

REMODELING & REDECORATING SPECIAL ISSUE

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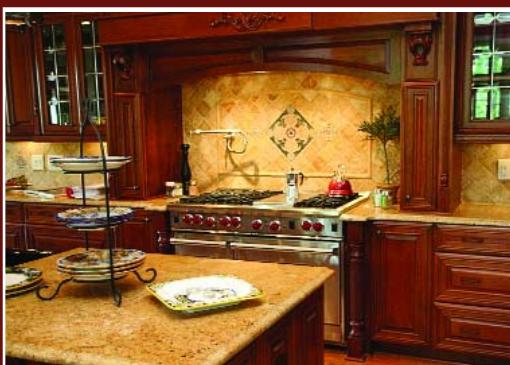
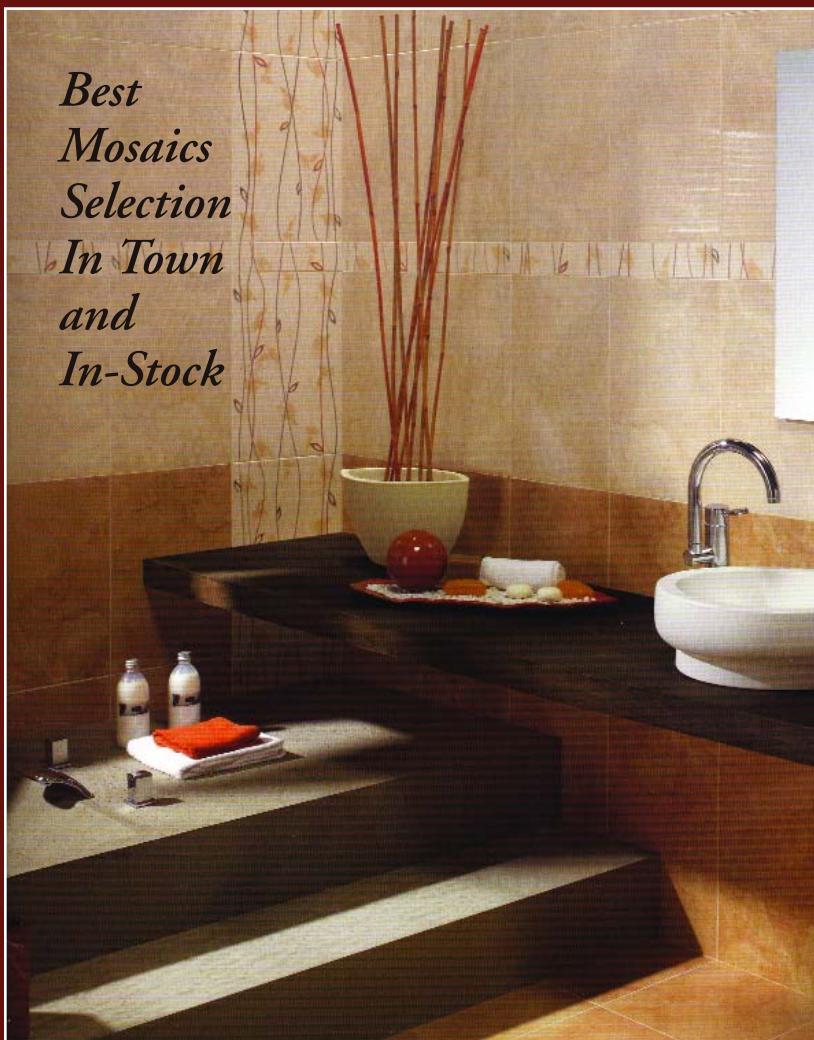
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