



A highlight of the country property is the 50'-long saltwater lap pool. A large crab apple offers some shade, while the columnar cedar was intended to be reminiscent of a cypress tree. **Trees**, Putzer Hornby Nursery; **pool**, Todd Pools; **paving, sodding and drystone wall**, Backyard Relief. **BELOW**: A simple stone ball in the perennial garden is one of many sculptural vignettes scattered throughout the property. **Perennials**, Beaver Valley Flower Farm; **bench**, Eddo Canada.



Natural Instinct

Striking architectural features add a modern twist to a historic country retreat.

Text by CATHERINE MACINTOSH | Photography by TED YARWOOD

The history of Perrett Farm runs deep in the Beaver Valley, a lush area of the Niagara Escarpment alive with unique plant and wildlife species. Named after the family who settled the land in the mid 1800s, the 25-acre farm boasts an old limestone grotto with an artesian spring once used for horses travelling along the pioneer road that still edges the idyllic property today. It's a storybook setting with an ironic twist — the most striking features of the farm are also some of its newest.

In 2006, the current owners — one a keen gardener and design lover; the other, a collector of fine early Canadian furniture — hired architect and friend Tony Belcher to redesign part of the property to include a lap pool, and convert an old drive shed into a guest suite and potting shed. "It was already quite beautiful," says Belcher of the property, that with its extensive perennial gardens and timeworn buildings evokes the

Styling by Sasha Seymour



ABOVE: Four beautifully weathered teak benches create a unique conversation area on the deck beside the main house. A haphazard grouping of stones creates a simple, organic centerpiece. **Benches, Eddo Canada.**

LEFT: Large limestone slabs form the steps up to the new walled pool area. The open pergola has slats of ipe wood that cast dramatic shadows. A large columnar cedar adds sculptural greenery.

BELOW: The south-facing view from the pool takes in a semi-circular lawn terrace, the owners' kitchen garden beside a stone wall (where they plant many types of vegetables and herbs in radiating rows) and the pond below. A lush bank of lavender plants evokes a French provincial garden.



feeling of a rolling Provençal estate.

The owners didn't want to see the pool from the house, so Belcher made it a charming destination by placing it 120 feet away, buffered by the tall perennial garden. But, while situating the pool a lovely stroll from the house was a smart concept, its site was less than ideal at first. The ground is quite sloped in this area and leads down to the old pioneer road (now a local county road), which presented issues with privacy and noise. And, with no large trees to offer shade or break the wind coming down off the Escarpment, it certainly wasn't ideal for poolside lounging.

Belcher's solution was a bold, new architectural wall made of local guillotined limestone that adds a historical look to the landscape, but also satisfies the local safety requirement of a 5-foot-high enclosure for pools. His inspiration came from his own travels through the area looking at the many picturesque stone buildings and walls that dot the countryside. "I love working on heritage buildings and I love modern design," says



ABOVE: Teak Lutyens benches alongside the perennial garden offer a quiet place to take in the scenery. **Perennials**, Beaver Valley Flower Farm; **benches**, Eddo Canada. LEFT: Antique bank vault doors were used to enclose the pool area by the cabana.

Antique **gates**, 507 Antiques.

BELOW: Built of local limestone, the pool wall is a striking architectural statement that provides shelter and privacy. At the south end of the pool, a lawn terrace stands in stark contrast to the wild ravine below.

Design, Anthony Belcher Architect; **masonry**, Walter Campbell; **stone**, Amsen Quarries; **wall coping**, Arriscraft.

Simple, natural objects used as sculpture can be found everywhere



OUTDOOR LIVING

RIGHT: The pool is purposely askew to the stone wall so that the patio is wider at one end than the other, creating a false sense of perspective that makes the space feel longer. Lattice doors on the cabana close to protect the wood armoire inside.

Design, Anthony Belcher Architect; **general contractor,** Forrest Contracting; **formed concrete,** Classic Contracting.

BELOW: Belcher and the homeowner sit with Anastasia Sparling of Beaver Valley Flower Farm; the owner volunteers many hours at the flower farm in exchange for hearty perennials and annuals. **Richard Schultz 1966 collection furniture,** Nienkämper; **pool,** Todd Pools.

BOTTOM: An antique bronze tap (a gift from one homeowner to the other) adorns the cistern that trickles to muffle the sound of the pool equipment. **Stone,** Amsen Quarries.



Belcher. “So here, I was able to marry these two styles.” To achieve the right mix, he topped the organic-looking wall, made of stones of irregular shape, colour and texture, with a modern, clean-lined coping.

