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*Helping Families Make the Right Move Since 1980*

## Celebrate Canada 150 by rediscovering Canadian cuisine



(NC) As you celebrate our special anniversary year, don't miss the amazing foods we have to offer. Here Lynn Crawford, one of Canada's most iconic chefs, shares some of the food trends she's currently seeing trend in our 150th year.

Canadian-international fusion. From far and wide, our multicultural mosaic means infusing Canadian favourites with international flavours. "Earlier this year, Canadian-international fusion made Loblaw's list of 2017 food trends, and they couldn't have been more right," remarks Crawford. Keep spice mixes like Za'atar, Togarashi and Ras El

Hanout to kick up the flavour in dips and barbecue meats. Or turn your meal routine upside down with sushi burritos made from British Columbian salmon, a steaming plate of butter chicken poutine or a kimchi grilled cheese.

French-Canadian cuisine. With popular restaurants like Joe Beef and Le Toqué, it's no surprise that Montreal recently topped a list of 10 rising star foodie destinations. It continues to get the attention of food blogs and food writers as the city celebrates its own 375th anniversary. Embrace our Quebecois heritage with hearty dishes like poutine, creton, baked beans, pea soup, tourtiere, ragoût de pattes de porc, and tarte au sucre. You can also try the bounty of locally produced cheese, bagels and smoked meats.

First Nations food. Discover foods with a history richer than our country's modest 150 years by learning about First Nations household favourites that have been enjoyed here for millennia.

"Some of my favourites to cook with are huckleberries, Saskatoon berries and baked apples. For meats I like pickerel, goose, quail and moose; and for grains wild rice barley and corn," says Crawford. Dip into the First Nation's cookbook scene and you'll find outstanding recipes like green corn leaf bread, traditional bannock, smoked salmon and roasted partridge.

Patriotic colour palette. Desserts are an easy place to add a pop of red and white to your party. Fresh strawberries, raspberries, cranberries and rhubarb are the perfect accompaniment to white chocolates, cakes, creams and meringues in airy summer desserts. "Try ingredients like cranberry juice and clamato for a festive touch in the drink department," advises Crawford.

## Top 5 summer home security tips

(NC) Most of us look forward to getting out of the house to enjoy the sun and warm weather. However, when planning your summer vacation or gearing up for

a sunny weekend getaway, it's important to secure your home, too.



Marc Barbeau, property claims manager from Intact Insurance, shares five items to include on your going-away checklist that will help protect your home against theft or damage.

1. Shutter your home and invest in security. Not only can a monitored security system with a posted sign help deter thieves, it may also qualify you for a discount on your home insurance. Draw your curtains, secure all windows and doors, and make sure all locks function properly. Install jams in sliding windows and doors and a safety bar on patio doors to help prevent access.

2. Trust a friend. Always let your insurer know if you're going away for extended periods of time. Arrange to give a set of keys to a neighbour or family member who can visit your home regularly to make sure everything is in order while you're away. This will help your home look lived-in and ensure any emergencies are covered.

3. Prevent water damage. In most provinces, water is the leading cause of home damage. Water damage is expensive and often difficult to eradicate. Identify and address water issues early to keep them from getting worse. Before travelling, turn off the main water supply valve to your

plumbing system and drain any appliances that hold water.

4. Unplug. All electrical and electronic devices like computers, televisions and portable air conditioners should be unplugged in case a power surge occurs while you are away, which could damage your property.

5. Maintain a record. Create an inventory of your possessions. Take pictures or videos of your valuables and always keep receipts. These records may make it easier for police and your insurance company to track items should something be stolen during your absence.

## Tips to protect your home from water damage



(NC) Did you know that water is the leading cause of home damage in most provinces? Just this past May, communities across the country had to cope with flooding as heavy rainfalls hit various regions over many days.

What can you do to protect your home? Here, Marc Barbeau, property claims manager of Intact Insurance shares his top four tips:

1. Water-resistant décor. The next time you're renovating your home, explore installing cement board instead of drywall in your basement. It's typically used in

showers and tubs and is less likely to absorb water. Cement boards are extremely moisture resistant and dry quickly when wet. For base moulding, consider a formed, paintable plastic material instead of wood. This way, even if water gets in, your home may be able to withstand excess water and mould damage.

2. Install backflow valves and sump pumps. A sump pump may help keep your basement safe and dry by collecting and disposing the water from your home. Already have a sump pump? Think about adding battery backup for times where the power is out.

When there's a heavy rainstorm, it may become too much for the sewers to handle, and waste can back up through floor drains, toilets and sinks. A backwater valve is a one-way valve that is installed on the main drain of your home. In the event of a backup, the valve closes to stop sewage from coming in.

3. Consider overland flood insurance. It's estimated that only 10 to 15 per cent of Canadians have insurance for overland flooding. New insurance products can help cover this. For example, Intact Insurance's enhanced water damage package consists of up to four components: sewer back-up, water and sewer lines, overland water and ground water. It's best that you talk to a broker to ensure you're getting the coverage you need.

4. Keep valuable items on higher floors. Store sentimental and valuable items on the upper floors of your home, away from the basement as many of these items may never be replaced if your basement floods.

## Ninety per cent of Canadians agree: Nothing brings people together like eating together



(NC) New research reveals that many of us struggle to actually sit down and enjoy a meal with others — and the key to more meal gatherings could lie in the food we serve.

Although a whopping 83 per cent of Canadians agree that families should eat together every night, only one in three are able to do so. Reasons for this include competing calendars of family members, busy work schedules and technology. These reasons are even more prevalent among the younger generation, indicating that the speed and complexity of modern life may be inhibiting family and community moments.