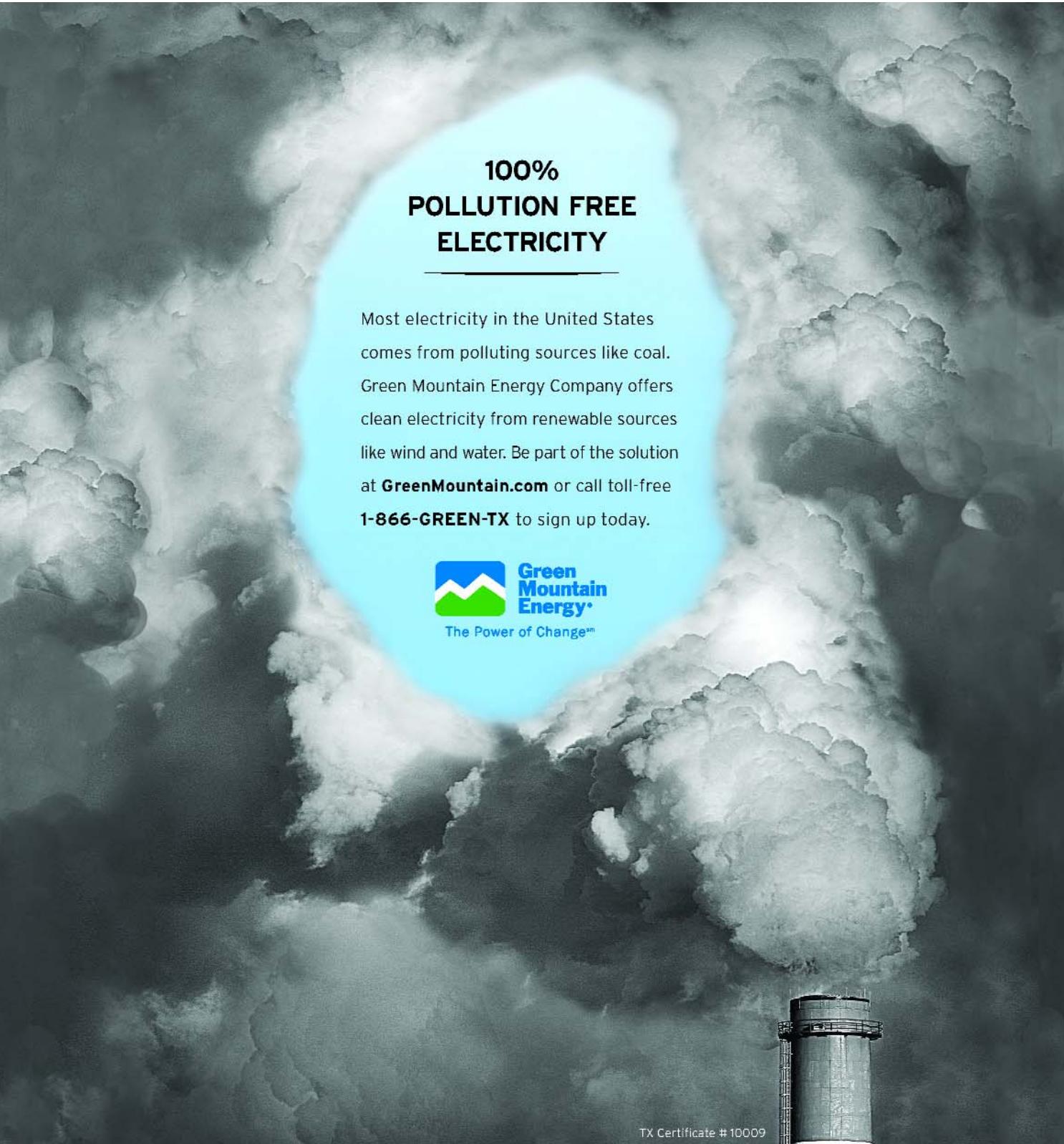
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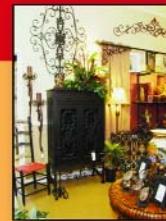
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On the Cover

