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Vancouver

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Nº 1

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Presenting Cubist House, an extraordinary statement of Vancouver modernism gracefully situated in the prestigious Southlands neighbourhood. Designed by Fred Dalla-Lana, protégé of Arthur Erickson and co-founder of Dalla-Lana/Griffin Architects, this residence embodies a pivotal moment in the evolution of West Coast Modernist architecture.

Cubist House channels Erickson's influence through its refined rectilinear forms, stepping flat roofs, and expansive walls of glazing that flood every room with natural light. The interiors are thoughtfully arranged on axes, cultivating spatial clarity and an effortless flow that elevates daily living into an

artful experience. Wrapped in a tranquil Japanese-inspired garden, the property offers a serene retreat for reflection and connection with nature.

Built in 1988, this contemporary pavilion features two levels, four bedrooms, and 2.5 baths, seamlessly bridging the legacy of Vancouver's first and second generations of Modernist architects. As Trent Rodney and Jason Choi of West Coast Modern share, "A home should lift the spirits. In the hands of the right architect, it can frame space and capture light in a life-enhancing way." Cubist House is exactly this—a dwelling designed not for mere shelter, but to inspire.

www.westcoastmodern.ca **LIV**





Brigitte & Henning Freybe

Collecting Modern Visions,
Sharing Inspiration

Brigitte and Henning Freybe had devoted much of their lives to a profound engagement with art. From the 1970s onward, they embarked on a journey of collecting that grew into a legacy of both cultural significance and personal meaning. What began as a way to remain connected to their German heritage evolved into a collection that spanned continents and decades.

Their dedication extended far beyond acquisition. The Freybes welcomed artists into their home, forging enduring relationships built on mutual respect and shared curiosity. Over the years, many of these artists sent postcards—humble tokens of gratitude and friendship—that would later inspire the exhibition title *Postcards from the Heart: Selections from the Brigitte and Henning Freybe Collection*. These handwritten notes revealed the depth of connection the Freybes cultivated with those whose work they cherished.



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Their collection embraced a remarkable range of artistic expression, encompassing painting, sculpture, photography, film, and works on paper. From early European influences such as Georg Baselitz, Daniel Buren, and Giuseppe Penone to the post-war innovations of Robert Rauschenberg and Frank Stella, their acquisitions reflected both intellectual ambition and aesthetic discernment.

Yet the Freybes never confined their interests to Europe and the United States. Their passion included the creative voices of their adopted home in Vancouver, where they collected pivotal works by Rodney Graham, Stan Douglas, Jeff Wall, and Beau Dick. They also became stewards of the Light and Space movement in California, bringing pieces by Helen Pashgian and John McCracken into their collection.

Presented at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Postcards from the Heart: Selections from the Brigitte and Henning Freybe Collection honoured this expansive vision. In celebrating more than thirty significant works, the exhibition bore witness to the Freybes' belief that art possesses the power to connect, enlighten, and endure. **LIV**

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Step inside INspiration Furniture, and you will discover a design destination unlike any other in Vancouver and Coquitlam. Since first opening its doors in August 2002, this visionary brand has redefined how British Columbians experience contemporary and modern furnishings.

The flagship showroom occupies an impressive 40,000 square feet within the New Look Building, a historic landmark known as Sigurdson's Mill in False Creek. Original 100-year-old timber beams,

cascading natural light, and verdant greenery create a compelling backdrop for a curated collection of globally renowned brands. Here, the aesthetic is unmistakably sophisticated: Natuzzi Italia's Italian-crafted elegance, the vibrant originality of Leolux from Holland, the sculptural drama of Cattelan Italia, and the peerless comfort of Stressless and Gamma seating—all presented within thoughtfully composed vignettes that invite exploration and inspiration.

“Each element—colour, material, proportion—works together to create something resolved and innovative.”

INspiration Furniture’s second location on Coquitlam’s United Boulevard expands this design experience to a wider audience, showcasing the same commitment to quality, selection, and service. Both showrooms are unified by a single purpose: to help clients realize the full potential of their living spaces through accessible, elevated design.

From the outset, INspiration Furniture has embraced a holistic approach to interiors. Their design process is methodical yet flexible, recognizing that each client’s project is as unique as the space itself. It begins with a complimentary initial consultation—either in person or virtually—where seasoned designers learn about individual style preferences, lifestyle needs, and project goals. Next comes space planning, an exercise in balance and flow that ensures every square foot is optimized for both function and beauty. Finally, designers curate a tailored presentation of furnishings, textiles, and finishes that embody the client’s vision, whether the aim is a subtle refresh or a complete transformation.

Leading this team is Lily Tang, the showroom’s Lead Interior Designer and Natuzzi Italia Brand Ambassador. With dual design degrees and over a decade of experience spanning residential, commercial, and custom procurement projects, Tang is deeply attuned to the nuances that define exceptional interiors. Her design philosophy celebrates contrast and narrative—she believes spaces must be harmonious yet layered with personality, reflecting those who inhabit them. “Good design realizes the potential of any space,” Tang affirms. “Each element—colour, material, proportion—works together to create something resolved and innovative.”

Supporting this commitment to excellence is INspiration Furniture’s 60,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution centre. This robust infrastructure ensures that most items are readily available for prompt delivery and professional installation. For clients, it means the journey from showroom to home is as seamless as the design itself.

Today, INspiration Furniture continues to offer an inspiring multi-brand blend of European sophistication and West Coast sensibility. Whether you are searching for a statement piece, refining a single room, or envisioning a cohesive home story, INspiration’s showrooms provide a canvas rich in possibilities.

Visit the False Creek or Coquitlam locations—or browse their virtual showroom—to experience firsthand how INspiration Furniture elevates interior design into an art form that is both accessible and unforgettable. **LIV**





FOLKE

A Vibrant Celebration of
Local Vegetables in Kitsilano

STORY AND PHOTOS BY HELEN SIWAK

Tucked along a quiet stretch of Kitsilano, Folke is the kind of restaurant that feels like an invitation—to slow down, to share a meal, and to appreciate just how stunning vegetables can be when handled with care and curiosity. Friends Colin Uyeda and Pricilla Deo have created something rare in Vancouver: an entirely plant-based restaurant that radiates both sophistication and warmth, without ever leaning on clichés about what vegan dining “should” be.

Upon entering the 1,400-square-foot room, guests are greeted by a striking wall of local wines that sets the tone for what follows—a meal anchored in a deep reverence for regional ingredients. Deep blue walls adorned with original seaweed pressings and dried grasses lend a coastal serenity that feels at once contemporary and comforting. Whether you settle into a table or choose a seat at the bar overlooking the open kitchen, the experience at Folke feels personal and engaging.

Chef-owner Colin Uyeda brings an impressive pedigree to the stove, with experience honed at celebrated restaurants like Kissa Tanto and Pilgrimme, and a transformative stage at three-Michelin-starred RyuGin in Tokyo. There, he mastered the art of coaxing profound umami flavours from miso, koji, and fermentation—techniques that now infuse Folke’s everchanging menu with nuance and depth. Each plate feels like a love letter to the farms that supply the kitchen with seasonal produce, transformed into vibrant compositions meant to be shared.

Folke’s approach to hospitality is as thoughtful as the food itself. The restaurant has adopted a hospitality-included pricing model—meaning gratuity is built into the price of each dish. This commitment to fair wages and sustainable work culture is inspired by similar models seen across leading restaurants in Europe, further reflecting the Scandinavian influence embedded in Folke’s name—a Nordic boy’s name that translates to “people’s guardian.”



