment, and buy a laptop that can be quickly stashed away and out of sight.

■ **Dining room:** If you have a laptop, you can use the existing dining table as a desk, and use a nearby drawer or cabinet for storage and supplies. If space allows, a secretary, desk or armoire can be added to the room — when not functioning as a desk, it can double as a sideboard.

■ **Bedroom:** While it's generally believed that combining one's office and bedroom takes a psychological toll, sometimes people have no choice. STYLE at HOME recommends separating the office and sleeping components of the room by using a screen to hide your work area, or employing an armoire or secretary that can close up and disappear from view.

— Chris Lackner, CanWest News Service

### Family friendly living rooms

**TIPS** • Typically the epicentre of social activity in any home, the family room is always a place that can use some tinkering and renovation. Sarah Miller of quotecity.com, a web portal for homeowners and contractors, offers the following remodelling suggestions:

■ **Pick the right flat-screen TV:** Consider factors such as size, design and compatibility with the room.

■ **Let your TV take centre stage:** Don't fear making the TV prominent in the room. In the modern era of sleek, thin flat-screen televisions, there is no reason to hide your screen in a room's corner (something often done with the flat-screen's bulky predecessor). Mounting the TV on a wall offers a common solution — allowing a TV to take up less space, be the centre of attention and generally be seen from anywhere in the room.

■ **Windows:** Choose shades, blinds and window film that will protect furniture and carpet from the wear-and-tear of the sun, and can reduce the glare hitting the TV screen.

■ **Have a floorplan:** Ensure your floors do the room justice as the most well-trodden home in the house, and the focal point for entertaining guests — either through stylish carpets or hardwood floors combined with rugs that suit the colour scheme and feel of your family room.

— CanWest News Service



Tedd Jacob, Calgary Herald

This oil painting abstract of a mountain scene, by Nepalese artist Laxman Shrestha, is the first artwork the Huffakers purchased as a couple.



Jenelle Schneider, Calgary Herald

Wood-carved, hand-painted decorative eggs from Russia adorn the fireplace mantel in the living room.



Jenelle Schneider, Calgary Herald

Tom and Claire Huffaker in the foyer of their residence, where the American and Canadian flags hang.

# Home IS WHERE THE ART IS

When U.S. Consul General Tom Huffaker and his wife, Claire, moved into their new residence, it didn't quite feel like home until the art, books and rugs were in place

LISA KADANE  
CALGARY HERALD

**T**hey've lived in Mumbai, Washington, D.C., Moscow, Ottawa and now Calgary, but for Tom and Claire Huffaker, home is wherever they hang their art.

After being assigned the three-year post of U.S. consul general for Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories, Tom moved to Calgary last August with

his wife, two teenage children and a two-year-old miniature dachshund the family adopted in Russia. Instead of engaging in a bidding war to find suitable digs in the city's hot housing market, Uncle Sam moved the Huffakers into the U.S. government-owned consul general's residence, a spacious, reverse-walkout bungalow located on a large, leafy, L-shaped lot in Mount Royal.

With their own furniture perpetually in storage and their new home already fur-

nished, moving day was akin to showing up at The Jefferson Hotel in D.C., with a lot of suitcases, paintings and area rugs. "When you first walk in, and until you get your stuff in, it doesn't feel like a home. It feels like a nice hotel," says Claire.

After a stately and somewhat formidable entrance — the U.S. State Department seal is affixed to the front window, and both Old Glory and the Maple Leaf flags

## PROFILE

hang ceremoniously from poles in the oak-floored foyer — a staircase beckons visitors up to the home's public rooms. There formality softens, thanks to the Huffakers' warm hospitality and global decor. "Art and books are the only way to make it your place," Claire explains.

The family has done that with a flourish. Over the course of two decades of married life in the U.S. Foreign Service, Tom and Claire have collected art and artifacts from around the world.

Wool-on-wool carpets purchased in Turkey and Kashmir now lie atop the home's parquet floors. Wood-carved, hand-painted eggs from Russia adorn the fireplace mantel in the living room. Paintings from Nepal, Canada, South Africa and the former Yugoslavia, among other countries, add a personal touch to walls throughout the 4,500-square-foot house.

SEE U.S. CONSUL, PAGE G2



Tedd Jacob, Calgary Herald

The formal living room is typical of the federalist style, a conservative look where rooms are arranged in perfect symmetry separated by wide arches. The room beyond is the Huffakers' favourite.

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soaring windows, custom millwork through-out and furniture quality built-ins. The custom kitchen is a chef's dream with a large centre island, top of the line stainless steel appliances and true walk thru pantry. The walkout has been masterfully developed with exercise room, wine cellar, built-in entertainment centre and more.

