

THE SHAPE OF THINGS

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Strong geometry and confident colour bring character and dimension to a newly built home.



OPPOSITE The original standard-height door that led to the master bedroom was replaced with a set of grand parlour doors. Their black hardware keeps the look classic. A modern take on a classic chandelier sheds light on a vintage rug, which defines the entry to the bedroom, bathroom and linen closet. The walls are custom panelled to add visual heft and create a stately impression.

DESIGN, Rebecca Hay Designs;
RUG, Aberfoyle Antique Market;
CHANDELIER, Universal.

LEFT "The formal dining room is closed off from the rest of the house, so we allowed ourselves a little drama," says designer Rebecca Hay. The 12-foot ceilings are covered in wallpaper, its blues are reflected in the vintage rug. A heavy modern table with brass frame is graced with a pair of chandeliers instead of a single fixture – something Rebecca recommends for extra-long tables. The wall art features framed feathers.

Anna French **WALLPAPER**, Kravet;
CHANDELIERS, Matteo Lighting;
SCONCE, Robert Abbey Lighting;
CHAIRS, Sunpan; **TABLE**, RH;
CREDENZA, CB2; **RUG**, eCarpet Gallery; custom **DRAPES**, Rebecca Hay Designs; **VASE**, Wyrth.

One by one, an unexpected parade of yellow cubes and tawny honeycombs, milky globes and ink-black slabs made their way into this newly built home in Oakville, Ont. A dresser with Mid-Century-Modern curves was marched in behind a sharply mitred dining table. And bobbed lighting followed rectangles tufted in velvet. "This was definitely a house with an emphasis on geometry," says designer Rebecca Hay. "It's furnished with all kinds of interesting shapes."

The inspiration for Rebecca's approach began with the home's towering 12-foot ceilings and rambling rooms. Without unique adornment, they came across as boxy and sprawling. "By taking these open spaces and pairing them with fun shapes, we completely altered the experience of the home," she says.

The clients wanted a classic yet urbane midtown home. To this end, Rebecca took a hard look at finishes and proportions. "One thing that stood out was that the ceilings were high, but the doorways were standard height," says Rebecca. She reconfigured the doors to make them higher and often wider, in some cases doubling them to create stately French doors. She also noted that while the walls were expansive, the finishes looked impersonal and new. "Using MDF, we created custom layered wall panels and tall baseboards, which added layers of gracious dimension and shadow," says the designer. →

RIGHT Rebecca conceived a complex palette in the living room: built-in shelving matches the walls, swivel armchairs in mustard yellow make a statement and navy blue velvet curtains lend formality to the jewel-toned palette. "The wool carpet is neutral without being solid," says Rebecca. Equally complex is the expert combination of shapes.

SOFAS, TABLES, COFFEE TABLE, ROUND END TABLES, RUG, ARMCHAIRS, Elite Mkt; **RECTANGULAR END TABLE,** CB2; custom **DRAPES,** Rebecca Hay Designs; **CHANDELIER,** Scence; Universal; **TABLE LAMPS,** Flow Design.

"EXPERIMENT WITH A RANGE OF FURNITURE SHAPES, SUCH AS CUBES, HONEYCOMBS AND CYLINDERS." — Rebecca Hay





Encircling a vintage round marble table, leather chairs in a warm camel tone pick up on the wood tones of the oak veneer pantry wall. "Originally, that wall of cabinetry was blank," says Rebecca. "That seemed like a waste of good storage, so we had the oak pantry built."

To draw the eye further upward, Rebecca turned to colour and light. In some rooms, she added paint and wallpaper to the ceilings for surprising swaths of colour. In others, she hung chandeliers or pendants to do the job. Now, every room in the house has its own overhead point of interest. Says Rebecca: "Adding playful bits of personality is what lets a home become your life story."

In the end, though, it's the palette that most defines the home's downtown vibe. Sophisticated and restrained yet vibrant and expressive, the colour scheme manages to walk the line between classic and creative. So, how did Rebecca manage that? She started with complex neutrals, such as marbled whites, veined blacks and worn leathers, then paired them with joyful jewel tones in blues, golds, pinks and even magenta. "These touches of colour may be minimal, but they make an instant statement," she says. →

BELOW & RIGHT Forever in flight, the delicate butterfly wallpaper in the powder room reaches to the room's mustard-gold ceiling. "The blues and golds and reds of these butterflies appear throughout the rest of the home," says Rebecca. Black accessories, such as the towel bar, mirror and fixtures are visually anchored to a chunky dark vanity.



