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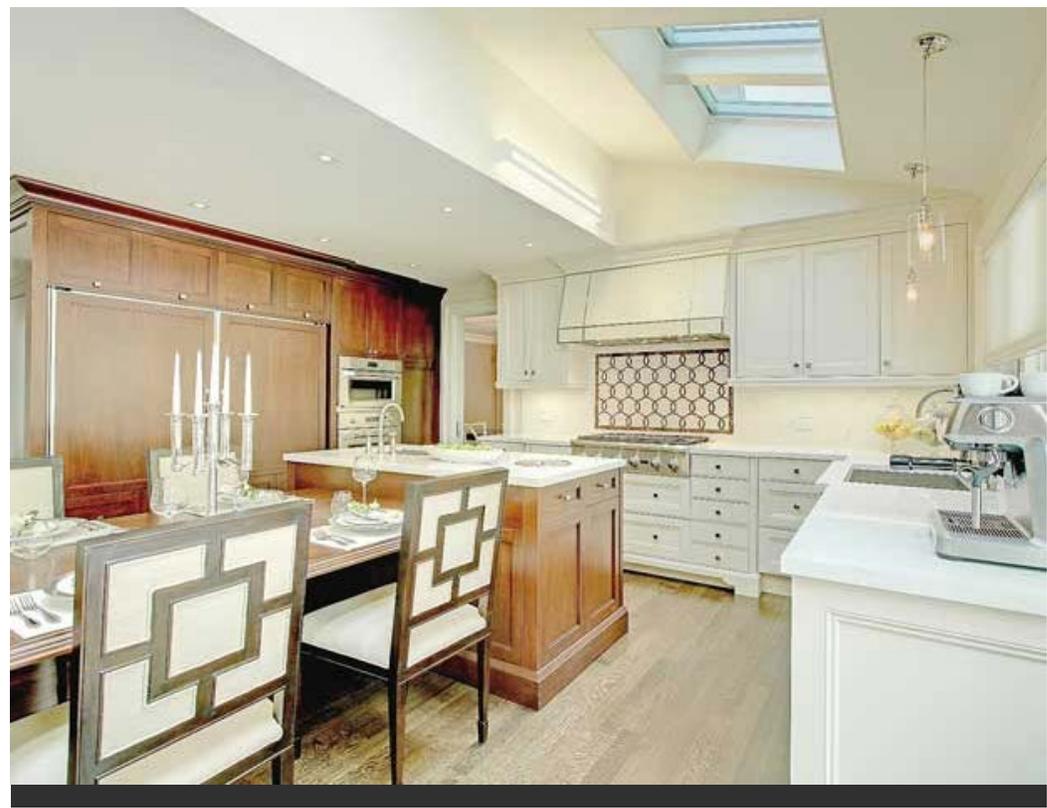


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## HOMES

# Sweat the small stuff: For Ramsin Khachi's own house, the details are key

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### By Jack Kohane

"Details, details, details" — that's Ramsin Khachi's mantra, and it's one he's evidently adhered to by the looks of his dream home.

Clad in signature flashy shirt, tailored jeans and sporting fashionably unshaven salt-and-pepper stubble, the principal of Khachi Design Group and Khachi Interiors ([khachi.com](http://khachi.com)) gazes with pride at his latest triumph: 79 Raymar Place in southeast Oakville.



His dream home, he says, was completed by "thinking small on a big budget," though he prefers not disclose the price. Situated close to dozens of upscale shops and trendy restaurants of historical downtown Oakville, it makes for a compelling picture.

Bordering the lake, the land on which the house sits was once part of a sprawling Eaton family estate. The area has been transformed into an exclusive cul-de-sac community, defined by generous lot sizes and mature greenery, where realty commands millions. Flagstone pillars at the street entrance are reminders of former glory times.

"The first time I saw this house, it was rundown — a warren of tiny, segregated rooms," Mr. Khachi says, standing on the house's stone stoop. "It was a diamond in the rough. I knew what to do — design an open space true to the history and refinement of the original estate."

By way of illustration, he points to the home's exterior features: Its impeccable mix of brick and stucco façade and the diamond motifs sculpted into the wrought iron railings that line the limestone steps wending to the front door. All of it makes for a sophisticated entry. Ditto columns of reclaimed brick framing the front portico, and the coach lights alongside the walkway, which would not have been out of place a century ago.

