



Left: Carla Pavlov at Benjamin Moore and Cameron Moore and Wallpaper Ltd. Below: Carla (centre) with Benjamin Moore owner Paul Medeiros (right) and DJ's Painting owner Jim Davis (left). Above: Carla's son's bedroom.

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CARLA PAVLOV

Carla Pavlov, who owns CR Designs, is a native Samarian, but left for a dozen years, working in the Toronto market. Ironically, her return to the area was prompted by her husband, who isn't local, who found a job here.

Carla studied interior design in Windsor before returning to school to study marketing.

"I've always taken courses through whatever firm I'm working with," she says, which gave her the skills and confidence to open up her own business. "I live, eat and breathe design and decorating." Carla says of her chosen career, adding that she was born into it.

"My father was a builder and my parents always had rental properties. I feel like my blood's part paint," she says, adding that "at 10 years of age, I urethaned my first floor."

Although CR Designs only started a year and a half ago, Carla has 20 years of experience behind her.

Even when she was living in Toronto, visits home always paid for themselves as she was kept busy working with projects here.

The CR stands for commercial and residential – Carla enjoys working with clients in both areas.

"I can help with floor and furniture plans, lighting designs, colour plans

and long-term plans that allow a project to be completed in stages, as the budget allows," she says. "I pride myself for acting similar to a project manager."

Any redesign project can be a daunting task. Carla says "all people should work with an interior designer. You get a professional design for a small percentage of the total cost."

Carla says, "When I walk into a room I can see it done, and other designers have the same ability." But anyone who doesn't have that innate sense should be cautious about going it alone.

When thousands of dollars are being spent on a new design, Carla says people are only shortchanging themselves by not calling in a professional.

"Why not have a guarantee it's going to look good?" she asks. Running the gamut from modern to traditional, Carla says her "designs reflect the individual taste of clients. They're always unique, always innovative, always creative."

She says she steers clear of "a signature design style imposed on every space." Carla too believes that working closely with the client is the key to success.

She says, "I can't tell you how many people tell me 'I'm afraid to have people over,'" because their home is so outdated.

That's understandable, says Carla, who says colours change about every 10 years, and that "you're almost forced to change every 10 years." Kitchens and bathrooms, she believes, should be updated even more frequently.

This fall, she says the look includes "a lot of fabrics," and there's a warming trend, so velvet, chenilles, tweeds and wools will be popular.

"As far as colours," she says, "hot and spicy; espresso, paprika, tan, rust, honey brown, moss green, cinnamon and chocolates. Red's huge and tangerine." She says this season's colour scheme is "hot spicy" food-oriented.

Her own 22-year-old home, Carla says, is currently "under construction." She calls her own style "contemporary classic," and says she's definitely into current trends.

"My husband complains he never knows what he's walking into when he comes home," she says. Combining her business and home under one roof is working well for now, she says.

Her favourite room in the house is her son's bedroom, which she not only loves for its design elements, but for its sentimental value.

"I did a wall mural for him to reflect where we live and it's one of those fun, whimsical rooms that's light and bright and fun."

She says her father enjoyed doing pen and ink drawings, and in his younger days had been a sailor. When she told him she was doing a nautical theme in her son's room, he sent her three drawings by courier, the very next day.

"Shortly after that, he passed away," she says. "It's kind of an emotional room. I became very passionate about it."

The room, like all of her painting, was done with Benjamin Moore paint and she does all the local consultations for that line as well.

Carla's a big fan of the product, and says, "The colours are amazing, and I also like a high-quality paint."

For more information on CR Designs, visit www.crinteriorsigns.com or call 519-869-6026.

Karen Robinet has been a journalist for 25 years and has her own communications business, publictybound.ca.

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