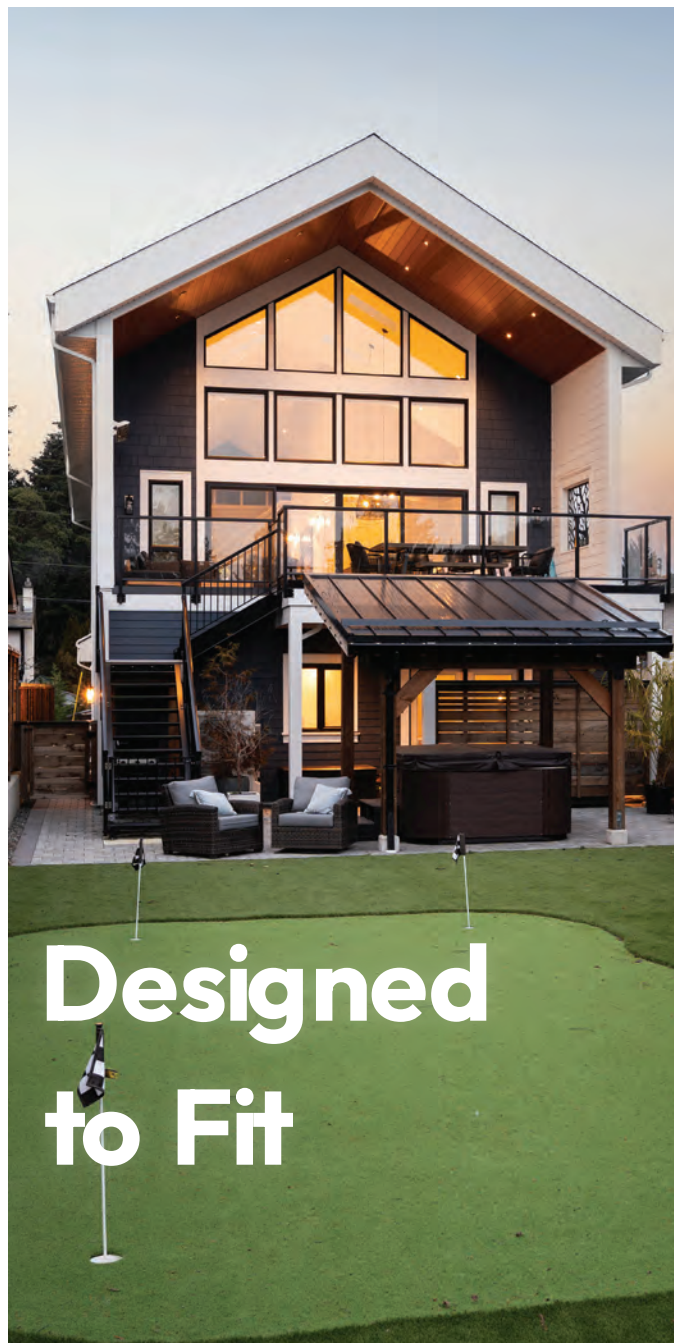


The menu is intentionally brief in its descriptions, leaving plenty of room for discovery and conversation with the chefs and servers, who happily guide guests through each preparation. Highlights of a recent visit included Tagliatelle with porcini mushroom, potato, and rosemary—a dish that showcased the earthy depth of local mushrooms—and Tapioca Dumplings with mushroom xo, bok choy, and ponzu, offering an inventive play of textures and brightness. The Chickpea Tofu with squash, sesame, and kale was a particular standout, demonstrating how simple ingredients can be elevated into something extraordinary.

Guests are encouraged to choose several small plates to share or opt for the Chef's Choice tasting menu of six to eight courses. This option blends items from the regular offerings with inspired off-menu creations and finishes with a thoughtful dessert. Those with dietary preferences will be pleased to find gluten-free options readily available, and if you have a special bottle you are eager to pour, Folke's corkage policy is refreshingly accommodating.

The beverage program, too, celebrates the region, with unique local beers, ciders, and wines alongside housemade sodas and meticulously crafted cocktails—both spirited and zero-proof. It is the kind of place that feels as comfortable for an impromptu dinner with a friend as it does for a special occasion, always centred on community and a shared appreciation for exceptional plant-based cuisine.

At Folke, vegetables are not a side note but the main event—a reminder of just how satisfying and exciting a meal can be when every element is treated with respect and intention. **LIV**



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The Lifestyle Foundation

Inspiring Beauty & Balance in Everyday Life

Every person's lifestyle is a personal expression, and each choice—no matter how small—reflects an attitude toward life.



The Lifestyle Foundation is redefining what it means to live a rich, creative, and meaningful life. Established by renowned television producer Shasha Liu, the foundation has become a vibrant platform that inspires individuals and communities to see daily life as an art form.

At the heart of The Lifestyle Foundation is a simple yet powerful belief: every person's lifestyle is a personal expression, and each choice—no matter how small—reflects an attitude toward life. From home design and personal style to the rituals that shape each day, the foundation encourages people to engage fully with their environment and to infuse it with vitality, creativity, and aesthetic appreciation.

Guided by core principles of sustainable living, inclusivity, and the celebration of beauty in all its forms, The Lifestyle Foundation offers programs and initiatives designed to help people rethink their habits and spaces. Whether it is enhancing a living room to feel more welcoming or adopting sustainable practices that support well-being, the foundation's resources and community projects show that even modest changes can lead to profound transformation.

The foundation also places special focus on supporting underprivileged groups by improving home environments and creating opportunities for personal growth. By blending Eastern and Western design philosophies within a North American cultural context, The Lifestyle Foundation fosters harmony, balance, and happiness for individuals adapting to new surroundings.





A defining characteristic of the organization is its commitment to uplifting the perspectives of “everyday experts.” Through workshops, digital showcases, and community gatherings, the foundation shines a light on the creativity and innovation of ordinary people who are finding extraordinary ways to improve their lives. By sharing these stories, The Lifestyle Foundation empowers others to see the possibilities in their own spaces and routines.

One of the foundation’s most celebrated moments took place this past September with the First North American Lifestyle Awards Night at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The event brought together designers, community leaders, and lifestyle enthusiasts to honour achievements in vitality, aesthetics, and creativity. Esteemed judges such as Ross Bonetti and Michael Geller recognized projects that exemplify the foundation’s mission of inspiring positive change.

The evening culminated in a donation to the Cause We Care Foundation, reinforcing the idea that the pursuit of a beautiful life is inseparable from the commitment to help others.

