

BOLD STRIPES | DESIGNER NURSERIES | LOVELY LILACS

# BC HOME & GARDEN

easy style ideas  
for the home:

- PRETTY ACCESSORIES
- DIY PROJECTS
- SPRING CONTAINERS

*Fresh* + fun spring  
entertaining

STANDARD ISSUE

How to tackle a typical Vancouver city lot

# ask the experts...



**PRO PICK** Williams and Sonoma jumps on the technology train with their sleek iPad kitchen stand and optional Bluetooth speaker attachment for added sound output.

In this issue our experts spruce up your winter containers, add a masculine touch to a girly space, match a white kitchen with the best countertop and table, walk you through your first succulent container garden, optimize seating in a bowling alley-like living room and dole out budget-friendly landscaping tips.



**Q** We have just purchased a home and I don't have a lot of money left over for landscaping. What's the best use of my budget?

**GLENNA PARTRIDGE answers:** Use what you have. Start with existing trees and shrubs. They are the backbone of any garden. A qualified arborist can advise you on necessary pruning or removal. Keep as many large specimens as you can. With proper pruning and cleanup, your garden will look better without planting anything additional.



For instant gratification, plant your favourite flowers, herbs and vegetables in a few large containers. Place them close to your outdoor seating area and they will satisfy your need for colour, be easy to maintain and won't cost as much as planting entire beds and borders.

PHOTO (portrait) Dennis Green

**Q** The kitchen in my new home is going to have white cupboards and dark hardwood floors – what do you recommend for a countertop and kitchen table?

**TAMARA WOUTERS and EMMA COMESOTTI answer:**

There are a number of directions you can go in choosing your countertop. Our preference is to use a light to mid-tone counter material in either a natural or engineered stone. This creates a dramatic effect that doesn't break up the contrast you've created by choosing dark floors and light cabinets. When it comes to your kitchen table, we have two suggestions. If you are keen to use a dark table, we recommend pairing it with light-coloured chairs to continue the contrast between light and dark. A second option is to use a light table, preferably in white, to tie in with your cabinets. In this case, either light or dark chairs would work well, depending on your preference.



**Q** My winter containers are starting to look tired. Is there anything I can do that will spruce them up from now until annual season?



**JORDAN MCDONALD answers:**

A great early spring container should include **structure, foliage, flowers** and **filler**. Do a quick tidy of your pots: remove anything that is dead, damaged or outdated. Add structure to your container with a tall, slender, freshly cut evergreen or an orange sedge (*Carex*). Then add some interesting foliage

plants such as heucheras, blue fescue or sedum 'Angelina'. Try spring bulbs, hellebores, primulas, violas or winter heather for flowers and toss in moss or decorative stones as filler. Work back to front starting with the tallest plant. Make sure the flowering plants are centre stage and close to the front. Cover any exposed soil with moss or stones. Don't skimp on the filler – it is what completes the fresh look.

PHOTO (portrait) Dennis Green

**SEE** Jordan create a spring container at [bcliving.ca/container-expert](http://bcliving.ca/container-expert)

**Q** My partner is moving into my condo, which is very bright and feminine. How can we add some masculine touches to balance out what currently looks like a girls-only club?

**A GOOD CHICK TO KNOW answers:** Welcoming your partner into your home is a fabulous opportunity to grant fresh eyes to your decor. It's often the juxtaposition



between masculine and feminine elements that creates a well-balanced space.

One of our favourite ways to tone down the femininity and add visual interest is to incorporate industrial pieces (vintage or reclaimed items will also add a sense of story to your home). In condos, try industrial shelving (1). Custom pieces can be created for a reasonable cost and provide personalized storage options while adding a cool and more masculine

backdrop to showcase your treasures (2). At AGCTK we love to support local talent – our go-to guys for super cool custom industrial pieces are at Shop Wrong (1192 E. Hastings St., Vancouver) and Union Wood Co. (503 Railway St., Vancouver).

Another easy injection of industrial chic is through lighting (3). Even the most feminine of rooms can achieve "gender balance" with the right light choices. Oversized metal lighting creates a bold statement without having to give up your best girly pieces. Try wall-mounted bedside sconces in lieu of table lamps as another sweet space-saver. A local gem to find stellar industrial lighting (and maybe a custom piece if you ask nicely) is Space Lab (1847 Main St., Vancouver).

PHOTOS Tracey Ayton

