



Verre églomisé mirrors by Toronto artist Cristina Pepe and a vintage-style chandelier bring glamour to the foyer. A dark marble floor (a recurring motif throughout the house) grounds the space. "If the stone has subtle striations, you can lay it in a more dramatic pattern, like herringbone," says Brian. **Chandelier**, Universal Lamp; **tile**, Stone Tile; **artwork**, Jodi Chapnik.

OPEN INVITATION



Designer Brian Gluckstein pulls out all the stops to entertain 70,000 guests in his latest showhome.

Text by WENDY JACOB | Photography by ANGUS FERGUSSON



The design of a dream house often begins with a Pinterest board — even for Toronto designer Brian Gluckstein. And if the dream home in question is the 6,500-square-foot Princess Margaret Cancer Centre Home Lottery Sweepstakes Showhome in Oakville, Ont., you turn those images into reality by building and furnishing the entire house from scratch — in six short months. With one caveat, of course: you're not just building a dream home for one client, you're also welcoming 70,000 visitors who stream through the front door.

“Every year I put together a secret Pinterest board and then sit down with the team,” says Brian. “We talk about what we want to do, as well as take comments from previous showhome visitors into consideration. Last year, people mentioned they wished the laundry room was on the second floor so, this year, that's where it is.”

Brian's accustomed to “making it so” for his upscale clientele and, as a five-time designer of the PMH showhome, he's no stranger to the demands of a tight timeline. For this project, there's always the added pressure of finding fresh design ideas that give the public something they may not have seen before — but want.

He emphasizes that this year's two-storey, four-bedroom home is all about entertaining, a place



▲ The contrast of dark metal against pale, dove grey walls makes the entry's Deco-style stair rail stand out. **Wall and trim colour**, Sterling (1591), Benjamin Moore; **large photograph**, Tony Koukos.



that can easily host a crowd with banquettes, impromptu bars and lots of places to set down a cocktail. On the lower level, a billiards table in the family room, a spacious boxing gym and a playdate-friendly Lego room keep the inclusive vibe going.

On the main floor, the sunken dining room provides major drama for dinner parties and represents a decorating sleight of hand. The sight lines from the library aren't halted by a sea of chair backs and table legs in the dining room, but continue through to the living room. It also creates an "enfilade" effect (when the doorways to a suite of rooms are aligned behind one another) and amplifies the rooms' colour shifts from bottle green to pale grey to blue-grey.

Brian also shifted away from the supersized kitchens of previous showhomes in favour of a smaller footprint with an adjacent family room that holds a servery. The intimate layout moves the theatre of cooking from the stovetop to the sofa. "Everyone is included here; that's what's so important," says Brian. "The cook

WOW MOMENT: BOTTLE-GREEN GRASSCLOTH WALLS AND MATCHING VELVET DRAPES

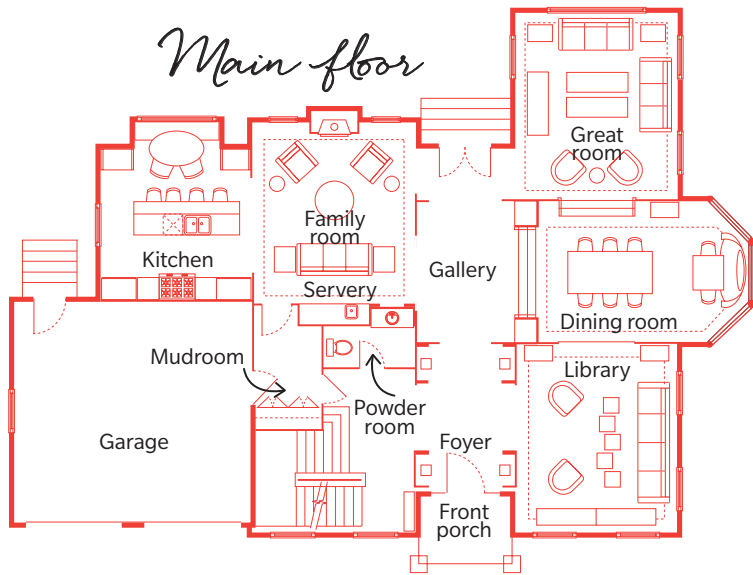
"WE'VE SEEN A LOT OF THE PALM LEAF FABRIC. THIS IS MY VERSION OF THE GREEN TREND. I LOVE THIS COLOUR — THE LIBRARY IS MY FAVOURITE ROOM"



can enjoy the view of the fireplace from the island and be a part of the conversation with family or guests seated at the dining banquette, or on the family room sofas."

