



WESTCOAST HOMES

Second
of two
sections

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LOOKING GOOD



The new home is from John Dean; its personality, from Huong Nguyen. 'She personalized the whole home with these amazing finds — art work, lamps, furniture, sculptures, twigs, buckets and executed it bang on,' he comments.

Space her stage in new-build in Kerrisdale

Retailer creates sales aid for builder by fusing contemporary, traditional

BY MICHELLE HOPKINS

When developer and builder John Dean decided to sell one of the four Stone Residences in Vancouver's Kerrisdale neighbourhood he is building, he decided to engage the services of a home stager.

He wanted a fusion champion, someone who could imagine a modern interior enclosed by an architecturally traditional exterior.

And he wanted a "Buy B.C." champion, someone whose interior additions, or insertions, would be sourced locally.

In Huong Nguyen of the Spotted Frog Furniture Co. he found his stager.

"What I really liked about Huong Nguyen is that all of her products and furniture are made here locally ... that's important to me," Dean says.

"She's also amazingly enthusiastic, she knows what she likes and knows how to put it together."

A new-construction home in Kerrisdale is a home, inevitably, in which local history is a principal design influence: There is so much there, and for so many years.

"We built the house in keeping with the neighbourhood charm, but the inside is more modern, a mix of formal and casual, and Huong was able to put all those different elements together ... when I saw what she did, I was amazed and thrilled."

He went on to say that Nguyen seemed to have an innate ability to come into an environment, get a feel for the unique features that make it work and then find exactly what furnishings would best suit it.

"She personalized the whole home with these amazing finds — art work, lamps, furniture, sculptures, twigs, buckets and executed it bang on."

"She was able to marry elements of traditional design with the overall contemporary design."

The first order of business for Nguyen was to take time to get "a sense of the house and its natural surroundings."

She spent time going through the home, looking at all its custom features, enhancing the best ones to catch potential buyers' interest.

"When I went through the house, I envisioned our target market as being a young executive family with small children," says Nguyen. "So, the furnishings had to be functional and able to grow with the family."

Since the house was built with lots of windows — to allow for lots of natural light to come through — Nguyen opted not to put any window treatments on the windows.

"However, if someone wanted to put window dressings, I would suggest very sheer textiles, nothing heavy, to soften up the window treatment ... it doesn't go with a true West Coast home," she says. "Most new homes being built in B.C. today are inspired by nature and the environment."

"Hence, most developers and builders are putting in huge, exaggerated windows."

Nguyen went on to add: "Because of our temperate weather and all the natural light, homeowners don't usually layer on huge drapes, rather they prefer sheer or real functional wood blinds to allow nature in."

In the kitchen, Nguyen complemented the stunning millwork and Italian cabinetry, all illuminated by Halogen flush mount lighting, with a minimalist decor. For the table she chose a square table — not typically seen in many kitchens, she agrees.

"I chose a square bistro height table because it's the perfect shape to encourage conversation," says Nguyen. "I really envisioned catering to a lifestyle."

"Since the walls throughout the house are painted in a serene palette, I went with lots of greys, blues and greens which are cool, soothing tones through-



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out." Meanwhile, many developers are seeing the value of hiring home stagers to close sales.

"Huong is like an artist, she took a blank canvas and created art," adds Dean. "I think staging allows prospective buyers to see themselves living

there."

Nguyen agrees. "It's about perfecting the art of creating a mood," she says.

To see a video of the house Nguyen and her team staged, visit http://movietours.ca/1087KC_Larch/ on the Internet.

The listing agent is Ken Chong, an agent with MacDonald Realty, at 604-671-1025; the listing price, \$2.75 million.

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