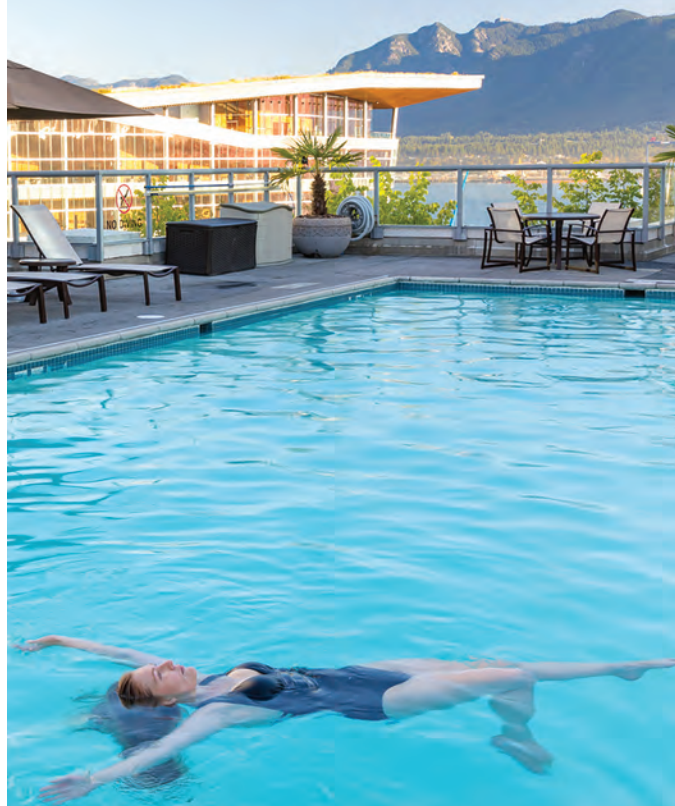
Through all of its initiatives, The Lifestyle Foundation remains dedicated to helping people discover the beauty in everyday moments and create more fulfilling, sustainable lifestyles. Whether it is enhancing the atmosphere of a home, finding new sources of inspiration, or connecting with a community of like-minded individuals, the foundation is a catalyst for personal and social transformation.

By celebrating diversity, encouraging creativity, and promoting balance, The Lifestyle Foundation proves that meaningful change begins right where people are—with the choices they make every day and the spaces they call home. In doing so, it continues to shape a more inclusive, harmonious society—one beautiful detail at a time. **LIV**

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LIV MESSAGE



PHOTO BY ALI DOLATI, LUXIN STUDIO

Community has a remarkable way of revealing itself in moments of vision and ambition. When our publisher, Mario Gedicke, made the bold decision to launch LIV Magazine, it was the unwavering support of our friends, colleagues, and readers across British Columbia that made it possible to bring this dream to life. In just a few short months, we have blanketed this beautiful province with three issues that celebrate the stories of extraordinary people, the destinations that inspire us to unwind and reconnect, and the places where we gather to savour unforgettable meals and experiences.

Each page of LIV is a tribute to those who strive to make our world more vibrant, compassionate, and connected. As we proudly present our second issue, we offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has joined us on this journey. Here is to the power of community—and all that lies ahead. **LIV**

All my best,

Helen Siwak
Editor-in-Chief



LIV

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Victoria

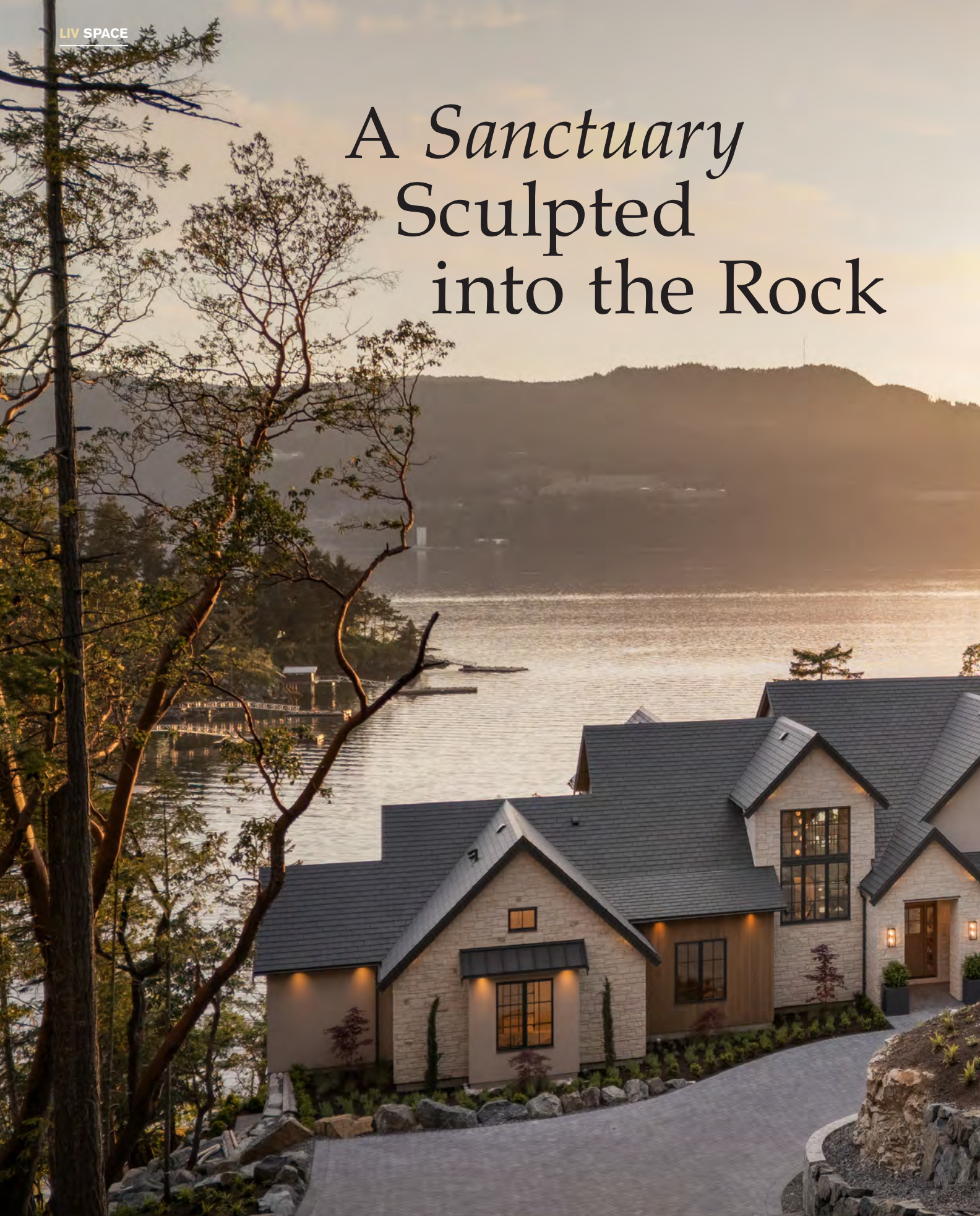
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PHOTOS BY JACOB MCNEIL PHOTOGRAPHY

A long, winding driveway leads to Shelter Cove, a waterfront retreat that redefines luxury living on Vancouver Island. Conceived and brought to life by Terry Johal Developments, this extraordinary home rests masterfully against a sculpted rock cliffside, seamlessly blending the rugged beauty of the coast with an effortless elegance that only decades of craftsmanship can deliver.

From the moment one arrives, the West Coast exterior commands attention. Linear massing of natural stone and smooth stucco grounds the residence in the landscape, while composite slate over steeply pitched rooflines pays homage to traditional design in a thoroughly modern expression. Panoramic ocean vistas stretch beyond every window, filling each space with a sense of infinite horizon. The architectural drawings by Hoyt Design established a bold, cohesive framework that celebrates these views while honouring the site's natural contours.

Inside, Mari Kushino Design has curated a timeless farmhouse aesthetic mingled gracefully with bohemian styling. White oak floors run beneath foot, their warm grain echoed in extensive millwork that wraps the main level. Sunlight cascades across each room through picture windows, softly tinted to temper the ocean's glare.



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Custom arches introduce a gentleness to the home's rectilinear design, framing views and transitions with a refined touch.

