

INSIDE

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## LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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## AROUND THE HOUSE



## Treasure hunting at Spruce Meadows

**EVENT** • Bring an antique of your own for appraisal or treasure hunt among the thousands of collectibles this weekend at an antiques show at Spruce Meadows.

Quality dealers from across the country will sell country, formal and prairie furniture, cowboy collectibles, folk art, native artefacts, '60s decor, art glass, fine china, clocks, among a host of other old treasures.

Peter Blundel's Antiques Identifications clinic will be set up and for a \$10 per item fee you can find out the origins or the value of your antique items.

The show runs today from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$7, (including parking) and children under 12 are free. For more information, check out [antiqueshowscanada.com](http://antiqueshowscanada.com)

— Calgary Herald



## Take a peek at Calgary ponds

**EVENT** • In landlocked Calgary, it's no wonder people get excited about ponds and backyard water features.

This weekend, you can whet your appetite or get inspired for your own plans as Waterworks Ponds hosts its first-ever Parade of Ponds.

Take a self-guided tour of 12 of Calgary's water features, including waterfalls, ponds, custom water walls and gurgler rocks at private homes and in commercial spaces. One of the highlights of the tour is a water feature at a private home in Springbank that has a 25-metre long babbling brook that drops an elevation of five metres and empties into two Koi ponds.

Tickets are \$15 and all proceeds go to the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. Call 403-266-5045 or email [calgary@waterworksponds.com](mailto:calgary@waterworksponds.com) for ticket information and a map.

— Calgary Herald

Inspired by Venice, a couple transforms their home using local finds and plenty of creativity

YVONNE JEFFERY  
CALGARY HERALD

**W**hen Blinda Bilou and Stephen Sosnick took possession of their home just outside Calgary two years ago, it sported white linoleum, white ceilings, white walls and pink-tinged, bleached oak woodwork. It was, she says, a very standard builder's special, built in 1997.

It didn't stay standard for long. Step into the home today, and you're instantly transported to Venice's palazzos, the mansions that still line the canals of the northern Italian city. Intricate ironwork, purposefully oversized furniture pieces and rich textures announce that this is a decor with a long pedigree.

But it's also a decor that's been achieved with items and materials primarily found right here at home,



The master bed features serpentine carvings.

rather than across the Atlantic.

"I've been collecting forever," acknowledges Bilou, whose artistic flair has brought her into the field of interior design.

"When we moved in, all the furniture, even the fireplace and the paint colours, came with us from our old house."

The couple took 30 days to paint the home's doors, walls and ceilings, lay a dark slate floor, and have lighting and electrical items replaced. That alone would have been a sea change from the home's previous pale incarnation. But then they really got to work, having recognized on a six-day trip to Venice that the city was very much the culmination of all that inspired them.

"Venice is where Europe meets the East, so it's a little bit exotic but old world at the same time," explains



The antique dining room table and chairs were an "accidental" find during a shopping trip.

Bilou.

Once a seat of power for the Byzantine Empire, and for centuries a major centre for trade between East and West, Venice takes its influences from many directions — as Bilou notes, it's a place where Chinese silks co-exist happily with European wood carv-

ings and Indian spices.

This marriage of cultures is now reflected in her home, where the kitchen sink resembles a baptismal font and the antique dining room chairs sport hand-tooled and painted leather.

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Photos, Colleen De Neve,  
Calgary Herald

The lion's head panel above the stove is an authentic replica of a Victorian fireplace backing.

## Insider tips

To give your house a new lease on life on a minimal budget — and avoid the mess and stress of a renovation — Blinda Bilou suggests stripping out all of the accessories in a space, including the draperies.

When you have a blank slate in front of you, with just walls and major pieces of furniture, she says it's easier to tap into your creativity and visualize new colours or accessories from different areas of the house.

"It's the easiest way to give yourself a new look," she says. And if you're working with a tight budget, make sure you allocate it throughout the area you're redecorating. This will help to avoid a big-ticket splurge that leaves you without funds to finish the rest of the space.

## Contacts

Blinda Bilou, Interior Inspirations: 403-949-8234.  
Stephen Sosnick, Refining Fire Metalworks: 403-589-6594

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Coach Hill - \$599,000  
39 Coachwood Place, SW  
2127 + 704 SF beautifully updated 4 + 1 bedroom on a quiet cul-de-sac; close to schools, parks, and DT! Hardwood floors, wood-burning fireplace, formal dining room, stainless steel appliances & granite in kitchen, large backyard & developed basement!



Patterson - \$625,000  
138 Patterson Hill, SW  
Beautifully updated 2+2 bdrm bungalow w/ hardwood floors, vaulted ceilings, California shutters, granite, stainless steel appliances & open floor plan! Dev'd walkout feat. huge rec room, games area, 2 bdrms & full bath. Over 2440 SF of living space!



Discovery Ridge - \$639,000  
314 Discovery Ridge Way, SW  
Steps to Griffiths Woods Park, this family home offers over 3000 SF of dev'd living space! 3+1 bdrm & den, rich hardwood floors, stone facing fireplaces, stainless steel appliances, main floor laundry, 5 pc mstr ensuite & lrg rec room in dev'd bsm!



Elbow Valley - \$675,000  
15 Bent Tree Place  
1583 + 1370 SF villa on a quiet cul-de-sac backing a green space & fronting a park! 1+2 bdrm & den, formal dining, hardwood floors, blue-pearl granite counters & jet-tub ens. in master! Stamped concrete drive, beautifully dev'd basement w/ full-size windows.



West Springs - \$825,000  
6 West Cedar Place, SW  
Executive home in West Springs with beautiful finishes & fabulous curb appeal! Over 3400 SF, 4+1 bdrms, jetted shower & jet-tub in mstr, premium stainless steel appliances & granite counters in kitchen, main-floor laundry & masterfully dev'd basement!