

Decorating Divas

Decorating Den celebrates 40 years of interior excellence



An elaborate chandelier hangs gracefully from the high ceiling, shining its glowing light upon two floors of this stunning residence.

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Builder
Belmonte Homes
Interior Decorators
Luisa Maringola and
Marisa Lupo

While decorating a brand new home may seem like the ultimate new toy, the reality can be far from fun. Regardless of the scope of the project, an entire home or just a few rooms, there are dozens of decisions ranging from wall coverings to fabric, furnishings and accessories.

To help homeowners solve one of those dilemmas, Decorating Den

Lumar Decorating
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launched an individually franchised shop-at-home window treatment company in 1969. It has emerged as Interiors by Decorating Den, the largest full service interior decorating franchise in Canada and America. With 500 franchisers who represent more than 100 brand name manufacturers, the company has a buying power of nearly \$60 million.

In May, the company celebrated two milestones: its fortieth anniversary and CEO and vice-chairman James S. Bugg Sr.'s induction into the International Franchise Association's Hall of Fame. It was also rated number one in the Decorating Services category by Entrepreneur magazine.

Canada's regional director and first franchisor, Linda Fagg, says the company is unique. "We work with clients in their homes and take all the guesswork out," she says. "We're happy to decorate a single room or entire home and handle everything... the installation of window treatments, floor coverings and furnishings." This one-source approach has netted the company scores of satisfied customers, many of whom return when they purchase a new home or renovate their existing residence.

Franchisors and business partners Luisa Maringola and Marisa Lupo, have owned Richmond Hill's Lumar Decorating for 19 years. Recently, one of Lumar's original customers asked for help in selecting a bevy of items for her brand new home. According to the homeowner, the results are stunning.

"Luisa knows me like a book," the homeowner says. "She knows the colours I like and don't like but often, when I can't make up my mind I ask her, 'If this were your home, what would you choose?' She always picks



Sleek custom cabinetry from Villa Kitchens are complimented by bold Bianco Antique granite countertops, not to be outdone by an impressive selection of stainless steel appliances by Dacor and a Sub Zero fridge, making entertaining a breeze.
(right) Soak in the grandeur, enveloped in Calacatta Slab marble and sink into this lavish whirlpool tub, stylishly complimented by an elegant Grohe faucet.



the perfect combination."

Maringola's methodology has remained the same over the last 20 years. After seeing each room in the house, she selected four or five options for each facet which were presented to the couple. Working together, they selected lighting fixtures, furnishings



and fabrics, mindful of the pieces from the couple's original home that were being repurposed.

"We used a historical colour scheme in keeping with the traditional design of the home and added punches of colour," Maringola says. In the living room, a symphony of warm golds is reflected in the paint, draperies and upholstered pieces. Even the ceiling is painted a light gold punctuated with bright white moldings. The punch of colour is provided by two arm chairs upholstered in a striped fabric that combines gold, cream and coral-red.

According to Maringola, the oversized kitchen with its soft green paint, neutral porcelain floor tiles and maple cabinets with a vanilla finish is easy on the eye. "The dark wood island, table, chairs and hutch offer contrast, and the large-scale coral and green floral pattern in the window treatments cre-

ate the drama we needed for balance."

For the master bath, Maringola suggested classic white marble with dark charcoal veining. She used a coral raspberry silk on the window to compliment the pale gray walls. Overhead, a crystal chandelier provides added elegance.

Ask the homeowner to pick a favourite room and the wife shrugs. "I love it all, but especially the living room and the family room," she says. "It's always a pleasure working with Luisa and Decorating Den."

Maringola is equally content with the results but her greatest pleasure was having an opportunity to work with old clients again. "It means we're doing our job," she says. ♦