The kitchen is a study in artful detail. Exquisite Delft tilework adds a storied character, perfectly balanced by the lightness of marble vanities and shower surrounds that gleam in the adjacent baths. In the great room, doors fold away completely, dissolving the barrier between indoors and the expansive outdoor entertaining space. Here, a covered cedar soffit shelters an alfresco kitchen and lounge, where every seat is poised to take in the endless ocean view. Beyond, a gas fire pit glows beside a striking infinity pool that seems to pour into the sea itself.

A reading room tucked to one side offers a hushed retreat. Earthy green walls and lush textures invite a slower pace, an invitation to linger and watch the light shift across the water. Every corner of the home bears the mark of skilled artisans—ornamental ironwork, precise millwork, and custom-built furniture pieces that elevate daily living to an art form.

Sustainability was as important as beauty in this build. Shelter Cove achieves Step Code 4 standards and a suite of green building initiatives. Geothermal heating serves both the residence and the pool, while ground source heat pumps and a heat recovery ventilator ensure year-round comfort. Permeable pavers line the hardscape, allowing rain to nourish a thoughtfully designed rain garden.





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At the heart of Shelter Cove's vision stands Terry Johal himself. As Victoria's premier custom home builder, Terry has spent over two decades turning dream homes into tangible legacies. Second generation in his trade, he has earned a reputation for unwavering commitment to quality. More than

just the name behind the company, Terry is a constant presence on every site, working alongside his crew to guarantee every detail meets his exacting standards. With a philosophy rooted in hands-on collaboration and a passion for spaces that feel as good as they look, Terry Johal Developments continues to shape the West Coast's most remarkable residences—homes built for life, and designed for you. **LIV**

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Founder, master goldsmith and jewellery designer Idar Bergseth was born in Vancouver. As a child, his fascination with rocks grew into a lifelong passion for fine jewellery. Classically trained and mentored by master goldsmiths, Idar began handcrafting jewellery in the 1960s—an era when most jewellers turned to mass production. Drawing inspiration from West Coast surroundings, Nordic heritage, and Celtic design, Idar pioneered a distinctive style that earned international acclaim and numerous awards.

For over fifty years, the Victoria-based shop has remained a beacon of sustainability and heartfelt craftsmanship. Each handmade piece tells a story and leaves a lasting legacy.

Among many accolades, Idar's Pirouette platinum and diamond ring earned first place at the Canadian Jeweller Magazine Awards of Excellence in 2018. That same year, his work was featured in the Vancouver Art Gallery's Modern in the Making, honouring artists and designers who shaped modern design in British Columbia.

Today, in a world of mass production, idar's original vision to create well designed, handmade and one of a kind pieces of jewellery made to be worn and become the heirlooms of tomorrow, stands strong. Using sustainable materials, time-honoured techniques and contemporary inspirations, results in pieces that are both meaningful and timeless.

Beyond idar's eight signature collections—from Celtic Revival to West Coast Flora—idar remains a place where beauty is created from the heart and shared with the world. **LIV**





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Celebrating Ballet Victoria

A Legacy of Innovation
and Emerging Talent



GAIL TAKAHASHI PHOTOGRAPHY

Ballet Victoria, British Columbia's only professional classical ballet company, continues to redefine the boundaries of the art form while nurturing the next generation of extraordinary talent. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Paul Destrooper, this boutique company of 14 dancers has steadily evolved from a regional ensemble into a respected international arts organization, acclaimed for its daring productions and dedication to technical excellence.

The 2025-26 season promises to be one of Ballet Victoria's most ambitious yet, opening in October with a world-premiere full-length ballet, *Aladdin*. Conceived as a family experience blending drama and humour, *Aladdin* will showcase the company's hallmark artistry and the formidable technique of its dancers. Later in the year, audiences can look forward to the beloved holiday tradition, *The Gift of the Nutcracker*, presented with the Victoria Symphony. This perennial favourite, enriched with new elements each season, consistently fills theatres and warms spirits across the Capital Region.

March will see the company exploring bold artistic terrain with a striking program featuring *The Rite of Spring*, alongside a new creation by Artist in Residence Andrea Bayne. The season concludes in May with a whimsical production of *Alice in Wonderland*, inviting audiences to rediscover the childlike wonder that ballet can evoke.

While Ballet Victoria's repertoire continues to expand, it is the dancers themselves who embody the company's commitment to growth and innovation. Two of these artists, Kaylie Conner and Isabelle Jutras, have emerged as shining examples of Ballet Victoria's dedication to developing young talent.

Originally from Vancouver, Kaylie Conner joined Ballet Victoria in 2019. Recognized early for her exceptional dedication, she became the first recipient of the Rosemarie Liscum Award for Emerging Artists in 2022. Known for her long, fluid lines and striking flexibility, Kaylie brings an expressive dramatic presence to every performance. Her interpretations of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, Carmina Burana, and *Frankenstein* have captivated audiences and critics alike.



DAN TAKAHASHI PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO: Dasha Armstrong Photography
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DAN TAKAHASHI PHOTOGRAPHY

Isabelle Jutras, born in Québec, has likewise distinguished herself since joining the company in 2019. Trained in ballet, jazz, contemporary, and musical theatre, she quickly rose to prominence, performing leading roles such as the Sugar Plum Fairy in *Nutcracker*, *Giselle* in *Frankenstein*, and a memorable pas de deux in *Bolero*. Isabelle's refined technique, radiant stage presence, and natural affinity for partnering have made her an audience favourite and a respected leader within the company. In addition to her performance work, she is a gifted teacher, generously sharing her knowledge with students at the Ballet Victoria Conservatory.

Through the artistry and dedication of dancers like Kaylie and Isabelle, Ballet Victoria continues to enrich the Canadian ballet milieu, serving as a cultural ambassador for Victoria and beyond. As the company prepares to bring its newest creations to life, it remains committed to fostering an environment where young artists grow into seasoned performers—ensuring that ballet remains vibrant, relevant, and accessible for generations to come. **LIV**



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BOOM + BATTEN

Harbourfront Magic Paired with BC Wine Legends

This Victoria Inner Harbour landmark offers fine dining with sunset and sailboat views.





Some restaurants rely on a spectacular view to create their allure and Boom + Batten offers that and much more. Suspended over Victoria's Inner Harbour, this contemporary 6,900-square-foot landmark is a place where Vancouver Island's finest culinary experiences unfold against the backdrop of sunsets and sailboats.

Restaurant Director Jade Kennedy, Executive Chef Laurence Munn, and Wine Director Kristine Osachuk form a remarkable team. Their dedication has earned Boom + Batten numerous distinctions, including the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence in both 2023 and 2024, the VIWF Wine Program Excellence Award in 2024, and recognition among OpenTable's Top 100 Best Brunch and Lunch Restaurants in Canada for 2025. It is a place where the setting is unforgettable and the flavours even more so.

The menus are inspired by the West Coast and showcase farm-to-table freshness at every turn. Brunch is an event in itself. The Crème Brûlée French Toast features rich brioche soaked in vanilla custard, crowned with a caramelized sugar crust, drizzled with maple syrup, and paired with crisp hash browns. The Croque Madame is crafted on house-made sourdough layered with smoked ham and gruyère, finished with a poached egg and a roasted jalapeño mornay sauce, served with vibrant market greens. Even the classic Avocado Toast feels refined and special.

