

*Working and Living in Durham**Darlene Breault**I treat each of my clients as if they are my only client!***Top renovation tips to make your renovation run smoothly**

By Erin McLaughlin, Style At Home

**Budget, budget, budget:** I can't say it enough. I'm an optimist who always believes that if you spend money on a quality reno instead of cheaping out, the necessary funds will magically appear. In reality, we know that isn't true! So make sure you do your homework. Talk to a friend who has been through a similar reno, do as much window shopping and cost-comparisons that you can do. Make sure that you tack on at least an extra 20% for those inevitable issues that will spring up. And check your budget with your contractor or trades regularly to make sure you're on track. Finally, don't borrow to renovate if you can. A reno is much more satisfying if you save up the necessary funds before your renovate.

**Find the right contractor:** We've all heard the horror stories (and I've certainly been witness to a few of them). My usual recommendation is that the best contractors can be found through word of mouth. But if you can't come up with a good referral, I am happy to say that you can find great contractors on the Internet. Check out sites such as [www.handy canadian.com](http://www.handy canadian.com) or [www.homerenovationguide.com](http://www.homerenovationguide.com). Make sure you get several referrals before you sign any agreements!

**Be realistic:** Dreaming is the start of any good renovation, but to have a good experience, you have to be realistic about what you can accomplish based on your budget, resources and your existing home. So many of us (particularly in this era of low interest rates and easily accessible home equity loans) will live beyond our means-just to have that gorgeous gourmet kitchen or marble bathroom. If you are absolutely committed to the dream of something that you can't afford, see if you are able to renovate in stages. For example, in my first home, I really wanted a stone floor in my kitchen. The price well exceeded my budget. I didn't want to compromise so I decided to wait to do the floor until I could afford the stone that I really wanted. I ended up painting my subfloor a putty grey and had the millworkers design my kitchen with an extra-high kick – which allowed me the room to install the stone floor later. Ironically, I ended up selling the home. One of the things that the new homeowners loved was the painted wooden kitchen floor!

**Do your research:** Talk to friends who have renovated as well as other real estate and reno experts. It's really important before you embark on the renovation rollercoaster that you have a clear understanding of what to expect. Plus, you need to make sure that you bring your thoughts and research to the table. Clip photos out of magazines of rooms that you love. Scour shops and the Internet for the latest and greatest. Have a general idea of how you want the space to look and feel. If you are overwhelmed, find a designer who can help you lead the way. If you want to find a reputable interior designer, log on to the Internet. In Ontario, you can get fantastic referrals through the Association of Registered Interior Designers. Other provinces also have their own associations.

**It's all in the details:** Thinking big picture should be commended, but we know that details are what can make or break a reno. I will never forget standing naively in the catacomb that was eventually to become my gorgeous new bathroom, delighted with myself that I had ordered my faucets, my tiles and my vanity. "Where are the rough-ins?" bellowed my plumber? "Rough-ins?" I asked, a shaky note of trepidation colouring the tone of my voice. Within moments, the glory of having provided everything to my trades had vanished as I realized that I had not ordered the "cake" of the faucets, only the shiny chrome icing. My error held up my reno for another two weeks. So make sure you have a list (or multiple lists for each room), and make sure that you confirm and reconfirm that everything has been ordered, has been delivered, etc.

**Renovate for the future:** Trends are for accessorizing, not for renovating. A rule of thumb for renovating is that doing a high-quality job in a classic style is exactly that: classic. If you invest in quality finishes now, you won't regret it. Forget about being a slave to fashion instead, think how dated those olive-green appliances look 20 years later. At the end of the day, there's nothing more classic than a basic white refrigerator or a white pedestal sink.

**Check in every day:** Your contractor will tell you that you only need to come by once a week. Don't believe him or her! You need to do a site visit every day. Unless you have an incredibly trustworthy person to oversee your reno, you really don't want to go on holiday or avoid the site. You need to be there ALL THE TIME. Mistakes will happen, and you need to make sure you're there to react to them. The longer that mistake goes unseen, the more expensive it will be to change it.

**Have fun!** It's not all doom and gloom. At the end of the day, there's nothing more rewarding than watching a space be transformed by good design decisions and great workmanship. Better still is the day when the work is done and you can enjoy the results.

As your Neighbourhood Realtor I am always happy to provide you with a comparable market analysis of your property. So please do not hesitate to call. I will be happy to assess the current market value of your home and talk about any

Real Estate queries you may have. It's always a pleasure!

Contact Darlene @ 905-723-5944 or [Darlene@ListedByDarlene.ca](mailto:Darlene@ListedByDarlene.ca)





**6<sup>th</sup> Annual  
KELLER WILLIAMS ENERGY**

**TURKEY DRIVE**



One of the core values and reasons I joined Keller Williams Energy is their commitment to making a difference in the community, their slogan is "Give Where You Live". In the spirit of this, we have just kicked off our 6th annual Turkey Drive Campaign. Our goal is to support 1500 local families which equates to approx 6000 people, in need this Christmas with a Turkey basket and Trimmings! The cost to support a local family is \$35 per family. If you would like to take part please contact me at the number or email below. Thank you for your generous support from all of us at Keller Williams Energy.

*The kindest compliment you  
can give me is the  
referral of your  
friends & family  
Thank you for your trust*

**Market Statistics**

- The average selling price for September transactions was \$533,797 – up by 6.5% year-over-year. Through the first three quarters of 2013, the average selling price was \$520,118 – up by over 4% compared to the first nine months of 2012.
- "It's great news that households have found that the costs of home ownership, including mortgage payments, remain affordable. This is why the third quarter was characterized by renewed growth in home sales in the GTA. We expect to see sales up for the remainder of 2013, as the pent-up demand that resulted from stricter mortgage lending guidelines continues to be satisfied," said TREB President Dianne Usher.

Full Market Watch Report is available at  
[www.ListedByDarlene.ca](http://www.ListedByDarlene.ca)

**Summary of Existing Home Transactions in Durham Region**

	New Listings	Active Listings	Avg. Sold Price	Avg. Days on Market
Durham Region	1,419	1,717	98%	25
Ajax	226	221	98%	20
Brock	38	107	94%	86
Clarington	223	271	98%	27
Oshawa	340	343	98%	21
Pickering	213	233	99%	24
Scugog	62	123	97%	54
Uxbridge	50	158	97%	42
Whitby	277	261	99%	17

**Community Events**

**Mistletoe Market**

When: Oct 19 2013, 10am-2pm

Where: Emmanuel Community Church, 1680 Reach St.

**6th Annual KW Energy Turkey Drive**

When: October - Nov. 30

Contact [darlene@listedbydarlene.ca](mailto:darlene@listedbydarlene.ca)

**Harvest Moon Dance**

When: Oct 25 2013, 8pm-12am

Where: Jubilee Pavillion, 55 Lakeview Park Ave

**Faith United Church Christmas Bazaar**

(fruit cakes, home baking, jams, jellies, knitting, quilts, used books, delicious lunch and so much more)

When: October 26, Doors open at 9 a.m..

Where: 1778 Nash Road, Courtice

**2013 FALL ART SHOW & SALE**

When: Oct 27 2013, 10am-4pm

Where: Ajax Creative Arts, 22 Sherwood Rd.W.at Linton, Pickering Village



**Sudoku**

Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9 .

		1				9	5	
2			3		9	1		
4	3			8				
					4		6	8
		6			3			2
	4	8		9				
			1	4				9
1	8		9			2		
9		3			2			1

For solution visit [www.ListedByDarlene.ca](http://www.ListedByDarlene.ca)



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