



# LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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## AROUND THE HOUSE

### Skip the plastic, save a tree

**WHAT'S NEW** • Canadians take home an estimated 55 million plastic carry-out bags a week from grocery stores and other retail outlets. At IKEA Canada stores alone, customers currently use 25 million plastic bags annually.

To help reduce plastic bag use across the country, the iconic Swedish retailer recently announced a plan to reduce plastic bag consumption at its stores by 50 per cent over the next year. The goal is to cut its plastic bag use number in half — to 12.5 million — by the end of July 2008.

Starting on Oct. 22, IKEA Canada will begin charging five cents for plastic bags. Proceeds from plastic bag sales will be donated to IKEA Canada's long-term environmental partner, Tree Canada, which will use the funds to plant trees throughout the country to help offset carbon dioxide emissions.

To help alter customer behaviour and endorse environmentally responsible habits, IKEA will continue to sell its reusable Blue Bags for \$1 each.

— Calgary Herald

### Calling all antique lovers

**EVENT** • The annual Antiques at Spruce Meadows show and sale returns to the EquiPLEX at Spruce Meadows this weekend. The show, running until Sunday, features 70 antiques and collectibles dealers from across Canada showcasing everything from furniture and china to art and nostalgic memorabilia.

The show will also host the Antique Appraisal Clinic on Saturday and Sunday during show hours, so attendees can find out if Grandma's old oriental vase is actually a priceless heirloom. Antiques at Spruce Meadows takes place Aug. 17 from 5 to 9 p.m., Aug. 18 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Aug. 19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission costs \$7 for adults and is free for children 12 and under.

— Calgary Herald

### A blog for every kind of bash

**ONLINE** • The Hostess with the Mostess Guide to Fabulous Finds and More for Contemporary Entertaining (www.hostessblog.com) is the blog to visit whether you are planning an upscale bash for hundreds or a low-key get-together for a few close friends.

No matter the occasion, the blog is full of ideas for party planning and includes tips on how to choose an appropriate theme and how to buy (or make) co-ordinating accessories and place settings.

"Hiphostess" blogger Jennifer Sbranti (designer, entrepreneur and entertaining guru, according to her bio) dedicates special entries to holiday party planning. The blog is full of ideas that may inspire you to plan a perfect gathering. Even if you think you have everything figured out, it's worth taking a peek.

— McClatchy Newspapers



Canadian works her way up from IKEA stock room to designing for the furniture giant

## MAKING THE CUT

WENDY WARBURTON  
CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Every day around the world, two million people, maybe more, pick up Dawn Wintour's carefully crafted handiwork and stick it in their mouths.

It may be holding miso soup, or perhaps laden with fettuccine and pesto.

Wintour is an industrial designer, and her work — cutlery, if you haven't already guessed — feeds some of the millions of people worldwide who shop at IKEA.

The 26-year-old Ottawa native is the first Canadian to design products for the Swedish home-furnishings giant, and her Svit cutlery is featured in its 2008 catalogue, which was released a couple of weeks ago. Her Natt cutlery appeared in the 2007 catalogue.

For Wintour, who graduated from Carleton University's industrial design program in 2006, designing for IKEA was a logical step after five years of working her way up from stocking the store's shelves to dealing with returned items at customer services.

"It was great because I got to see how IKEA packages their products and how they transport things, and how they make things so they'll ship more effectively and efficiently," she says.

In sales, she got her first

look at IKEA's product range and came up with ideas for new products.

"I kept thinking 'I've got to design IKEA a microwave stand to sell' because everybody wants one and they don't use them in Europe in the same way we do," she says.

Her three years in the store's busy customer service department were also instructive because, she says, she was able to see how things broke.

Her store manager, who had previously worked at IKEA's headquarters in Sweden as part of a team that oversaw product development, urged her to apply for one of IKEA's prized internships — something no Canadian had ever received.

It meant taking a year off from her studies, but the six months Wintour spent in Almhult were worth it, she says.

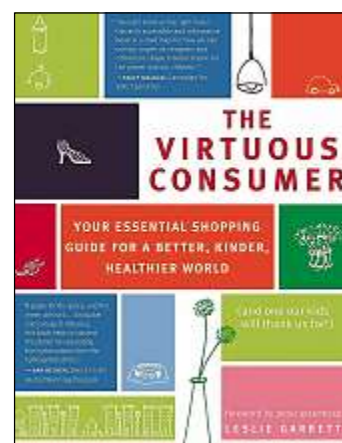
"They have a lot of resources in terms of engineering specialists, and there's the core design team, which I was on as an intern," she says.

"Then there's a large group of product developers, who arrange the final colours, the final materials, where the manufacturing will be done and how many pieces will be ordered. The design department just gets to sit there and draw and come up with ideas and brainstorm."

SEE CUT, PAGE G2



Bruno Schlumberger, CanWest News Service  
Dawn Wintour's apartment is furnished with items from Value Village and IKEA, where she bought the Expedit bookshelf behind her.



## Think before you buy

Author of The Virtuous Consumer doesn't preach, but teaches

LISA KADANE  
CALGARY HERALD

Homes house stuff, and lots of it. The clothes, furnishings, knick-knacks, toys, books and electronic gizmos accumulate as the years roll by.

Much of it — or at least the packaging it comes in — is destined for the landfill.

Sure, some of us recycle our old couches by donating them to a charity, hand down kids' clothes and toys to nieces and nephews, or foist stained Tupperware onto neighbours by hosting a garage sale. But many of us purge by dragging over the garbage can.

Isn't there a better way?

Make sure the product is green — or at least something you really love and can't live without — says Leslie Garrett.

"You can't pick up a magazine that doesn't tell you how to de-clutter. But no one ever says, 'Stop buying so much stuff!'" says the London, Ont.-based writer.

It's hard to eschew consumption when living in a material world, but Garrett explores an alternative solution in her new book, The Virtuous Consumer (New World Library, \$18.50).

Its basic tenet is easy to grasp: by making informed consumer choices, we can improve our health and that of the planet we share.

Garrett, 43, started down the road to virtuous consumerism after her first daughter was born nine years ago.

"All of a sudden, it just seemed like my house was filling up with stuff, but I really hadn't thought too long and hard about what it was made of or how it was made," she says.

"We've become very unconscious consumers as consumerism has grown."

To stop the madness, Garrett began by questioning the food her family was eating, and she started buying organic milk and meat. Her awareness grew from there into a syndicated column called The Virtuous Consumer, about socially and environmentally responsible purchasing.

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