In this month's story on Recessions Redos, Houston design pros say new paint gives you the most bang for your buck when you're remodeling your home. The bedroom on our cover features happy hues from the Techno-Color palette of Sherwin-Williams 2009 Lifestyle Collection. It's inspired by the new color possibilities that technology creates. The green hue on the wall is SW6704 Hep Green; the blue is SW6486 Reflecting Pool. Window frames are SW7667 Zircon and ceiling is SW7019 Gauntlet Gray. Photo courtesy Sherwin-Williams. See Page 34.

Photo courtesy Sherwin Williams

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editor's note

ITE is a newish acronym that's gained currency among some bloggers and e-mail correspondents. They use it casually like they do "LOL" (Laughing Out Loud), only ITE isn't quite as happy. It stands for "In This Economy," and it's shorthand for "in this miserable recession."

But cheer up. ITE, Houston's housing market is not that miserable; our median housing sales and prices are holding their own. The Houston Association of Realtors (HAR) tells us that in May, the total volume of real estate sold was \$1.1 billion, down 23.8 percent from last year, but still it's over a billion dollars. HAR says Houston's current housing climate is performing at 2004 levels. And 2004 was not a bad year.

Interest rates are low, first-time homebuyers get an \$8,000 federal tax credit on the purchase of their homes in 2009, and buyers with good credit can get mortgages.

Whether you've bought a new home or owned your home for years and just want to spruce it up, we've got some great ideas for you this month in our annual Remodeling and Redecorating Special Issue. ITE, how do you get the most bang for your buck when you redo your house? (O.K., I'm dropping the ITE now, never to mention it again.)

Writer Leigh Bell asked seven design professionals for tips on redo-

ing a room on a tight budget. She asked: What can you get for \$1,000? What can you get for \$2,000? They gave her a wealth of tips and resources, and all that information is yours free for the taking, starting on Page 34.

One of the best ways to transform a room on a budget is to paint it. I had fun this month visiting various paint stores to see their collection of palettes they pull together for you, usually in promotional brochures near the paint chip display. I love looking at all the paint chips but get overwhelmed, so I always enjoy the palette collections the paint manufacturers (or designers) publish to help you match and contrast hues in a room.

And then there are the names of the paints. In a future life I want to be a paint namer. For a recent painting project at my home, I became enamored of the names of several shades of whites and grays I was considering: Biscuit. Snowflake. Pudding Mold. Wool Skein. I think my favorite paint name of all time is Wolf, brown with a tinge of gray that coated the walls of the husband's dressing room in the first home I ever featured. A feral hue for the dressing room? Why not?

I hope this issue inspires you to do something new to your home to keep it fresh and vibrant. It should always be a place you love to come home to.

Linda Barth

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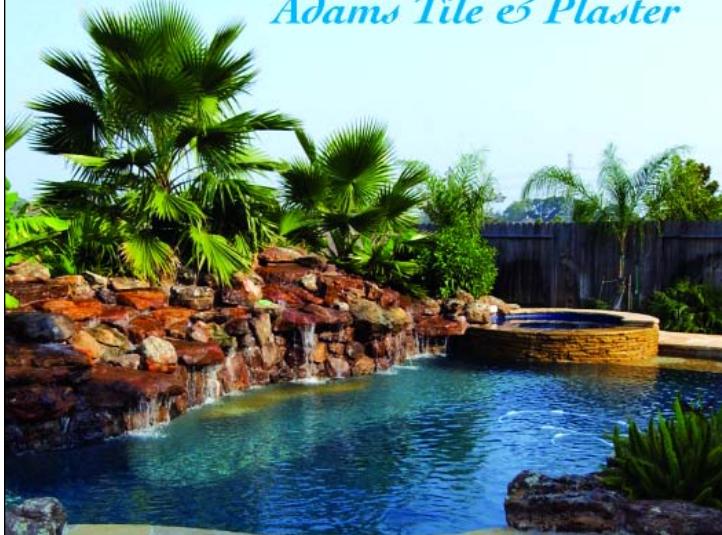
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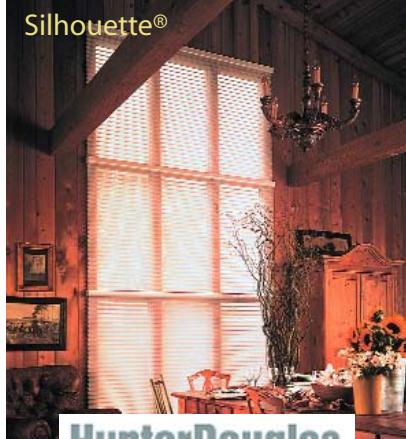


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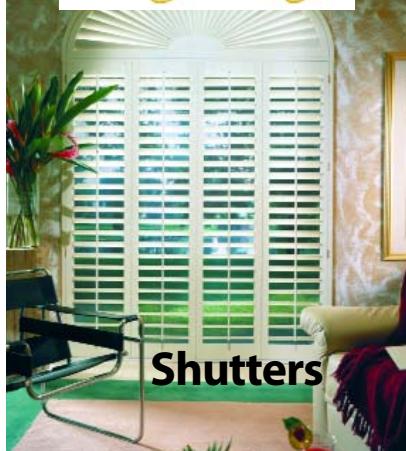
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around town July 2009

At The Menil Collection: "Drawings on Site: Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen" exhibit is this drawing of Trombone Bridge, a proposal for a railroad bridge straddling a river in the New Jersey flats.