"THE WHIMSY OF THE WALLPAPER IS BALANCED BY STRONG LINEAR ELEMENTS, SUCH AS THE HEAVY COUNTERTOP." — Rebecca Hay



"THE SPHERES ARE MADE OF THE PUREST WHITE GLASS YOU CAN IMAGINE." — Rebecca Hay



LEFT A pair of white bobble chandeliers hang above the waterfall island. "The spheres are made of the purest white glass you can imagine," says Rebecca. "They remind me of balloons." Their black cords are in keeping with the dark cabinetry and countertops. Veining in the backsplash inspired the deep grey paint on the cabinets.

OPPOSITE An unexpected combination of oak veneer upper cabinetry was paired with dark lower cabinetry. The hazy glass on the windows of the uppers blurs the tableware inside, giving it the appearance of a painting. Brass hardware and barstool legs blend with the home's oak details, including its wide plank floors.

COUNTERTOP, BACKSPLASH, FLOORS, Olympia Tile; **CABINET PAINT**, Raccoon Fur 2126-20, Benjamin Moore; **LIGHTING**, Universal Lighting; **STOOLS, CHAIRS**, Elite Mkt; **TABLE**, Decorum Decorative Finds.

"FOR GRAND TWO-STOREY ENTRYWAYS LIKE THIS, GO AS BIG AS YOU CAN. WE CHOSE AN OVERSIZED MIRROR AND OVER-STUFFED VELVET BENCH FOR THIS PURPOSE." — Rebecca Hay



If you're keen to try adding dashes of daring colour at home, Rebecca has some advice: consider introducing some mustard upholstery, as she did, on a pair of cube chairs, adding some warm peony-pink pillows to your bed, or covering a bathroom wall in colourful butterflies. "Just remember that a little hue goes a long way," she says. "The key is to use small touches, over and over, throughout your home."

The same advice carries over to shapes – the more repeats the better. A spherical chandelier, for example, will look more at home with a globe-shaped vase or round mirror nearby.

So, if you're seeking a simple tip that will result in a strong, cohesive, whole-home design, take it from Rebecca and make this your new move.

OPPOSITE To retain the home's emphasis on millwork and paneling, entryway furniture was kept to a minimum. The towering mirror looks grand due to its scale and gilding. The rich jewel tones of the tufted bench suggest the home's colour palette. The bold marble floor tile can handle the messy mud and snow that comes in on boots in winter.

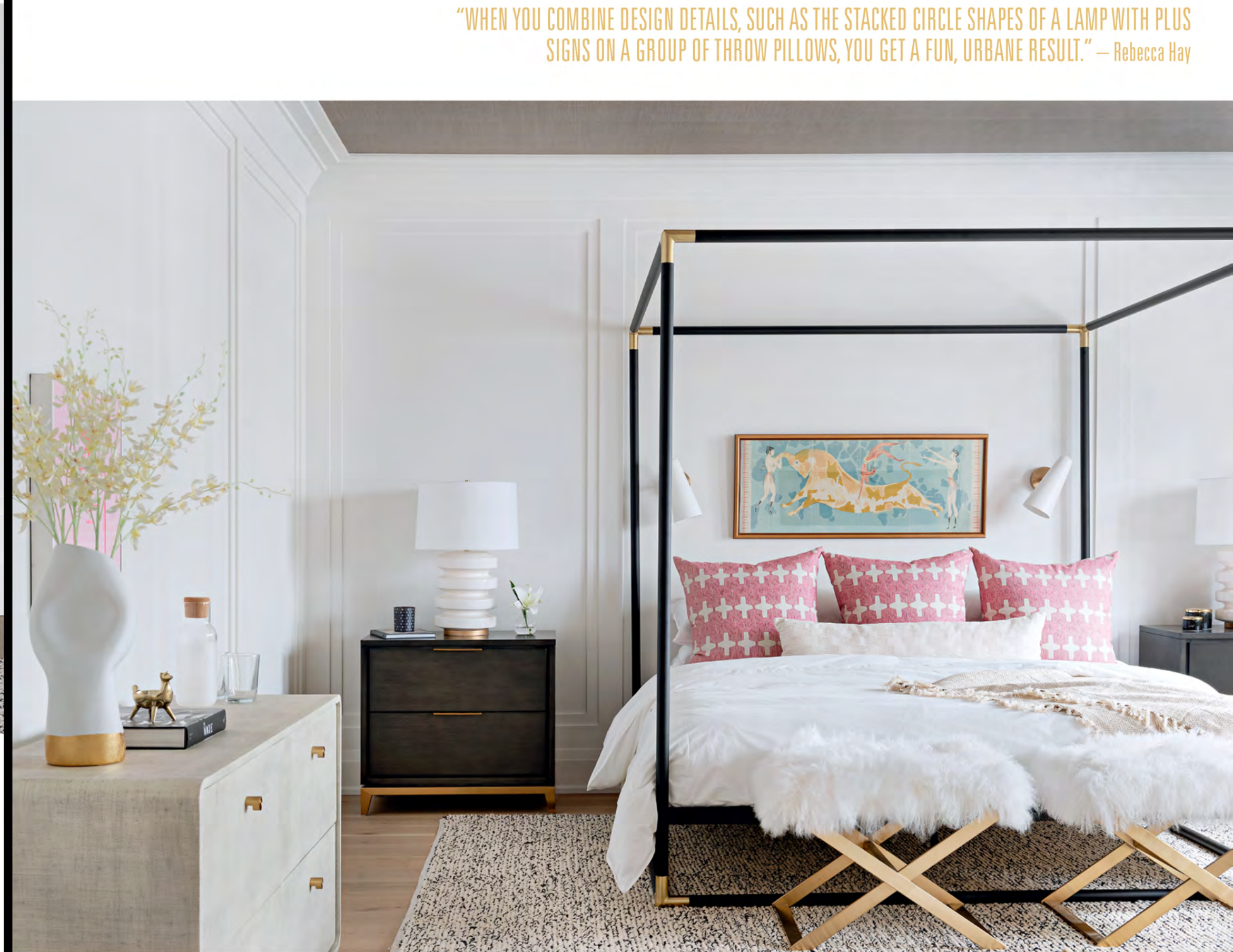
LIGHTING, Universal; **BENCH**, Elte Mkt; **MIRROR**, RH; **WALLPAPER**, Kravet.