Inside the walls, a real treasure awaits: a clean-lined saltwater pool with a dark Marbelite lining for the illusion of infinite depth gives the owners a private oasis for swimming laps. Attached to the wall is an open pergola with modern steel beams instead of the expected wood columns. Belcher’s modern-trad mix also extends to the furniture. “I had to veto the terracotta planters the owners first had by the pool,” jokes Belcher. (They found a home on the guesthouse veranda.) The owners did, however, get Belcher’s glowing approval for aluminum, mid-century-modern patio furniture designed by Richard Schultz that mirrors the minimalist lines of the pool. Now, not only does the new pool area offer privacy, it offers simple luxury with an outdoor shower and a washroom built into the cabana.

The couple has lived at Perrett Farm since the 1980s,

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COOL CUBAN

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Delux Restaurant, Toronto (416) 537-0134 or visit deluxrestaurant.ca. **Page 163:**

Plated meal: Plate, Twice Found, Toronto (416) 534-3904 or visit twicefound.com.

Page 164: Hearts of Palm Salad with Cilantro Vinaigrette: Fabric, Designer Fabrics, Toronto (416) 531-2810 or visit designerfabrics.ca; salad servers, Rustica Tabletop, Toronto (416) 829-6972 or visit rusticatabletop.com; dark blue plate, Twice Found, Toronto (416) 534-3904 or visit twicefound.com.

Page 166: Roast Chicken with Achioté and Lime: Pan, Rustica Tabletop, Toronto (416) 829-6972 or visit rusticatabletop.com; bowl, Twice Found, Toronto (416) 534-3904 or visit twicefound.com. **Page 168: One-Pot Black Beans and Rice and Fried Ripe Plantains:** Surface, glasses, Rustica Tabletop, Toronto (416) 829-6972 or visit rusticatabletop.com.

Page 170: Tres Leches Cake: Pan, Rustica Tabletop, Toronto (416) 829-6972 or visit rusticatabletop.com; jug, Twice Found, Toronto (416) 534-3904 or visit twicefound.com.



FOOD NEWS

Pages 172 and 174

Page 172: CSA Farms: In B.C., visit ffcf.bc.ca; Ontario, visit csafarms.ca; Quebec, visit equiterre.org.

3 of A Kind: Purdy's Chocolates, visit purdys.com for locations; coffee mill, Avenue 18, visit avenue18.ca for retailers across Canada; espresso set, MoMA Store, visit momastore.org. **Page 174:** *Miss Dahl's Voluptuous Delights* by Sophie Dahl, William Morrow (2010), visit williammorrow.com for retailers; Summer Kitchen Fine Foods, visit summer-kitchen.com; Frigidaire, call 1-800-668-4606 or visit frigidairecanada.ca.



TRENDWATCH

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Clothes, visit josephaltuzarra.com; fabric, Kravet Canada (to the trade), Vancouver (604) 255-4242,

Calgary (403) 270-9690, Mississauga, Ont. (905) 607-0706, Toronto (416) 921-1262, Montreal (514) 931-2437, 1-800-535-3258 or visit kravetcanada.com for showrooms across Canada; chaise longue, B&B Italia, visit bebialia.com; throw pillow, Jonathan Adler, visit jonathanadler.com for retailers across Canada; mosaic tile, Bisazza, call 1-800-BISAZZA or visit bisazzausa.com for retailers across Canada; pitcher, The MacBeth Collection by Margaret Josephs, visit themacbethcollection.com; handbag, Sparrow Handbags, visit sparrowhandbags.com; table, Lee Walsh, visit leewalsh.co.uk; perfume candle, Agraria, visit agrariahome.com; wastebasket, Spisani Designers, visit spisani.it. **H&H**

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dividing their time between here and a house in Toronto, so the main house already had a real sense of their personalities, showcasing their fantastic collection of early Canadian furniture. Belcher aimed to connect the new spaces with the old, by referencing the house's architecture in the new pool cabana and the guesthouse. Simple touches like borrowing a turquoise armoire from the main house for towels and sound equipment carries over the owners' decorating style to the outdoor space.

The new kitchen garden is planted alongside a charming stone wall, another peaceful spot to enjoy the farm's rolling vistas

Belcher added another new stone wall opposite the pool that acts as a charming retaining wall and creates a semi-circular lawn terrace. The new kitchen garden is planted alongside it in radiating rows, offering another peaceful destination for the green-thumbed owner to enjoy the rolling vistas of the farm while tending to the fruits of his labours. The owner's stamp of using simple, natural objects as sculptures is everywhere — wicker baskets at the ready for fresh garden finds, a giant stone ball peeking out from the garden, or a mass of found rocks on a moss-covered table. And while the gardens have shifted, and bold new structures have been added, everything here still feels very much at home in the Beaver Valley. **H&H**

