

The Saturday Star

Condo Living Section  
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Pages P1, P2

## One Balmoral

# Creating a smart home in sky to showcase mahogany riches

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Decorating a Toronto pied-à-terre for a couple, with homes in Muskoka and Florida, proved no small job for designer Kelvin McAvoy.

The condominium suite was larger than many homes — a 2,600-square-foot two-level affair at One Balmoral, on Yonge St. just south of St. Clair.

His clients — a prominent executive and his wife, whose family had built up a successful retail empire — were moving from a smart townhouse on nearby Avoca Ave. and wanted their new home to be even more impressive.

The interior designer started working with tradespeople early last year on the eighth- and ninth-floor suite, supervising the painting, light installation and the plans for built-in units. Six months later the couple moved in.

McAvoy's job was to create a fitting home for the couple's heirloom mahogany furniture, much of it Victorian.

"I had to accommodate family pieces, as well as their art," he says. "They also wanted a gracious look for when they are in town and when they entertain."

He looked at the spacious en-

trance hall first and decided it had to be grand. The result is an entrance that centres around a spiral staircase and a magnificent chandelier from the owners' former home.

To emphasize the curves in the staircase, McAvoy designed a round carpet that picks up the floral motif from a fabric on a Victorian armchair. The chair and a round Victorian table, with an oil lamp, sit on the carpet, a custom piece made by Creative Carpet Co. in Markham. The hall also contains a handsome Hepplewhite buffet, too large for the dining room.

"When you move from a house to a condo, you have to be flexible about getting rid of some furniture and placing other pieces in unconventional places," he explains.

McAvoy used every little corner. In the den, he had oak book shelves built in the 18-inch space on each side of the drapes. He added oak cornices and mouldings and had an oak entertainment unit with slide-in sides made for the TV, stereo and CD storage.

A lovely dark rose wallpaper went into the dining room. The hue is not only a period colour, but a



**RICH HUE:** A dark rose wallpaper went into the dining room, a perfect foil for the mahogany table and chairs.

➤ Please see Designer, P2

## DIAMANTE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NEWS CLIP

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# Designer accommodates family's heirlooms and art

Continued from P1

perfect foil for the rich mahogany table and chairs carved with the Prince of Wales feathers' motif.

And following the decorator's credo, "A home is in the details," he carefully repeated rosy-wine colours throughout the condo to make it all hang together.

The Victorian mahogany mantel in the dining room came from the woman's family and surrounds a fireplace that goes through to the living room.

The dining room also houses two paintings, one by the owners' son and a still life, with lots of pinks, by McAvoy.

McAvoy found the living room presented a challenge in that there were three floor-to-ceiling windows, each rising to a different height, making the room appear slightly askew. He cleverly cured this with a "height line" for the eye by installing three valences in different widths.

"They wanted an underplayed Manhattan look in the living room, so we chose a rich beige Italian silk with subtle stripes for these valences and drapes," McAvoy says.

He followed through with the rose from the dining room and used a darker shade — a wine — in the easy chairs and sofa cushions. The effect adds up to an urbane room, perfect for sipping martinis at the oversized windows that frame a view of the brilliant city lights to the east and south.

McAvoy had *carte blanche* upstairs, where, what was originally intended to be dining and living rooms became a 32-foot by 16-foot bedroom as well as an ensuite bathroom. The room appears to have acres of white carpet and the light airy ambience is enhanced by a sunny yellow chintz, covering the three Palladian windows and bed. The luxurious bathroom with a marble Jacuzzi also has a 10-foot high Palladian window.



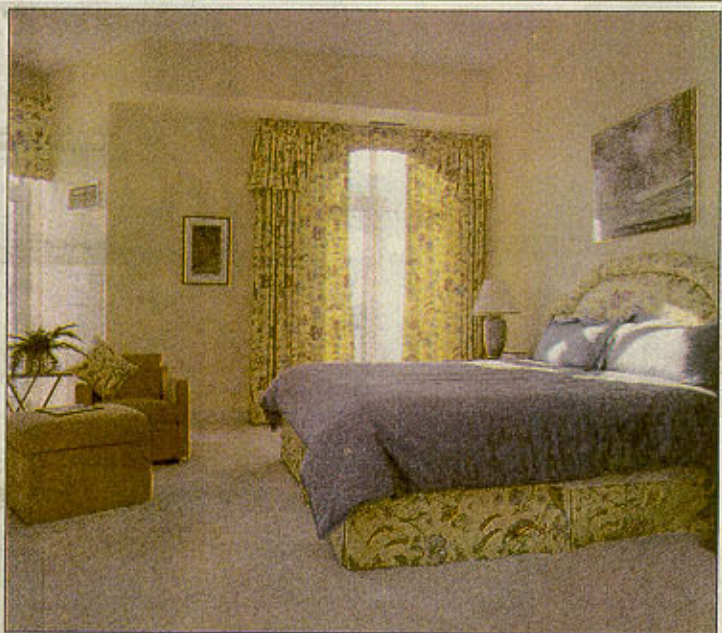
BERNARD WEIL PHOTOS/TORONTO STAR

**'HEIGHT LINE':** Valences in different widths even out three floor-to-ceiling windows, which each rise to a different height in the living room. A sunny yellow chintz adds an airiness to the bedroom.

McAvoy estimates that about \$100,000 was invested in painting, wallpaper, fabrics, upholstery and custom fittings.

Drapery fabrics from Susan Brown & Assoc. (354 Davenport Rd.) were shipped to Kingwood Drapery in England, where they were made up. Many yards of fabric went into drapes for the bedroom windows, at a cost of about \$11,000.

One Balmoral developer Julie DiLorenzo, a partner in Diamante Development Corp., says several buyers purchased a pair of condos and made them into an upstairs-downstairs home, with big circular staircases.



"People selling homes want to buy more than they are selling," DiLorenzo says. "As a result, we had over 100 different plans at One Balmoral that required lots of custom work." She refers to condos bought by high-end buyers as "boutique homes in the sky," and predicts skilled artisans and tradesmen are going to be in

such demand they will be "the doctors of the future."

DiLorenzo admits that in the '80s, there was no way condo developers would spend time and money on custom work.

"We paid penitence for our lack of attention," she says. "Now that has all changed and we build homes that people are going to stay in," she says.