



INTERIOR DESIGNER LORI MORRIS

Toronto's queen of opulence.

Writer **Richard Ainscough**

Toronto-based interior designer **Lori Morris** has achieved what many in her field strive for: she has created an unmistakable style of her own.

A masterful balance of elegance and opulence, Morris's work is refreshingly feminine—a departure from current contemporary **interior design** trends of hard edges, dark colours, and steel. Her trademarks include plush furniture, ornate mirrors, warm-toned woods, natural elements like marble and slate, and unapologetic colours—pastels are a favourite. Dramatic fireplaces with carved mantles frequently appear, and it seems that no room is complete without the addition of a chandelier or a filigree picture frame, or two. So unabashedly fanciful are Morris's designs, one could imagine a latter-day Marie Antoinette sampling **marrons glacés** amid the proliferation of velvets and silks in one of her canopied bedrooms—yet Morris never veers into overwhelming self-caricature. Her work inhabits a sweet spot between modern sleekness and the grandeur of the French Rococo period.

“I feel that I'm a trend setter in terms of what I will do because I have no boundaries,” Morris asserts. Ever alert, the designer travels the world seeking for hyper-unique materials, furnishings, and skilled artisans to help her visions materialize. She identifies as an artist who uses furnishings and architecture to communicate a story. “When you create an original painting, you're not comparing it to anything, so it's an original piece—it's sometimes hard to understand at first ...” she says of her self-acknowledged ability to set design trends, “and then it becomes mainstream, and I've already moved onto the next level.” Currently, she is experimenting with embellishing the grouted space between tiles with **Swarovski** crystals.

When discussing her methods of finding inspiration, Morris doesn't struggle to keep things fresh; she feels equipped with her internal resources. “I don't think you can really teach someone to be artistic and creative,” she admits. “I think that it is something that you have in you, and I have it in abundance, so for me it's just a matter of really taming it as opposed to trying to find it.”

The House of Lori Morris Design offers client services on par with Morris's regal designs. Every renovation is assigned a project manager who works to liaise between clients and Morris herself. An in-house concierge team assists with moving clients into their homes, as well as overseeing home maintenance once each space has been completed.

If one is in the market to renovate a château, consider Morris an ersatz fairy godmother able to make the most opulent dreams come true.

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