Tread Lightly, acrylic/mixed media on canvas by Janet Wayte. On view at the Bedford.

At HCCC's Challenge VII show: "This is My Handle, This is My Spout," 2008, by Michael de Forest. Photo by John Carlano.

exhibits

Starting July 18 at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St., two new exhibitions, **Challenge VII: dysFUNctional and Unknitting: Challenging Textile Traditions**, challenge the traditional uses of wood, textiles and other materials while celebrating the unexpected. In Challenge VII, the works of 30 international artists evoke a sense of humor, fun and suspicion. Unknitting focuses on knitting as performance art while creating avant garde works. Information: 713.529.4848 or www.crafthouston.org

Starting July 21, the Heritage Society Museum, 1100 Bagby, in collaboration with The Center for Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art, presents **Miles and Miles of Texas: The Lone Star State Through the Eyes of Buck Schiwetz**. The show is a rich survey of the artist's work throughout his long career. Information: 713.655.1912 or www.heritagesociety.org

At The Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross St., **Drawings on Site: Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen** showcases the drawings for public monuments these two American artists proposed over the past 30

years. An innovator of American Pop Art in the mid 1960s, Oldenburg proposed public landmarks in the form of monumental sculptures of everyday objects such as a teddy bear or peeled banana. In the late '70s, he teamed with van Bruggen to create proposals of fanciful works, including a Trombone Bridge, a proposed railroad bridge straddling a river in the New Jersey flats. Information: 713.525.9400 or www.menil.org.

The art of **Linda Darke and Janet Wayte** on view through August at the Bedford restaurant, 1001 Studewood. Information: 713.880.1001

events

Houston's Fourth of July celebration, **Freedom Over Texas with Fireworks Presented by Shell**, will honor the 40th anniversary of NASA's Apollo XI Lunar Landing on Saturday, July 4, from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission is free. Information: 832.393.0868 or www.freedomoverTexas.org

The **First Saturday Arts Market** in the Heights keeps its summer night time hours, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. every first Saturday of the month in the Wind Water Gallery parking lot at 548 West 19th St. Information: 713.802.1213 or www.FirstSaturdayArtsMarket.com.

Lewis & Maese will host a **summer clearance tag sale** July 11, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at 2301 Sabine St. This is not an auction, but a tag sale for bargain hunters seeking antiques, fine jewelry, collectibles art and out of print books. Information: 713.942.7200

Mark your calendar for **White Linen Night** in the Heights Aug. 1, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tour galleries and cafes, hear cool live music, catch pedicabs to get around, and, oh yes, wear white. Information: whitelinenightsheights.com

Also, mark your calendar for the Houston Glass Club's 35th annual **Festival of Glass and Antiques Show and Sale**, Aug. 14-16 at Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. Glass making is a lost art. In the 20th Century, dozens of great glassmaking companies plied their trade; now only a handful do. This show is one of the best in the country for 20th-century American-made glassware. Information: 713.729.4267 or www.houstonglassclub.org

classes

Let your kids learn about nature at summer camp without leaving Houston. Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, is holding **Nature Trekkers**

Summer Camps for kids 5 to 12.

The week-long classes offer hands-on learning experiences under the guidance of staff naturalists. Camps topics include: "Winged Hunters," July 13-17; "Lifelines," July 20-24; "Outdoor Adventures," July 27-31; "Bug Basics," August 3-7; and "Wild Science," July 6-10 or August 10-14. Cost for full-day camp is \$230 for members; \$270 for non-members. Information: 713.681.8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org

Can you canoe? Take a half-day trip down **Buffalo Bayou** with conservationist Don Green on July 8 at 1 p.m. to learn about the history of the bayou. The stretch of bayou through which he'll guide you is between Loop 610 and Shepherd Drive, one of the wildest portions of the waterway. Meet at Houston Arboretum the Thursday evening prior to the trip for orientation. Cost, including equipment is \$85 for members, \$105 for non-members. Information: 713.681.8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org

pet of the month

I don't want to spend my 5th birthday at the Houston SPCA, even though these folks have been wonderful to me. My name's Chopper, I'm a male Labrador Retriever mix and I've been living at the SPCA since December when someone in my owner's family developed an allergy to pets. It's time for me to go to a new home. I want someone who appreciates my energy and loves to play. I'm a great workout buddy, am totally house-trained and love kids. Yes, Houston's hot right now, but we could go jogging at dusk around Hermann Park. Have you seen the new Lake Plaza renovations there? The new boathouse? The Little Big's hamburger stand on the lake where surely you'll be sharing one of your sliders with me (hope, hope)? It's so fine. People used to be afraid of Hermann Park; with its new renovations, it's one of the best and most beautiful things about Houston. Adopt me, and let's go exploring. Ask for my I.D. # A06909721 at