Those who appreciate a shared experience will find the Appy + Share menu irresistible. The Cold Smoke Albacore Tuna Pizette is delicate and bright, while the Chicken Liver Parfait arrives with sourdough crostini and a lively mustard fruit relish. French fries come in three delicious styles, each one satisfying in its own way.

Those seeking a hearty, comforting meal, a bowl of West Coast Fish Chowder arrives rich and warming, touched with paprika oil. The Green Pea + Bacon Risotto feels both rustic and polished, and the Wild Boar Bolognese is deeply savoury. Dinner includes thin-crust pizzas, hearty handhelds, and the restaurant's signature fish and chips made with Phillips Tiger Shark Pale Ale battered Pacific Pollack.



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Wine Director Kristine Osachuk's thoughtful program shines with exceptional selections from British Columbia's most celebrated producers. Guests will discover the elegance of Mission Hill Family Estate, whose Pinot Noir and Chardonnay showcase the region's diversity. Phantom Creek Estate offers biodynamically farmed Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Gris, and Riesling that bring a bright freshness to any pairing. The wines of Burrowing Owl Estate Winery, known for their expressive Cabernet Franc and rich Chardonnay, complete a lineup that feels uniquely tied to the land.

Happy hour becomes a perfect time to explore these celebrated bottles, as well as other vibrant local pours. Whether you prefer a crisp Pinot Gris with the chowder, a bold red with the bolognese, or a bright sparkling rosé to toast the view, every glass elevates the experience.

Boom + Batten is a destination that feels at once relaxed and refined. Every detail, from the welcoming service to the thoughtfully sourced ingredients, speaks to a commitment to excellence. Whether you arrive for a leisurely brunch, a business lunch, or an unforgettable dinner, you will leave with a sense of having discovered something truly special on the shores of Vancouver Island—and you will already be planning your return. **LIV**



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Blaise McDonald

Shaping the Future of MAC Reno Design Build *with* Vision & Heart

When Blaise McDonald reflects on MAC Reno Design Build, he does not just see a successful construction company. He sees his father's legacy, decades of relationships built on trust, and a future where generations of McDonalds will continue redefining what it means to be a true "Contractor for life."

Founded by Ed McDonald in 1980, MAC began as a general contracting business. From the earliest projects, Ed believed exceptional people build extraordinary companies. His reputation for perfection grew one client at a time, evolving MAC from modest repairs to Greater Victoria's preferred design-build contractor. Today, Ed still plays a vital role, meeting homeowners and ensuring each project begins with the same promise of integrity and care that inspired the company's first job sites.

Blaise McDonald grew up immersed in that promise. In the early days, MAC was a home-based operation. As a boy, Blaise spent weekends and summers helping out at the Home Care Centre on Viewfield. Those experiences shaped his perspective: every renovation was more than construction; it was about creating spaces where families could thrive.

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Now President, Blaise has expanded his father's vision with the same commitment to craftsmanship while embracing technology and modern business practices that set MAC apart. As a Red Seal-certified electrician with a Master's Certificate in project management and a bachelor's degree in Construction Management, Blaise is as comfortable on the job site as he is in a boardroom. This unique blend of practical experience and formal training gives him the insight to lead complex renovations with a steady hand and a collaborative spirit.

At the heart of MAC's success is their proven Design-Build process. Under Blaise's guidance, the approach goes beyond efficiency—it brings clarity and transparency to homeowners. Every project begins with a thoughtful conversation to uncover the client's needs and aspirations. From there, the team develops a complete plan—design, materials, timeline, and pricing—before construction begins. Fixed-fee pricing ensures no surprises, and the BuilderTrend portal keeps clients updated in real-time.

The Ranch, MAC's dedicated design centre, has become a cornerstone of Blaise's vision. Rather than sending clients across the city to browse samples and fixtures, The Ranch brings everything under one roof. Homeowners can touch flooring, compare finishes, and experience the materials that will shape their homes. This innovation streamlines the process and reflects Blaise's focus on creating an enjoyable, stress-free renovation journey.



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While Blaise leads MAC with a forward-thinking mindset, the company's heart remains its people. His sister, Robbyn McDonald, who serves as Marketing Manager, Office Manager, and Events Coordinator, ensures every client feels welcomed and supported. Together, the McDonalds have nurtured a culture rooted in excellence, collaboration, and genuine care.

"Our team is dedicated to building and strengthening the community through providing high-quality careers and projects," says Blaise. "It is important to us that MAC is a company people are proud to work with and to work for."

Their dedication has earned MAC Reno Design Build presti-

gious recognition, including Georgie Awards from the Canadian Home Builders' Association of British Columbia and VIBE Awards from CHBA-Vancouver Island. Yet for Blaise, the greatest achievement is knowing that MAC is the first call clients make when they are ready to build, renovate, or dream again.

With dynamic leadership, deep respect for tradition, and an unwavering commitment to quality, Blaise McDonald is not only preserving his father's legacy but also ensuring MAC Reno Design Build remains a family business defined by trust and innovation—ready to inspire future generations to follow in his footsteps. **LIV**



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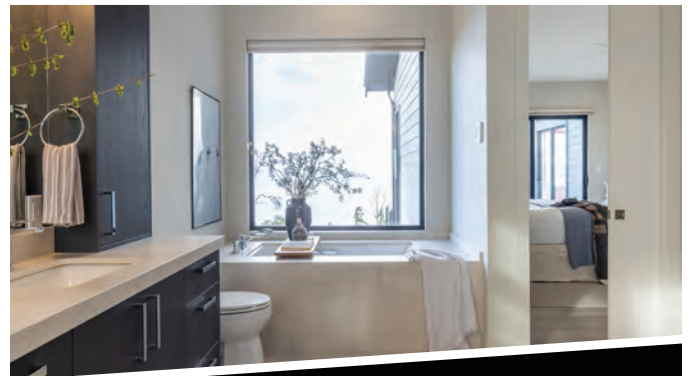




In the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest, Nimmo Bay Spa is a sanctuary where the rhythms of nature set the tone for profound relaxation. This is not merely a place to visit—it is a destination to immerse yourself fully in the healing tranquility of the West Coast.

Here, wellness unfolds far beyond the spa walls. Begin your day with floating yoga sessions on calm, glassy waters, feeling each movement mirrored by the stillness beneath you. Guided meditations drift through towering trees, their leaves whispering as you reconnect with your breath and the quiet power of the rainforest.

Signature treatments at Nimmo Bay are inspired by the landscape itself. Indulge in botanical facials, integrative bodywork, or a soothing massage crafted to melt tension away. For a truly memorable experience, the Rhythms of Nature half-day ritual combines a Forest Bathing Meditation, your choice of an Intertidal Scrub or Ayurvedic Head Massage, an invigorating outdoor rain shower, and a customized massage that leaves you deeply renewed.



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Guests seeking a more immersive retreat can elevate their stay with the Wellness Within the Wild package, transforming each moment into a personally curated escape. From natural thermal therapy to relaxing in remote floating saunas, every element is designed to help you unwind and discover balance.

At Nimmo Bay, every experience feels intentional and restorative. Whether shared with a loved one or embraced solo, this coastal haven invites you to refresh your senses and depart feeling grounded, recharged, and profoundly connected to the beauty of British Columbia's wild spaces. **LIV**



Change Builders

Celebrating the leaders advancing sustainable construction while keeping choice, affordability, and performance at the core

Nanoose Bay Passive

Change Builders is a new series celebrating the builders and renovators who are quietly redefining the future of residential construction on Vancouver Island. These leaders prove that progress doesn't have to come at the cost of affordability or homeowner choice. Instead, they are pioneering smarter, more durable, and energy-efficient homes that are grounded in the realities of today's market and the evolving needs of families and communities.