RIGHT Tucked away in its own corner of the house is a home office. Custom cabinets surround the window, resulting in a 20-inch deep sill that makes the house look older than it is. Handmade drawer pulls echo the curves on the gracious door and demilune pendant above. The cabinets are deep enough to store a printer, and feature a library sconce above, which gives a sense of studious luxury.

PAINT, Philipsburg Blue HC159, Benjamin Moore; **HARDWARE**, Shayne Fox Hardware; **DESK**, Elte Market; **CHAIR**, Sunpan; **LIGHT FIXTURE**, Universal.



"WHEN YOU COMBINE DESIGN DETAILS, SUCH AS THE STACKED CIRCLE SHAPES OF A LAMP WITH PLUS SIGNS ON A GROUP OF THROW PILLOWS, YOU GET A FUN, URBANE RESULT." — Rebecca Hay



ABOVE Modern yet pretty, a pink Chanel art print brings a pop of colour to the softer neutrals of the master bedroom. The feminine dresser has a linen-textured finish and rounded corners.

RIGHT Sharp corners and dark tones bring a masculine touch to the bedside tables, which support curvaceous modern lamps. The thick knotted custom rug and faux fur covers that top the ottomans soften the sharp lines of the black and brass canopy bed.

BED, DRESSER, CB2; **CUSTOM RUG,** Studio321b; **OTTOMANS,** Elle Mkt; **NIGHT STANDS,** Sunpan; **LAMPS,** Flow Decor; **SCONCES,** Universal; **GRASSCLOTH WALL-PAPER ON CEILING,** Threadcount.



“ONE WAY TO GIVE A BATHROOM MORE HEFT AND VOLUME IS TO GO BOLD WITH THICK BLACK COUNTERTOPS AND LARGE GEOMETRIC TILE.” — Rebecca Hay



OPPOSITE “I love mosaic floor tile. It hides fluff and hair, and feels great beneath bare feet,” says Rebecca. “The soaker tub is surrounded by walls tiled all the way up to the ceiling.” A modern dark chandelier brings balance to the dark background of swimming fish on the wallpaper in the water closet. The rich pinks and golds of the fish echo the jewel tones throughout the home. Brass fixtures are classic, warm and clean.

RIGHT A heavy black marble countertop accents the black hexagonal marble floor tiles. The hardware pulls on the white oak vanity are marble, as well. Brushed brass fixtures and accents strengthen the design. “Repeating the marble and brass this way brings flow to the room,” says Rebecca.

Hexagon six-inch polished marble **TILE AND COUNTERTOP**, Olympia Tile; **WALLPAPER**, Cole and Son; **HARDWARE**, Shayne Fox Hardware; **FIXTURES**, Moen.