

ROSE BARROSO **BOSS LADY**

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PHOTOS: ARNAL PHOTOGRAPHY

A leader for the automated modern home, Rose Barroso has paved the way for a new kind of house dotting Toronto's landscape in recent years. Starting from humble beginnings, Rose has become one of the preeminent luxury homebuilders in the city, specially the west end, in just twelve short years. With a focused eye firmly planted on the future of luxury home development, Rose draws inspiration from numerous sources to make dream homes come true.



How would you describe a Barroso home?

When I set out to build my first modern home, I knew I wanted to be different and entice a distinctive pool of buyers. In this line of work, it's imperative that you're always a step ahead of everyone else.

A Barroso home is a house of the future, today. It's modern inside and out and fully automated. Each house boasts clean lines with an open concept layout throughout. One of my goals with each home is to maximize energy efficiency in every possible way.

Each build evolves by drawing inspiration from various sources along with a great deal of research. But a few themes are carried through every home I design: functionality, sexiness, comfort and modernity. I envision each home as a place to fully live, raise a family and entertain guests.

I believe it's important to give your full attention to whatever you are doing in a given moment. That's where automation plays a significant role. It allows you to be fully aware and in the moment. The convenience that comes with automation permits you, for example, to be with your family and guests at the dinner table and control anything – from music to temperature and lighting - from your fingertips.

Every component is related and the allotted space will dictate how I approach the build. When I have a new idea for automation, I work with my team to integrate it into the wider system and find a solution.

How does home automation change a person's life?

It helps to make life easier in terms of stress, security, comfort and most of all convenience. Automation can give its user peace of mind – no need to hand out any security

codes or worry about forgetting to turn the lights off. The entire house is programmable and controlled from a tablet or smart phone - everything from the lights, alarm, curtains, temperature, surveillance cameras, and television to name a few. The system is so advanced and customizable that one can program their home as they see fit, travel comfortably, and check in whenever they like. Phone notifications of a break-in or something that has gone awry add a layer of security.

What is the latest in home automation? How do you see the future?

Incredible innovations are always on the horizon. One of the latest is called Control4 Smart Home Skill that uses Alexa, an intelligent personal assistant developed by Amazon. Alexa integrates into and controls a home through an automation system like Control4. This

system puts convenience into your everyday life – Alexa can turn on the television, close the door, and even dial a number for you. There is no limit. You can even answer emails from an iPad wall unit. Because this technology is so programmable, you can customize lighting throughout the house, even from one side of the bed to the other to complement your morning or evening routine. To top it all off, a 'good night' button turns everything off from the comfort of your bed. While an 'away' button turns everything off upon leaving your home and closes your garage door too!

Another innovation is combining a car communication system into the home automation structure. The end result is that this system would enable communication between your car and your house, for instance, to open the garage door upon entering the driveway or turn the lights on. The system is called SDL or SmartDeviceLink.



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In my opinion these innovations and many more are certainly here to stay and there's no stopping it. In the near future there will be nothing that can't be controlled – even appliances, though we're not there just yet. But you'll be able to put your fridge into 'vacation mode' thereby changing the temperature to save energy.

When it comes to technology, you are known for building outside of the box and being innovative in your projects. What are some of your latest creations?

One of my latest ideas is an automated wine cellar. I've taken the traditional wine cellar to a new level. For example, a notification will appear if the temperature is off or if the door is left opened or even when it opens. In addition to preserving your investment, you've also got an added sense of security. Another creation involves turning essential home lighting into art - by adding LED lights into the home frame work before the dry wall goes up. As a form of recessed wall lighting, you can create any effect or decoration your heart desires on the wall.

Saunas, pools, in house gyms, games rooms and wine cellars are fast becoming a given. How do you manage to keep reinventing luxury these days?

It definitely comes with its challenges, but it's also one of the aspects of my job that I love. I love to create new, more efficient and innovative ways of doing things. One of my most recent projects, set to begin this Fall, is to create an authentic spa in place of a traditional four hundred square foot bathroom "spa like" environment. The space will be divided into three with a river of pebbles as you enter – an in floor Jacuzzi tub, massage room and a Ganban'yoku, which is a form of a hot stone spa – will consume the space. A Ganban'yoku is comprised of a volcanic stone which is subsequently heated. When lying down on this waterless sauna, the rock produces specific infrared rays to aid the body in getting rid of toxins.

What is the biggest challenge you faced being a woman in a predominantly male industry? How do you overcome it?



Unfortunately, it's not something that can be easily overcome, I honestly do not believe I have as of yet. I've had to fight through it. As a result I've grown a thicker skin and worked through challenges with others. It was extremely difficult in the beginning. Being asked when my father or husband would be arriving on site or at a meeting and at the same time being told to hire a designer were just part of the process of building my business. Over preparing for every meeting, because I wasn't regarded as an expert in my field, lead me to become one of the most prominent and respected individuals within my trade. I've learned a great deal over the years.

What is your motto in life?

Giving 100% of yourself everyday while correcting your mistakes along the way. I believe in karma and I believe in being honest and fair. For me, loving what you do is the Key – it's not enough to just get through the day. It's utterly important to me to put my heart into everything I do, while being passionate about life. Everything comes out better when your heart is into it!

