



# COMFORT & joy

BY SARAH ST AMAND • PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY HORKOFF

Perfectly designed family room scores big for quality time during the holiday season

One way to defeat the inevitable cold and dark of the winter months is to nestle indoors with cosy winter textures in a room that offers relaxation and comfort. Homeowners Kyle and Melanie Richie approached my firm to turn their walk-out basement family room into a space just like that. But there was one stipulation: the room must be ready for the 2014 hockey season so they could hunker down and enjoy the game on a chilly night.

## THE GAME PLAN

For clients and designers, it's helpful to start with a source or a jumping-off point when creating a fabulous interior. In this case, it was the rustic brick wall that inspired the welcoming atmosphere for this family retreat.

I began sourcing fabric swatches with a relaxed organic feel, and also took into consideration fabrics that could take the wear-and-tear of everyday living. From there, I began to build my colour scheme and decided on a navy blue linen sectional sofa with toss cushions in a geometric pattern to give it some interest and contrast.

Good design doesn't always have a ton of pattern, paint or wow-factor wallpaper. Sometimes, it's just about the way the eye moves around a room and the interesting elements that go into the space. It's found in the marriage of materials and the combination of finishes and textures.



## THE FACE OFF

I sat down with the couple to determine their wants and needs. Kyle, a successful investment entrepreneur, and Melanie, a busy stay-at-home mom, needed a space where they could spend downtime relaxing, playing games and watching TV with their three children.

They wanted their family room to feel cosy and inviting, somewhere they could also entertain friends and family. A space that could withstand just about anything kids can dish out.

Kyle and Melanie gave me free reign to tackle their basement renovation project and allowed me carte blanche to let my creative juices flow. And through thoughtful design choices, we created a room that has become their personal escape from a hectic lifestyle.



**THE LINEUP**

It's important to think about the function of the room before considering the other elements. Once the everyday use of the living space is determined, a floor plan is essential so the type of furniture and the scale of the space can be taken into consideration prior to sourcing new items.

This room was no exception. In order to fill the large area with ample seating, this required larger scale items, which meant some customization. The sectional sofa was made to my specifications so it would take up a large amount of the living space and be able to accommodate any number of guests.

On a shopping excursion to my favourite Toronto furniture boutique, I found this fabulous coffee table. The scale and the finish fit the bill for the space as well as the "kid factor." It's indestructible and meets the wear-and-tear-of-everyday-living criterion.

**IN THE ZONE**

Even during together time, not everyone may want to be doing the same thing. To keep everyone in the same room, and happy, I created several action zones. This room has a "together space" centred around the sofa, a separate chair where someone can sit and read, and a table where someone else can play games, draw, craft or do a puzzle.

Since storage was also necessary, the rustic leaning bookshelves were a perfect solution as they harmonized with the relaxed esthetic; they also store games and crafts, and they're ideal for highlighting special treasures.



"One way to embrace the cold and dark is to just go with it like a hibernating animal and nestle indoors with cosy winter textures in a room that offers relaxation and comfort."

paint colours



**SOURCES**

The custom upholstered furniture, chandelier over the games table, and custom artwork are from Sarah St. Amand Interior Design. **ACCESSORIES:** homesense.ca; **BOOKSHELVES, COFFEE TABLE, SIDE TABLE:** elte.com; **PAINT:** Walls, Dufferin Terrace CC-456; Trim, Cloud White OC-130; Games Room, Grey Shower 2125-30; benjaminmoore.ca



**TEAM BUILDING**

Mixing old and new elements always adds interest to any space. On a sourcing trip, I found vintage maps from a thrift shop and had them customized in a simple black frame so they would be the perfect backdrop to the sectional sofa. From there, I decided to add a custom feature wall of downtown Toronto street names. Comfy furnishings and accessories such as toss cushions and throws enhance the warm, inviting look.

After many months of renovations, and just in time for the 2014/15 hockey season, the Richie family can finally enjoy all the comforts of their cosy retreat.

When the family room was completed, Kyle came into the room, said nothing, and gave me a thumbs-up! As a designer, I made my goal. Let's see how the hockey season plays out. ♦



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