"I didn't want a stucco box," the designer says. "I wanted something to reflect the neighbourhood, to blend in beautifully with its surroundings. It's these details that give the house its historical context."

He points out the manicured grounds that are strictly no-fuss, with a perennial garden verged by artificial grass inlays in the front yard. "This is ideal for people who are just too busy to spend time raking lawns," Mr. Khachi says, including himself in the observation. The rear courtyard is designed purely for enjoyment, with a reflecting pool and built-in barbecue and bar. But the prime feature of the lawn-free backyard are the heated floors from the back door to the barbecue that afford outdoor grilling throughout the year.

Entering past the weighty mahogany front door, a multitude of marvels within this 4,900-square-foot six-tier, split-level home unfold. "The total gut and rebirth of this spacious home remains on the same footprint as the original structure," explains Mr. Khachi, who designed all of the details, both large and small.

The living spaces are gorgeous. Most of the rooms are accented with chunky baseboards, just over seven inches high; oak floors and decorative plaster wall mouldings are throughout. Polished and brushed nickel hardware on doors and



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cabinetry lend a sophisticated feel.

In the to-die-for kitchen, a thought sparks a smile from Mr. Khachi. "A kitchen should not only be beautiful, but also practical. I often use the analogy that a beautiful kitchen is like a good-looking girlfriend or boyfriend," he laughs. "You eventually get used to the looks and that's when the inner personality becomes more important."

Here's a kitchen exuding personality. Classy and elegant, the room is saturated with light that streams in from the skylights and a wide bank of windows. Definitely a working kitchen (it opens to the family room), it exemplifies the top three points to efficient kitchen planning: workflow, space and motion. The central island, made of walnut, has an integrated breakfast table and pantry wall.

And for the tech lover, there are heated floors and energy-efficient appliances. The home is also equipped with an iPad with its own server that controls the heating and cooling system remotely, monitors the security functions and cranks up the entertainment centre and sound system. Downstairs, the safe room — fortified by a heavy metal door, reinforced jamb and panic button — is a place of refuge for the family in case of emergencies. It's also the hub of the home server and is pre-wired for Biometrics for secure and keyless entry into the home.

"Most people don't have the time to be fixing things that should work and dealing with the nuisances that could be eradicated with a little extra thought," Mr. Khachi says. Examples: so as to not ruin the look of the walls, outlets were placed in the baseboards; invisible speakers were installed in several rooms behind the ceiling. "This turns the drywall into a large speaker for an amazing surround sound effect," he grins, cranking up the volume for a demonstration.

Amazing sounds, sights and tastes abound in the basement. The wine cellar is thermostat-controlled behind a glassed entrance, and stocks more than 200 wine bottles. The adjacent exercise room/gym with Kodan vinyl floor tile features Zaneen linear lighting on the room's perimeter, accent lighting on the ceiling, and a 46-inch LED flat screen TV hung behind a mirror wall.

But the star attraction is the soundproof home theatre room, its 115-inch TV screen, Epson Powerlite Home cinema projector (tucked out of sight in the bulkhead), and a booming Harman Kardon sound system creates the full movie experience. Designed like a vintage Hollywood cinema, it comes complete with step-down seating (two comfy sofas), coffered ceilings, beverage refrigerators and handy built-in microwave for popcorn as the family settles in to watch flicks.

"I'm always learning and discovering new ways to create the perfect home," Mr. Khachi says. That's the sort of design advice he gives in his Home Day segment, which airs Thursdays on *Cityline*. The renovation of No. 79 has been documented on *Cityline* over the past 14 months.

His emphasis on details and functionality mirrors his attitude. "Life's too short for stuff not to work right, so I keep refusing to cut back," Mr. Khachi says. "I choose to go with high-quality products that do what you need them to do." Those top-line items include the hardware for pocket doors. "Traditional pocket door hardware has always been a pet peeve of mine," he sighs. "They've always rattled." In searching for a solution, he found the smooth operating Crowdertrack system and uses it regularly in his renos.

Number 79 offered Mr. Khachi an opportunity to be his own client. "I wanted to take everything that bothers me about home renovating and correct them. I didn't want a budget to limit my decisions. I had carte blanche to design every space to achieve functionality."

*Watch for Ramsin Khachi's new column for Post Homes in Luxury Living, Nov. 11.*

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