

Burlington Bay home with a float plane down the block

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90 Oaklands Park Court, Burlington, Ont.

Asking price: \$5,288,800

Taxes: \$12,680.40 (2023)

Lot size: 119.9 by 144.96 feet

Listing agents: Elise Kalles and Jen Tripp, Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd., brokerage

The house today

The concept of compromise is often presented in a negative light. But as in all things, it's the details that count.

For married couple Tanya L. DeAngelis and Daniel Russell, partners in business and life, buying a house in Burlington was a compromise to relocate between their previous home in Toronto to get closer to Mr. Russell's business interests in the Niagara region. They weren't overly familiar with Burlington, but they were pitched on a unique street on Burlington Bay that has seen more than its share of billionaires and millionaires over the years.

“When we bought that house we got a folder with the name of every person on the street,” said Ms. DeAngelis. Among the current and former residents of Oaklands Park were Tim Horton’s co-founder Ron Joyce, who built a billion-dollar donut empire (his son Ron Jr. and Mr. Horton’s daughter Jeri-Lyn married, and still live a few doors down), former trucking magnate Michael DeGroot and David Braley, who owned three CFL teams over his career. The couple purchased their house from the Swire family, who were prominent franchise operators with Kentucky Fried Chicken. “It’s a friendly area,” said Ms. DeAngelis, “At Halloween, they all gave out really nice trick or treat bags,” she said.

Ms. DeAngelis was pregnant with her daughter when they bought the home 11 years ago, and before moving in the couple undertook a major renovation to update the interiors while leaving the exterior relatively untouched.



Home of the Week, 90 Oaklands Park Court, Burlington, Ont.
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“My dad was the contractor. He did the renovations for us ... it was special to have that done by my father,” said Ms. DeAngelis. Her father, Salvatore (Sam) died in 2017.

The inspiration for the new interior was the West Coast, and their stays at Vancouver’s Fairmont Pacific Rim hotel.

“We started going out there about 15 years ago. We’re the largest shareholders of a company – Synex Renewable Energy Corp. – being on the board of that company was what drew us out there,” she said. The chief draw to Oaklands Park was the waterfront access, including riparian rights for having a dock (rare in the area). “We love the water; the sparkles at night, the sunrises. [Mr. Russell] had a kayak, there are neighbours with jet-skis, one neighbour has a float plane they dock at the house.”

Down to business

Despite the wealth and prestige of residents of the street, with few exceptions the exterior presentation of the homes are low-key, suburban-standard and No. 90 is no different.

“We thought about changing the façade, but at the end of the day you live inside your home, not outside,” said Ms. DeAngelis. “What’s magical about this home is that it’s such a surprise. It’s nice to be discreet in this day in age, where you know what’s inside and no-one else does.”

Stepping past the beige brick of the single-storey ranch-style home you enter into a small foyer with a closet that opens onto a staircase leading to the finished basement and beyond that into a massive great room centred by the kitchen.

This is the space most informed by the lobby of the Fairmont: There are two granite islands that waterfall to the warm oak floor (very much like the check-in desk) and above the prep area is a square wood panel in the same honey colour, much like the wood ceiling in the lobby. The cabinetry millwork under the islands and on the pantry is also in planks, with a slightly lighter stain.

Behind a pocket door in the kitchen is a short hallway/mud room that connects to the garage and the back stairs to the basement (as well as a two-piece powder room).

A step down from the kitchen is a large living room with a wall of book-matched marble that gives the veins in the stone an almost Rorschach-blot effect as it surrounds the fireplace (an upgrade over the hotel's use of stone slabs on its walls).

On the back of these two spaces is a long sunroom that was formerly three-season and is now an all-year-round space with more of the honey-coloured planks on the ceiling. This long, light-filled space looks through window walls onto the pool deck and bay beyond.

There are three bedrooms on this level, off to the right of the front foyer. Two smaller children's rooms with front-yard-facing windows with an oversized ensuite bathroom sitting between these rooms and the lake-facing primary suite.

The bathroom has more hotel inspiration: marble-clad floors and walls with tub, separate shower and double vanity. The storage cabinets are the same millwork style as the kitchen and the warm wood pairs with the light browns in the marble to warm up the space. The doors in all these rooms are taller than standard, in rich brown stain against the mainly white walls, which adds another bit of hospitality style to the space.

Downstairs has two bedrooms (which have been used by guests or live-in caregivers and nannies over time) as well as a large home gym space. A bonus room has rough-ins for a kitchen and a large L-shaped rec room fits a pool table and media-watching corner comfortably. Look carefully and you'll notice quite a few stickers attached here and there, a telltale sign a space was well-used and enjoyed by the couple's two small children.

A resort on Burlington Bay



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The backyard has always been a retreat and a place to soak up the sun and the lake, but during COVID-19 the couple added a salt-water infinity pool to kick the relaxation up a notch.

“It’s a complete resort feel,” said Ms. DeAngelis. “Go outside, have a coffee, sit down ... it’s very private out there, you can wear your pyjamas.” The most you are likely to see is some friendly boaters sailing or paddling by. The house has permits for a dock and the retaining wall has an access point for the one they moved up to their cottage.

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