



QUIRKY QUARTET

Alberta design group Loyal Loot chosen for special Toronto exhibit
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LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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CATCHING BETTER ZZZZS

Lure sleep to your door with bedroom decor

YVONNE JEFFERY
CALGARY HERALD

A recent survey for hotels.ca turned up a surprise, says Jennifer Drew, spokesperson for the hotel-booking website. "We asked Canadians what aspects of travel were the most important," she explains. "And 46 per cent came back and said that slumber, or getting a good night's sleep, was the most important thing in selecting a hotel."

It even came in well ahead of hotel location.

"Everyone leads a much busier life these days," Drew says. "This really is driving us to realize that we need to slow down and get a better night's sleep wherever we are."

But that's easier said than done. While hotels across the country are responding with specially engineered beds, pillow menus and even sleep concierges that offer bubble bath, white noise machines and relaxing aromatherapy linen sprays, few of us have such luxuries at home. We can, however, take inspiration from the hotels, along with comfort from experts such as Dr. Adam Moscovitch, director of the Calgary-based Canadian Sleep Institute.

"About 25 per cent of the Canadian population will have noticeable, significant problems with their sleep in any given year," says the sleep specialist, who's also an associate clinical professor at the University of Calgary. "By definition, that's problems falling asleep, staying asleep, waking up too early or waking up feeling that your sleep was not refreshing."

For most of us, the problem will be transient and the trigger identifiable — which means that common sense guidelines can help. Moscovitch warns,

for example, that light in the bedroom can pose problems.

"When we get exposed to light even through closed eyelids, it suppresses our melatonin secretion and gives the body the message that it's time to get up," he explains, adding that our dry air increases the likelihood of such anti-sleep behaviours as snoring — (for more on combatting dry home air, see page G5).

To help you nurture a good night's sleep, check out Moscovitch's tips below, along with those from Calgary's Kensington Riverside Inn and feng shui expert Debra Ford.

Scientific solutions

Moscovitch offers commandments for better sleep:



Adrian Shellar, Calgary Herald
Calgary's Riverside Inn uses calm colours, "blackout" drapes and 300-count sheets to ensure a good sleep for guests.

- Schedule a relaxing period before going to sleep, to separate your body and mind from the day's hassles.
- Use your bedroom for sex and sleep, not as an all-purpose activity area.
- Your bed should be comfortable (not transmitting movement from one side to the other), large enough (at least a queen if you're a couple), in a dark room kept at the right temperature (20 C, give or take a few degrees).

- Keep a regular schedule, going to bed and getting up at the same time each day: Don't go to bed until you feel sleepy.
- Be consistent about naps: Take them regularly or not at all.
- Exercise in the morning or early afternoon, but not late in the evening. A relaxing, mild physical activity might be helpful close to bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine after 2 p.m. Avoid smoking close to bedtime or night.
- Don't use alcohol or street drugs as sedatives. While they might help you fall asleep, they lead to sleep disruption.
- If you feel hungry, have a light snack or a glass of milk. Heavy meals close to bedtime can result in discomfort and further sleep disturbances.
- If you can't fall asleep, don't lie in bed frustrated, watching the clock. Leave your bedroom to relax, and go back when you feel sleepy again.
- If your sleep disturbance lasts longer than a few weeks, you may be in sleep disorder territory: talk to your physician about referrals and options, and consider joining a research project at the Canadian Sleep Institute: call 254-6400.

Luxury lullaby

Denis Bargshoon, operations manager at Calgary's CAA Four Diamond-rated Kensington Riverside Inn, shares the facility's tips for good sleeps:

- Use calm colours such as earth tones and "clean" designs on walls and bedding; avoid prints that are too busy.
- If you like music, choose something relaxing, such as classical music.
- Hang blackout drapes behind decorative drapes to shut out light and noise.
- Dress the bed with comfortable, quality bedding (the Inn uses pillow-top mattresses, 300-count Frette linens and triple-sheeting instead of duvet covers).
- Choose lamps with low light to avoid disturbing your sleeping partner.
- Try to situate your bedroom in the quietest area: often the second level, at the back (away from street noise).
- Try earplugs and sleep masks if you're easily disturbed, especially if you're a shift worker.
- Switch your phone ringer off or have it go straight to voice-mail.
- If you're tall, choose a bed design with an open foot (rather than a sleigh bed, for example), to avoid bumping up against the bedframe.
- Try a bath before bedtime to help you relax.
- If you like a hot drink before bed, sample decaffeinated teas to find one that you like that won't keep you awake.
- To check out the Inn, visit kensingtonriversideinn.com.

There's more hotel sleep inspiration at hotelzzz.ca.

SEE SLEEP, PAGE G2

AROUND THE HOUSE

The feel-good factor

DECOR • Make your walls feel — and look — good with paintable white wallpapers from Graham & Brown. Available in textures such as beadboard, antique-style ceiling tile, stucco and an embossed weave, these papers are an easy way to add interest to your walls without a major renovation. You can paint them to match your decor or leave them white, as you wish.

The wallpapers are available at Canadian Tire, Home Depot and Wal-Mart for approximately \$20 a double roll, which covers about 56 square feet.

