

# This iPad is loaded with renderings, and you can keep it if you buy a condo

**Clever, clever! The Rockport Group** is using iPads as bait to sell units in Twenty One Clairtrel, the mid-rise boutique condo at Bayview and Sheppard. The iPads, loaded with renderings and floorplans, are given to potential purchasers to take home during the 10-day cooling-off period. If you decide to buy, you get to keep it. If not, you have to give it back. “People have really hon-

**TECH BAIT**  
oured us and given them back, if they’ve chosen not to purchase,” says a company spokesperson. “The initial premise was that it would be a good selling tool, but we also felt it would be a nice opportunity for purchasers to review the information in the quiet of their own home.”

Since the promo, which started two weeks ago, 10 people have bought condos. The initiative has been a great success, says the company spokesperson. Visit [twentyonecondos.com](http://twentyonecondos.com).  
*National Post*



# The colours of rusticity, one country at a time

BOOK REVIEW

**Country Color**  
By Judith Miller  
Photography by Simon Upton  
Vendome Press  
176 pp; \$45.50

By MARTHA UNIACKE BREEN

There's nothing country-goose or frilly about *Country Color*: this beautifully illustrated volume explores the various palettes of rustic interiors worldwide and gives detailed advice on the materials and colours that authenticate the look. Divided into palettes rather than individual hues, the book provides chapters devoted to each grouping, along with suggested paint colours and fabric swatches. The index contains a list of (mostly) North American sources, along with the paint numbers and brands that the author, an internationally known designer, recommends. But what makes the book especially inviting are its photographs of interiors from Provence to Scandinavia, the American South and Northeast, to Mexico and Quebec. A sourcebook of regional colour, it's also a travelogue of the ways populations have decorated their interiors in humble ways, using the resources available to them. The book exposes the reader to all kinds of new, less familiar



COUNTRY COLOR

In this Dutch cottage, floral shades abound.

“folk” archetypes: Moroccan *tadelakt* walls (a marble-like finish made from a mixture of sand and quicklime), natural pigments and finishes such as limewash (once very popular in Britain as an inexpensive alternative to plaster), clays such as ochre and umber, or

animal/vegetable dyes such as madder, indigo and cochineal, made from crushed beetles. Whether you're looking for a nuts-and-bolts guide to recreating rustic interiors, or just looking for inspiration, *Country Color* delivers.  
*National Post*



Listed for \$1.65-million, the light-filled, offbeat Bell Tower has \$350,000 worth of upgrades.

# GET THEE TO THE funnery

Is that a nun's head? At a former church, this suite is like no other — and, oh, what heavenly ceiling heights! *By Connie Adair*

With a mix of modern and medieval, the Bell Tower suite is a place that piques the interest of the visitor, makes them think — and makes them smile. The former Howard Park Methodist Church on Sunnyside Avenue, in the Parkside and Bloor neighbourhood, once housed a nursery school, an auditorium, a basketball court and pews for more than 1,000 parishioners. The massive 1910 stone structure was bought by a developer in the early 2000s and was converted into residential lofts. In 2008, the first occupants began moving into The Abbey suites, no two of which are alike. The owners of the Bell Tower put much thought and cash (about \$350,000) into serious and not-so-serious upgrades throughout the 2,700-square-foot interior and 550-sq.-ft. exterior spaces (MLS# W1889416). From the original 26-foot high cathedral ceiling in the open-concept living area to the industrial kitchen, exposed limestone walls and pipes to modern granites, this suite is “modern meets Gothic romance,” says real estate agent Lynn Tribbling of Coldwell Banker Terrequity Realty. Wide open white spaces are punctuated with vibrant stained glass that stretches two storeys high and draws the eye upward, the visitor's gaze stopping only to notice a lamb statue, or two, resting atop limestone outcroppings. Subtle artwork in the hall takes the form of “wall spirits,” Ms. Tribbling says. “Parts of a nun and a pope peek out from the wall — a nose, half of a pope's hat, a hand holding a candle — with musing rather than scary faces.” Granite floors in the living room have insets of 32x32-inch etched-glass floor art. In the foyer, a Holstein “holy cow” statue stands beside massive wood bookshelves reminiscent of the stacks at the University of Toronto library, she says.

The space was designed to be not only beautiful, but functional too. The sleek kitchen, “the beating heart of the main floor,” has no upper cabinetry for a clean look, she says. “A 20-foot walk-in pantry was added to offer much-needed storage and a place to keep a wine collection.” A highly polished stainless steel staircase offers access to the upper levels, where there is a master bedroom with an ensuite spa bathroom complete with shoji screens, a spa tub, heated floors and a door to one of three terraces. The third-floor office, where the owners, a university professor and a school principal, write books and prepare speaking notes, is a minimalist space drenched in natural light. The outdoor turret landing has artificial grass, Ms. Tribbling says. “The owners were recently shopping for an antique lawn mower to put on the artificial grass.” From the top of the church tower are lake and park views. The media room, the only room that isn't white, has red walls and stained glass windows. It's like being inside a glass paperweight, Ms. Tribbling says. So fun, serious and interesting is the space that a photographer friend of the owners insisted on capturing it in an art book. “The suite offers numerous features and art to keep the mind fed. There is no downtown cookie cutter loft here,” Ms. Tribbling says. “Abbey Lofts were sold with little fanfare. Academics live here — professors, lawyers and people who think for a living.” But if it's not to the next owner's taste, the art and decor can simply be removed to transform the space into whatever the new owner desires, she says. “You could even do a Canadiana look with a simple wood table and church pews.” The Bell Tower suite is listed for sale for \$1.65-million.  
*National Post*

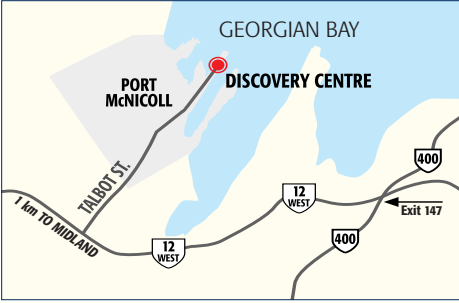


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