In an industry often navigating a complex mix of regulatory changes, economic pressures, and environmental urgency, these builders stand out by balancing sustainability with practicality. They recognize that true responsibility goes beyond trends, it's about embracing diverse fuel options, performance-driven solutions, and most importantly, respecting client priorities. Change Builders are those who strike that balance, who show that better building is possible now, not years down the road.



Pheasant Hill Homes of Nanaimo continues to raise the bar. In 2024, they captured the FortisBC Award for **Excellence in Energy Efficiency in New Construction**, affirming their reputation as leaders in practical, high-performing homes. Their award-winning project, *Cliffside Modern*, showcases how energy-efficient design and traditional craftsmanship come together to create livable, stylish homes that respect budgets and priorities.

This contemporary build quietly delivers exceptional comfort and keeps energy costs low—proof that energy-conscious homes don't have to sacrifice beauty or affordability. Additionally, Pheasant Hill's *Nanoose Bay Passive* home earned the **2024 Golden Blower Door Award** at the Vancouver Island Building Industry Awards for outstanding airtightness and energy performance. This home exemplifies the company's holistic approach: working collaboratively with clients and trades to balance aspiration with accessibility, creating homes that perform exceptionally in the real world.

Pheasant Hill Homes demonstrates that airtight building envelopes and energy-efficient performance aren't lofty goals—they're everyday standards.



In an era where environmental responsibility is no longer optional, **J. Zsiros Contracting Ltd.** is helping redefine what's possible in residential construction. Based in Courtenay, this award-winning builder is leading the way with *Woodland Haven*, a home that not only embraces sustainable living but elevates it to an art form.

A recipient of the **2025 Vancouver Island Building Industry Award for Best Environmental Initiative**, *Woodland Haven* exemplifies what it means to build for the future. Situated on a tranquil ALR-zoned property, the home is certified Net Zero, Built Green, and BC Energy Step Code 5, setting a benchmark for energy-efficient construction on the Island.

But this isn't just a technical achievement, it's a lifestyle statement. Engineered hardwood floors, hickory cabinetry, granite countertops, and radiant heated bathrooms all speak to a level of craftsmanship that proves sustainability and luxury can coexist seamlessly. Every element was selected with intention, reflecting both the homeowners' commitment to health and energy efficiency and the builder's dedication to thoughtful, high-performance design.

The home also earned the **2025 Golden Blower Door Award**, presented by Bernhardt Contracting, for achieving the lowest air changes per hour (ACH)—a crucial marker of airtightness and energy performance.

As the *Change Builders Series* launches, *Woodland Haven* stands as an inspiring start—proof that innovation, beauty, and sustainability are not mutually exclusive, but inherently connected.



Change Builders aren't chasing perfection—they're building homes for real families in real communities with real budgets. And through each smart, well-executed choice, they're proving that meaningful progress happens not in extremes, but in thoughtful, responsible action.



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The cover features a background of overlapping, semi-transparent diamond shapes in shades of grey and white. A central dark grey square contains the word 'LIV' in a large, gold, serif font. Below it, the words 'STYLE.TASTE.SPACE' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Below the central square, the word 'Okanagan' is written in a large, elegant, gold script font.

LIV

STYLE.TASTE.SPACE

Okanagan

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Lela Milacic

Where Style Meets Second Chances

BY TOBY TANNAS PHOTOS BY DARREN HULL



Lela Milacic knows both sides of the story—what it means to struggle, and what it means to thrive. She grew up in a small town in Montenegro, where life was modest and hand-me-downs were a way of life. But even in those lean years, she found joy, strength, and a deep appreciation for the little things.

Her path took her from small-town beginnings to a career in finance, marriage to the love of her life, and a move to Canada where she built a life rooted in hard work and resilience. After more than two decades in accounting, she made the leap to entrepreneurship—choosing a business that celebrates both beauty and value.

Luxury resale felt like the perfect fit. Today, through Most Wanted Luxury Resale and Rosebuds Designer Consignment, Lela blends her love of fashion with a strong sense of community, giving pre-loved pieces a second life and supporting local charities along the way.

How did your professional journey unfold—and what led you to where you are now?

One thing my dad always said was, “Failure is not an option,” and that mindset has guided me every step of the way. I work hard, and I put my heart into everything I do. I have built a community where people feel welcomed, valued, and excited to give new life to their pieces.

What part of your work lights you up the most?

What truly lights me up is seeing how people are embracing second-hand luxury in a whole new way. There is less stigma now—shoppers are excited about sustainable fashion, making smart financial choices, and finding unique, high-quality pieces. Helping people sell what they no longer wear and discover something new at a fraction of the price? That never gets old. It is not just resale anymore—it is a movement.

What does great style mean to you?

Looking put-together without being overdone. It is not about labels—it is about effort, confidence, and consistency. Style becomes who you are when it is part of your everyday life—just like kindness or work ethic.

How would you describe your signature style?

Simple, classy, and polished. I try to mix things up, but I definitely have my go-to pieces. As a busy mom and business owner, I want to look stylish, but also feel like myself.

What are your style staples?

Pencil skirts—thanks to my years in the corporate world. And dresses—they are my easy go-to.

All-time favourite piece:

Some of my favourite pieces are Gucci bags and accessories—but I do not use them often. That is part of why I love resale. Sometimes we invest in luxury that no longer serves us. I help people give those pieces a second chance.



Go-to shoes:

Valentino pumps—for events, they are hands-down the most comfortable for dancing. No need to swap them out!

Everyday bag:

LV Neverfull for travel. My Chanel Boy Bag for daily wear—it is so durable. And YSL for nights out.

Jewelry you cannot part with:

Anything sentimental—pieces from my kids or husband. I also wear my cross every day. I still consider myself a simple girl at heart.

Signature scent:

Sì by Giorgio Armani, YSL's newest fragrance, and sometimes Creed—my husband wears it, and I love it (but it is definitely a splurge!). **LIV**

All Elements

Redefining Luxury Homebuilding in the Okanagan

Kim Larson, founder of All Elements, has always believed that architecture could do more than create beautiful spaces—it could shape a better future. A Penticton native with an early fascination with homes and architecture, Kim spent her childhood sketching neighbourhood houses and constructing miniature worlds from Lego bricks. This passion led her south to California, where she studied architectural technology, refining the skills that would one day transform her into a pioneering figure in Canadian homebuilding.

In 2009, Kim returned to the South Okanagan, determined to reimagine how luxury homes are conceived and built. She founded All Elements Design.Manage.Build in Kelowna, a company whose very name spoke to her vision: uniting every aspect of the building process under one collaborative, holistic approach. Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's principles of harmony between people and nature, Kim made it her mission to build homes that were as functional as they were timeless.







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At the heart of All Elements is a philosophy that luxury must also be sustainable. Kim's residence exemplifies this ethos. A net-zero home crowned with solar panels is proof that high-end builds can coexist with environmental stewardship. Under Kim's leadership, All Elements has built a portfolio of ambitious, energy-efficient estates recognized with Tommie, Georgie, and Builder awards. Most recently, the project "Les Deux Pins" was named a finalist in the 2025 CHBA National Awards for Housing Excellence in two categories, including Best Custom or Renovated Net Zero Home.