For a preview, visit grahmbrown.com.

— Calgary Herald

Add new life to IKEA furniture

STYLE • If it's time to freshen up your IKEA furniture, check out Bemz. The Swedish company offers an online portfolio of slipcovers designed to fit the furniture giant's chairs and sofas — even some that IKEA no longer sells.

They offer a wide selection of fabrics by the metre and customized slipcovers, including the new Metropolis collection. Evoking classic 1950s and '60s Scandinavian design, it's ideal for creating a retro, moody atmosphere in moss green, dark navy, zinc grey and old gold.

Bemz fabrics are specially treated to prevent shrinkage and can be machine washed, with slipcover prices starting at \$45 for the IKEA PS chair.

Browse the collections, request free swatches and purchase online at bemz.com.

— Calgary Herald



Organic Style online

MAGAZINES • Organic Style magazine has gone exclusively online, with its premier issue now available at organicstylemag.com.

Check out the features on organic cotton farming in India, wildlife conservation in Kenya and sustainable flower growing in Ecuador, just as a start.

"You'll meet growers, artisans, environmentalists, humanitarians and visionaries — people who are truly inspirational," said publisher Gerald Prolman in a press release. The magazine will publish online quarterly and subscriptions will initially be free.

— Calgary Herald

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Spruce Cliff - \$425,000 & \$429,000

55 Spruce Place, 2 new condo suites, one w/ double indoor parking, \$425,000 & \$429,000, with superb, sweeping views, 2 bedrooms, terrific amenities include gym, pool & hot-tub.

West Springs - \$535,000

47 Weston Park, SW - 4 bedrooms, 1,790 + 710 SF With dev'd basement, backing onto a park! Granite Counters, double-sided fireplace, heated driveway & heated garage, quiet cul-de-sac.

Springbank Hill - \$595,000

131 Springbank Mews, SW - 2,118 + 707 SF 4 bedroom family home with dev'd bsmt, steps to local park. Crown molding, granite counters, big great room with corner fireplace.

West Springs - \$595,000

4 Weston Place, SW - 1,489 + 1,391 SF 4 bedroom bungalow with dev'd bsmt, backing a park. Hrdwd, ensuite w/ jet-tub, one of the 2 bedrooms in the bsmt also has an ensuite.

Strathcona Park - \$639,000

174 Strathridge Cl., SW - 2,075 + 865 SF, 3 bedroom, dev'd bsmt, hrdwd, granite, 5 pc ensuite w/ jet tub, island-style kitchen w/ raised eating bar, granite counters & designer colours.

Killarney - \$850,000

3020 - 27th Street, SW - 1,993 SF 2 storey with fully dev'd bsmt, 4 bedrooms, hardwood floors, granite counters, stainless steel appliances, rainshower & extra deep jetted tub in ensuite.

Crescent Heights - \$875,000

1412 - 2A Street, NW - 2,002 + 893 SF 4 bedroom home feat. hardwood floors, inlaid slate, granite counters, vaulted ceilings, pool table, walking distance to downtown!

Discovery Ridge - \$925,000

32 Discovery Ridge Rise, SW - 2,760+ SF, 4 bedrooms, w/ dev'd walkout bsmt, backing linear park. Granite counters, 3-way f/p in grt rm/nook, ensuite with 3-way f/p & jet-tub.

Strathcona Park - \$975,000

39 Strathridge Gdns, SW - 1,782 + 1,407 SF 3 bedroom bungalow with fully dev'd walkout bsmt, backing ravine low traffic crescent. Hardwood floors, granite counters & soaring ceilings.

Springbank - \$1,095,000

55 Springside Street, SW - 3,377 SF 5 bedroom home with dev'd walkout on 2 acres, incredible rocky mountain views, renovated kitchen, hardwood floors, 3 wood burning f/p, skylights.

Wildwood - \$1,275,000

76 Woodlark Dr, SW - 1,885 SF split level with dev'd bsmt - 4 bedroom - completely rebuilt home! Steps from Edworthy park, Douglas Fir Trail & off-leash park & quick commute to DT.

Elbow Valley - \$1,390,000

12 Fishermans Point - 1,930 + 1,723 SF bungalow With dev'd walkout basement, backing onto a Ravine, in a cul-de-sac. Features Hardwood, Granite counter, designer paints, heated garage.

Inglewood - \$1,600,000

1206 & 1212 8th Ave, SE - 2 LOTS SOLD AT LAND VALUE: Side by Side on the River in trendy Inglewood offering a total of 132' frontage. Ideal site for future development: R-2 zoning.

Strathcona Park - \$1,750,000

63 Strathridge Gdns, SW - 3,703 + 1,671 SF, 4 Bedrooms w/ den, backing ravine, soaring ceilings, Dev'd walkout w/ gym & wine cellar, window wall With incredible ravine views!

Evergreen - \$1,995,000

2626 Evercreek Bluffs Way, SW - New 2-stry, 5000+ SF of living space w/ dev'd walkout, ideal location backing directly onto Fish Creek Park, 5 bedrooms, huge windows framing views!