Even as visitors begin to stroll through the showhome, Brian's secret Pinterest board is already well populated for the 2018 incarnation. A few hundred yards away from this year's home stands a cleared lot — a blank slate full of potential for next year's vision. **H&H**

▲ Brian tweaked the concept of a formal library to reflect the way people work now and made it a social hub. "Libraries are not a necessity," says Brian. "We're more fluid in the way we work with laptops on sofas now. This is a much cooler take on a library." He skipped the desk and filing cabinets in favour of consoles that double as a bar and a comfortable sofa. **Sofa, armchairs, coffee tables, consoles, lamps, GlucksteinHome; rug, Elte; trim colour, Aegean Olive (1491), Benjamin Moore.**



WOW MOMENT:
SUNKEN DINING ROOM

“YOU WANT TO PROVIDE A VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES MOVING THROUGH A HOME. NOT EVERY ROOM SHOULD HAVE IDENTICAL NINE AND A HALF FOOT CEILINGS”



▲ Pale blue-grey walls and tonal drapes create a cocooning feel in the living room, while accents of orange, wood and brass warm up the cool palette. Twin coffee tables plus the console offer expansive surfaces for drinks. **Sofas, lounge chairs, coffee tables, console, table lamps, GlucksteinHome; rug, Y&Co.; drapery fabric, JF Fabrics; wall and trim colour, Boothbay Grey (HC-165), Benjamin Moore; artwork (right) by Richard Herman, artwork (left) by Hanna Ruminski, Art Interiors; round side table, Carrocel.**

▼ To keep the look flexible, Brian chose freestanding étagères with a mix of open and closed storage instead of built-ins. A railing keeps the sight lines into the dining room clear. **Étagères, GlucksteinHome; wallpaper, drapery fabric, Kravet Canada.**



The dining room offers entertaining versatility with a custom banquette in the bay window that can serve as a spot for cocktails or seating for buffet-style meals. **Table, chairs, bar cart, GlucksteinHome; chandelier, Universal Lamp; rug, Y&Co.; drapery fabric, Kravet Canada; wall and trim colour, Grey Horse (2140-50), Benjamin Moore.**

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▲ “People have commented on how cosy the house is,” says Brian. “It’s because there are so many comfortable places to sit.” In the kitchen, banquette seating in a bay window (flanked by pantry units) overlooks the backyard patio and pool. **Chairs, table, stools,** GlucksteinHome; **flooring,** Vintage Hardwood Flooring; **shutter colour,** Onyx (2133-10), **cabinetry colour,** Coventry Grey (HC-169), Benjamin Moore.



WOW MOMENT:
VAULTED KITCHEN CEILING

“YOU HAVE ALL THIS SPACE HERE, WHY NOT USE IT? THERE ARE NO ROOMS ABOVE THE KITCHEN SO I GAVE IT A VAULTED DETAIL AND A SIMPLE PENDANT LIGHT TO DRAW THE EYE UP”



◀ Brian saves statement wallpaper — like this metallic scenic print — for the powder room, along with a mirrored wall and floating vanity. **Wallpaper,** Arte; **countertop,** Hanwha Surfaces; **faucet,** Grohe; **light,** Universal Lamp.

▲ For a showhome, the kitchen has a relatively modest footprint, but the ceiling detail makes it feel special. “I’m tall and I don’t like having to look around low pendants over an island,” says Brian. “This one is hung high to illuminate the vaulted ceiling.” French doors to the garden let in lots of light; framing them with interior black shutters injects European flair. **Cabinetry,** PM Fine Cabinetry; **hardware,** Atlas Homewares; **pendant,** Universal Lamp; **wallpaper,** Metro Wallcoverings; **range,** Miele; **faucet,** Grohe.

▼ Black trim punches up the white bathroom. A frosted glass panel conceals the water closet (left) and shower (not shown). **Cabinetry**, PM Fine Cabinetry; **cabinetry and wall colour**, White Diamond (2121-60), Benjamin Moore; **hardware**, Richelieu; **scence**, Universal Lamp; **countertop, backsplash**, Hanwha Surfaces.



WOW MOMENT:
BRASS CANOPY BED
 “I’VE HAD A FOUR-POSTER BED IN MY OWN HOME FOR 17 YEARS. THIS BED REALLY MAKES A STATEMENT AND MODERN BRASS VERSIONS ARE SUCH A GREAT UPDATE ON CLASSIC WOOD FRAMES”



Floor plan illustration by Shelley Frayer

◀ Windows wrap around the soaker tub, bathing the principal ensuite in natural light. “Everyone thinks you need masses of marble in a bathroom, but that’s not the case,” says Brian. “Porcelain tiles can have loads of impact if they’re laid in an effective way.” **Bathtub**, DXV; **faucet**, Grohe; **tile**, Stone Tile; **accessories**, GlucksteinHome.

▲ In the principal bedroom, the furniture floats away from the walls for a relaxed look. “The chaise in front of the window — that’s a signature for me,” says Brian. “I love to come home and put my feet up.” **Bed, linens, nightstands, table lamps**, GlucksteinHome; **custom chaise**, Gluckstein Design Planning; **rug**, Elte; **wall colour**, Pale Oak (OC-20), Benjamin Moore; **chaise and drapery fabric**, Kobe Interior Fabrics.