All Elements offers more than construction—it delivers a comprehensive design-manage-build approach that provides a seamless luxury home-building experience from concept to completion. From the first sketches to the final product, clients engage directly with an in-house team of construction professionals devoted to transforming inspiration into bold architectural statements that are uniquely their own. Each home is shaped by the four elements—air, earth, fire, and water—to create spaces that are in balance with their environment and built to endure.

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All Elements specializes in net-zero construction, a standard that reduces energy use by up to 80 percent compared to conventional builds. Each Generational High-Performance Home integrates renewable energy systems and uses materials that lower embodied carbon. These residences not only lower utility costs and maintenance but also support a more sustainable future. For every home built, All Elements plants 500 trees—a reflection of Kim's belief that building a home should give back to the land that sustains it.

When Kim is not guiding clients through the process of building their dream estates, Kim can often be found boating on Skaha Lake, reconnecting with the natural beauty that has always inspired her work. In every custom estate, All Elements builds with a purpose: to honour individual vision, embrace innovation, and create homes that truly last for generations.

Following its 2024 acquisition by Dilworth Homes, Kim's legacy continues to honour her original vision of crafting extraordinary homes that stand the test of time. The union of these two industry leaders brings together complementary strengths to shape a legacy in Okanagan homebuilding. Backed by Dilworth Home's powerhouse team, resources, and decades of expertise, All Elements maintains the same high-quality, boutique service clients know and trust, now enhanced with even greater value. **LIV**

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Perched above Okanagan Lake and carved into the side of a mountain, the estate stretches across 300 acres of vineyards, orchards, and raw natural beauty. Designed by renowned San Francisco architect Howard Backen, the buildings are an architectural love letter to the land itself—vast glass walls, stonework, and warm wood blending seamlessly into the surroundings. It is the kind of place you discover once and remember forever.



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While some destinations excel at just one thing, O'Rourke Family Estate is a true playground for the senses. Whether you come for the world-class wine, the unforgettable dining, or the chance to wake up amid the vines, there is an experience waiting for every guest. And with a grand opening celebration planned for July 2026, the estate is gradually unveiling facets of its vision, one remarkable detail at a time.

Already, the property has begun hosting special events that signal the calibre of experiences to come. This year, the newly opened Row 188 restaurant debuted with a series of intimate, ticketed culinary evenings, pairing the estate's elegant wines with seasonal menus crafted by the estate's talented culinary team. Every dinner feels like an exclusive invitation to be part of something bigger—an unfolding story that celebrates wine, culture, and community.

Entertainment is another hallmark of the estate's character. The outdoor amphitheatre recently hosted two sold-out performances by Canadian superstars Jim Cuddy and Barney Bentall, drawing fans from across the region for unforgettable nights of music under the Okanagan stars. As General Manager Ian Scromeda shared, "O'Rourke Family Estate is so much more than a winery. It's an art and music venue, it's a cultural centre, it's a global destination."

At the core of the estate are 110 acres of meticulously cultivated vines, producing a portfolio of exceptional wines under the direction of head winemaker Stephanie Stanley.



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From the crush pad viewing deck, you can watch the winemaking process unfold—grapes sorted and pressed, juice poured into French oak barrels lining 12,000 square feet of underground caves. Every bottle tells a story of place and patience, with varietals that include Pinot Noir and Chardonnay with a few limited release exceptions.

Wine tasting here is never just a casual affair. The estate's tasting rooms offer panoramic views over Okanagan Lake, while private dining spaces and rock-carved bars provide an intimate backdrop for chef-led dinners and special celebrations. And if you wish to make a weekend of it, you can reserve either the Georgie Award-winning five-bedroom Log Home, the charming Cottage in the Vines, or The Gate House Suites.

For special occasions, O'Rourke Family Estate feels like a dream realized. Weddings are held under a pergola built from 120-year-old timber, with the option of arriving by helicopter on the private helipad. Corporate gatherings and milestone celebrations unfold across the amphitheatre, multiple decks, and private dining spaces, including the caves themselves. Few venues can offer an evening as cinematic as a candlelit dinner deep underground, surrounded by aging barrels and the cool hush of stone.

What makes this place even more remarkable is how approachable it feels. Despite the scale—more than 180,000 square feet of thoughtfully designed space—there is a warmth and authenticity in every detail. This is a destination shaped by passion rather than pretense, where guests are invited to slow down, savour, and connect.

Whether you are a Predator Ridge homeowner or simply passing through the Okanagan, set aside a day—or better yet, a weekend—to discover this remarkable place. Come for the wines, stay for the concerts, the architecture, and the sense of discovery at every turn. O'Rourke Family Estate is an experience designed to be savoured—an inspiring testament to what is possible when vision meets vineyard. **LIV**



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Elevate Your Next Gathering

Private Chef Lynne Fantham
in the Southern Okanagan



There is something unmistakably special about gathering around a table filled with beautiful, nourishing food.

In the Southern Okanagan, Private Chef Lynne Fantham has made it her mission to transform special occasions into unforgettable culinary experiences. With over a decade of expertise spanning renowned kitchens such as Quails Gate Winery, Fairmont Pacific Rim, and Middle Beach Lodge, Lynne blends refined technique with a warm, approachable style that makes guests feel truly cared for.

A dedicated Red Seal chef and certified nutritionist, Lynne understands that good food is not only about taste but also about connection and well-being. Her thoughtfully curated menus reflect a passion for local, organic ingredients and an unwavering commitment to quality. Whether you are planning an intimate lakeside dinner, a milestone celebration, or a relaxed afternoon of grazing, she offers options to suit every occasion.

Having a private chef is a wonderful way to mark special occasions without the need to dress up and head out. Instead, you can relax at home or by the lake while an experienced professional brings restaurant-level dining to you.

Her Family Style menus bring comfort and abundance to the table, while elegant three- and five-course meals showcase dishes like refreshing Green Gazpacho crowned with goat cheese and sunflower seeds, or Roasted Marinated Picanha with red wine jus. For plant-based diners, creations such as her vibrant kebabs with cherries and silky potato purée demonstrate how indulgence and health can harmoniously coexist.





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No celebration is complete without something sweet—her Basil Olive Oil Cake and Affogato with shaved dark chocolate ensure a memorable finish. Those who prefer a more casual spread will delight in Lynne's artfully arranged charcuterie boards and grazing tables featuring local meats, cheeses, fruits, and homemade breads from Oliver Eats Ltd.

If you have ever dreamed of hosting a gathering where every detail feels effortless and every bite feels inspired, Private Chef Lynne Fantham might be just what your next special occasion needs. **LIV**



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Cupcakes You Crave:

The Heartfelt Rise of a Family Bakery

BY TOBY TANNAS

Some of the strongest bonds begin in childhood kitchens—where stories are shared over mixing bowls, and traditions are passed down one handwritten recipe at a time. For sisters Carolyne McIntyre Jackson and Jodi Willoughby, that bond was forged on a farm just outside High River, Alberta, surrounded by wheat fields, prairie skies, and the irresistible scent of something sweet in the oven.

The sisters grew up knowing there was always a treat in the deep freeze, tucked away amongst layers of wax paper inside 4L ice cream pails. In their home, baking was more than just dessert—it was love and connection. Moist chocolate cakes, swirls of buttercream and gooey squares became the foundation for something much bigger than either of them could have imagined.