“We know that when people eat together, good things happen,” says Tom Phillipou, executive chef from President's Choice. “But in a world where fast-paced technologies and busy lifestyles can easily take over, it can be difficult to carve out time to enjoy meals with family and friends.”

If you want to bring your loved ones to the table, it's clear that the menu plays an essential role. In fact, 92 per cent of survey respondents agreed that food is a

common thread that ties people together.

The food itself varies by region, as Canadians embrace diverse flavours and ingredients. For example, nearly half of Ontarians believe that pancakes and maple syrup bring people together, while people from Nova Scotia are more inclined to enjoy seafood like lobster and chowder with others. In Quebec, Canadians believe tourtière, a dish steeped in history, has the power to unite. Along the west coast, BC residents enjoy eating Pacific salmon at a communal table.

“Food has a unique ability to create common ground and facilitate shared experiences,” says Phillipou. “When we acknowledge that fact and consciously select ingredients and dishes that we like to eat together, it becomes much easier to reap all the benefits associated with sharing a meal with others.”

## How to choose the perfect paint colour



(NC) Painting is a quick and inexpensive way to give a room a refresh, but committing to a new paint colour can feel intimidating. Ask any paint expert and they'll say that one of the most difficult parts of project is selecting the right colour. If you're looking for inspiration for your room or DIY endeavour, try some of these ideas.

Retailers. Home and garden retailers and paint supply stores have paint centres with colour cards, brochures, swatches and other great selection tools. These can be helpful in finding trend information and colour guides based on your goal for the room. Once you've narrowed down some options, grab a few free paint swatches or purchase a small sample size to test in your home. Paint broad sections at eye level to evaluate the colour, and remember that it's very easy to paint over test zones so don't worry about how dark the shades may be.

Online resources. Check out the websites of popular home magazines for inspiration from interior decorators and designers who share trending hues, and editor's picks for various rooms. You can also search your favourite home improvement and décor blogs and Pinterest for popular and fresh ideas. Additionally, many paint and sundry manufacturer websites also host libraries of inspiring image collections, colour advice and tips on how to paint. For example, the Painter's Mate Green site has tool recommendations, common mistakes to avoid, and how to select a painting tape.

Your environment. Look around — what colours are on the walls at your favourite restaurant or shop? What about your best friend's living room or a hotel bedroom? Within your own home, identify colours in artwork and accessories that appeal to you, and use those to begin a palette for a room. Great ideas often come from the spaces around you. Find more information online at [paintersmategreen.com](http://paintersmategreen.com).

## Creative ideas to maximize your summer



(NC) Does it ever feel like time flies by faster every year? Changing your habits and routine is a great way to fight the feeling of time passing you by — and summer is a great time to start. Instead of your normal seasonal activities, cultivate a new interest to enjoy. Here are some ideas that'll inspire you:

Develop a taste for the arts. That could be going to see a play, switching up the music you listen to, or trying out painting or pottery. Art has many mental health benefits and is a wonderful way to infuse some imagination into your life.

Set an athletic or health goal. If you are already sporty, participating in a long distance run could be a good option. If exercise is not part of your life, consider committing to an accessible, daily activity — a little bit of exercise can go a long way towards a healthier mind and body.

Try volunteering. Getting involved in a community festival, coaching a sports team, or helping out at a local non-profit are all great ways to meet new people and make a meaningful contribution and enhance self-esteem.

Engage with a cause. Whether its environmental issues, human rights or social justice, connecting

to a good cause is a great way to enrich your summer. Organizations like Amnesty International offer all kinds of accessible ways to get involved with people from all walks of life.

Find more information at [www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca).

## 5 ways to make your older home feel new



(NC) Dreaming of improving your home, but a major remodel isn't necessarily in the budget? It may seem basic, but a fresh coat of paint is an easy trick to give your home a new look. Try some of these simple, inexpensive paint projects that make for quick updates and keep the old-home charm.

Paint kitchen cabinets. This is an economical way to transform an outdated kitchen into something timeless. Select a primer that is recommended for the type of surface you have, then remove the cabinet doors and hardware and label them for easier reassembly. Use painter's tape to protect the wall or backsplash tile and cover the countertop with plastic or poly-sheeting. Instead of the typical two-step process to apply poly-sheeting, try using Painter's Mate double-sided poly-hanging tape to make prep time a breeze.

Revamp drawer pulls and door handles. Give your home a small but impactful refresh by updating

worn door handles, drawer knobs and pulls. Instead of replacing everything, try repainting — all you need is a screwdriver to remove knobs and handles and a metal spray paint. Before painting, clean the hardware and lightly sand to ensure that paint adheres easily. Add a layer of clear lacquer after the paint dries to help prevent scratches.

Create an accent wall. This focal point can be a powerful design move, breaking up the traditional look of having four same-coloured walls. Plus, it's an easy way to play with colour in a new way without committing to painting a whole room. When selecting the colour, the accent wall should complement the adjacent wall colour. When in doubt, paint your statement wall two shades darker than the rest.

Paint your ceiling. If your home already has a fresh coat of paint, then look to other areas that could use a touch-up, such as the ceilings. When repainting the ceiling, don't be afraid to add a pop of colour. Whether dramatic or subtle, adding colour to the fifth wall can alter the geometry of a room, tricking the eye and changing the feel of a space.

Pro tip: use a roller with extended reach to tackle high ceilings.

Refresh trim. Details such as moulding, trim and baseboards can seem relatively minor but create a significant impact. As these accents are the visual foundation for a space, you can change the look of any room by simply playing them up with a crisp white colour.

Find more painting projects and tips online at [paintersmategreen.com](http://paintersmategreen.com).