Carolyne and Jodi are the heart and hands behind Crave Cupcakes, a bakery born from family recipes and a craving to sprinkle a little joy—one cupcake at a time. The pair opened their first shop in Calgary's Kensington neighbourhood more than 20 years ago, followed by three more Calgary locations, then Saskatoon and Edmonton. Now, for the first time, they've expanded beyond the Prairies—Kelowna is Crave's first location in British Columbia.

Expanding west was more than a business move—it was a leap of faith. "It was daunting," Jodi admits, "to open after 12 years of not expanding, but Kelowna has welcomed us with open arms."

The Vaughan Avenue location is lined up out the door most mornings and includes something extra special: CeCe's Coffee. A full café alongside the bakery—another first for the sisters.

"When we came across the space with the big windows it just spoke to us," Carolyne recalls. "We envisioned people sitting inside and outside, eating a cupcake and drinking delicious coffee – so we launched our first-ever coffee and tea bar. CeCe's allows people to slow down and connect over something sweet."




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At Crave, every recipe has a story. Grandma's chocolate cake, mom's buttercream, but gone are the days of ice cream pails! Cookies, cakes, and slices are served up with style in charming blue boxes. Even more than the recipes, it's the feeling they want to preserve.

"We hope a Crave treat brings people back to a moment," says Carolyne. "A birthday, a Tuesday, a hug from your mom. Something warm and familiar." Jodi recalls a moment that perfectly captured this: "I pulled up to one of our stores and watched a woman peel the paper off her cupcake, take a deep breath, and bite in. The look on her face—that's what we're doing this for. That quiet little moment of pure joy."

Everyone has a favourite Crave indulgence. For some, it's the Crave Olicious—a decadent chocolate cupcake topped with Crave's signature periwinkle blue buttercream. Others swear by the Red Velvet Elvis, with its glorious cream cheese frosting. Then there are the monthly features—limited-time creations dreamed up by Crave's team to celebrate the seasons, surprise loyal fans, and keep the menu feeling fresh and fun.

The aesthetic of Crave stores—charming and nostalgic—matches the heart behind it. From the moment you walk in, the goal is to feel like you've stepped into a modern version of the past. "We wanted it to feel like home. Like that warm place you always want to return to," says Carolyne.

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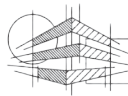




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That feeling does not come easy—it takes a whole team. Crave has always been a family affair, with husbands and kids pitching in behind the scenes. “Working with family comes with its challenges,” Jodi laughs, “but it’s also where the magic happens. We trust each other completely. And we’re all in it together.”

Twenty years in, some things have changed—systems have evolved and the team has grown—but core values remain the same. The product must look beautiful and taste even better. “That’s always been our rule,” says Carolyne. “It can’t just be pretty—it has to deliver.” And deliver, they do. Whether it is for a wedding, a baby shower, or just a midweek pick-me-up, Crave has become part of life’s most cherished moments.

So what is next for Crave? The sisters are not giving away all their secrets, but there is talk of continuing to expand, maybe a sequel to the first Crave Cookbook and adding more offerings to their line of bake it yourself products. Whatever comes, it will be made with the same love and intention that started it all.

For me, it is a privilege to tell this story—not just as a writer, but as someone who’s known these remarkable women since our school days in southern Alberta. To see them pour so much of themselves into something that brings people joy, that is the sweetest success of all! At the end of the day, a Crave cupcake holds more than frosting and sprinkles—connection, comfort, and love are baked right in. Who knew something so sweet could be so powerful?”

To see what Crave is serving up; visit cravecupcakes.ca **LIV**

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5957 Sooke Road
Sooke, BC | \$2,499,000

Stunning Oceanside estate on a 1-acre lot, offering complete peace & privacy! The spacious interior is flooded with natural light from large picture windows framing tranquil ocean & mountain views. This 5 bed, 3 bath home offers resort-style living year round, with ample space for friends and family to gather. Outside, the value becomes truly evident, with patios, extensive garden beds, outdoor cooking areas, and a deep water dock.



3525 Upper Terrace Road
Victoria, BC | \$4,498,000

This beautifully updated 6 bed, 7 bath home sits on over half an acre in the highly desirable Uplands neighborhood. Surrounded by mature trees and well-maintained gardens, it offers a unique blend of classic character and modern comfort, ideal for family living. Located within walking distance to the University of Victoria, Uplands Golf Club, Royal Victoria Yacht Club, and Gyro Beach, this home offers timeless charm, modern updates, and an ideal setting for family life.



2555 Newman Road
Central Saanich, BC | \$3,200,000

Custom-designed waterfront gem! Timeless elegance meets modern luxury in this stunning 3 bed, 3 bath home with walls of glass showcasing panoramic views of James Island & Mt. Baker. The exterior space is meticulously landscaped, incorporating stone pathways, designated seating areas, and low-maintenance gardens. A private pathway grants direct access to 81 feet of shoreline, ideal for intertidal exploration, kayaking, or tranquil relaxation with the ambient sounds of the ocean.



8853 Park Pacific Terrace
North Saanich, BC | \$2,369,000

An architecturally stunning home in Dean Park with uninterrupted views of the Haro Strait, the Gulf Islands and glorious Mount Baker. Proudly featuring a spacious open concept layout over 4,500 sq ft, with 4 beds, 5 baths, a sleek fireplace, rubber driveway, walk-in wine room, a separate 1-bed suite, plus multiple decks and infinite vistas, this home has it all!



2464 Tryon Road
North Saanich, BC | \$4,450,000

This stunning oceanfront, custom-designed estate embodies West Coast style and architecture. With an open floor plan and soaring ceilings, the interior exudes sophistication. The home offers 4 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms crafted to highlight sweeping ocean, mountains, and island views. The easy-care yard, triple car garage, and landscaped grounds offer direct access to the waterfront, making this a boaters' and kayakers' dream property.



928 Claremont Avenue
Cordova Bay, BC | \$3,398,000

Discover refined coastal living in this 3,700 sq ft, 3-level masterpiece with stunning ocean & mountain views. A semi-circular driveway & sculpted rock-wall gardens welcome you. Inside, grand windows & glass doors fill the space with light & frame panoramas from front & rear decks, offering seamless indoor/outdoor living. The back deck opens to a private fenced yard & tranquil garden. A legal 1-bedroom suite with ocean views & a covered deck adds flexibility.



11406 Sycamore Drive
North Saanich, BC | \$3,599,000

Set in the prestigious Lands End area, this 6,000 sq ft architectural gem offers 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and exceptional privacy and tranquility. Designed to blend natural beauty with timeless design, this bright & spacious home offers panoramic views of the ocean, valley & mountains from multiple patios that promote indoor/outdoor living. A separate 1-bedroom suite offers space for family, friends or rental opportunities.



5605 Parker Avenue
Cordova Bay, BC | \$6,700,000

Experience unparalleled beachfront living on prestigious Parker Avenue, where sweeping views of Mount Baker and stunning sunrises define this exceptional 2.85-acre waterfront estate. Completely updated in 2012, the residence boasts 7 bedrooms, 5 1/2 bathrooms, and breathtaking ocean vistas from every principal room. A private 1-bedroom studio provides versatile living options. Expansive rolling lawns lead to 250 feet of private beachfront.



675 Towner Park Road
North Saanich, BC | \$2,895,000

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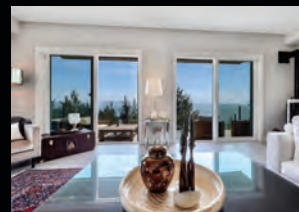
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