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After

The kitchen needed to be more functional, so the range was relocated and replaced with a new slide-in range. A new convection microwave and new drawers were added. Reeded glass installed in the existing painted upper cabinet door fronts plus new chandelier lamp shades helped update the space.



After

How this once-tired kitchen was updated: Remove wallpaper; paint cabinets; install granite countertops and tumbled marble backsplash; coordinate appliances; and add glass pantry door and new lighting and hardware.

A TOO-BUSY KITCHEN NEEDED TO BE MORE FUNCTIONAL. THIS BUDGET-MINDED REDO SIMPLIFIED ITS LOOKS AND MADE IT WORK BETTER

When I first saw Ruth and Paul Parrish's old kitchen, my first thought was the room did not reflect their vibrant personalities or Ruth's love of cooking. The 1980s kitchen was in need of a facelift. Its wallpaper and window treatments were dated, the appliances were old and getting ready to crater, the sink was really scratched and the ceiling light box stopped working 10 years ago.

Ruth hated the cramped, drop-down desk by the windows and knew the wallpaper had to go. She wanted a walk-in pantry since she loves to cook, but it wasn't in the budget to knock down walls to expand. So the challenge was to find budget-minded solutions to solve their multiple storage and decorating issues, using the existing footprint of the kitchen.

During our meeting, I gave the couple multiple countertop options to research and to combine that

smooth surface with a more textured stone or faux-stone tile backsplash. I also suggested painting the existing cabinets Benjamin Moore "Woodstock Tan" and trim "White Dove", and either paint their existing hardware or replace it. When Ruth mentioned Paul's arthritis, I suggested he accompany her to "test drive" pulls and/or knobs to find a style that was a comfortable fit for his hands. They settled on bin pulls from www.simpsonhardware.com that sells items that are slightly imperfect.

tip > **The most interesting kitchens offer contrast both in texture and depth of color—strive for deliberate contrast between flooring, cabinets, counter, backsplash and wall color.**

The wonderful thing about a remodel is making a space function for your needs. "Being a librarian, I started researching kitchen remodels and discovered that the refrigerator is never supposed to be placed next to the oven," Ruth explains. "We had a major design flaw and didn't know it."

I recommended the couple install a downdraft slide-in range where the downdraft cooktop was located, and build pullout drawers under the new microwave. "With perseverance and your help I was able to locate a downdraft oven that worked with our existing venting system. We saved a lot of money because we avoided the cost of putting in a new vent hood," Ruth explains. For budget reasons, the couple opted to keep their existing standard-depth refrigerator but did follow my suggestion to build it into a new cabinet to camouflage its depth.

Instead of a walk-in pantry, I suggested new pull-out shelving would allow Ruth access to the deepest depths of the pantry. Although I gave her a worker bee source, Paul built the shelving, which Ruth loves. "My handy husband, an avid do-it-yourselfer—built this tremendous feature you suggested. My ►

Before

The wall oven was incorrectly located right next to the refrigerator and the open kneehole desk (next to the windows), solid upper cabinet doors and bare chandelier light bulbs were not working for the owners.



Before

Busy wallpaper, laminate countertops, mismatched, dated appliances and a space-gobbling light box undermine this kitchen's potential.

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**Before**

Busy open shelving, a dated, exposed dishwasher and a shuttered pass-through visually closed in the kitchen.

**After**

To make this kitchen feel spacious, we removed shelving and shutters, added a new integrated dishwasher with a custom wood panel, painted cabinets and simplified accessories.

shelves were so deep on one side that there were items literally buried in the back," she explains. Additionally, new drawers were suggested for the never-used kneehole desk area and now house recycling, backpack and shoe storage.

Knowing the age of her food disposer, she was glad when I suggested they prepare to buy a new food disposer too, with the purchase of the new black Blanco Silgranite under-mount sink.

tip Depending on the age of the food disposer, sometimes the only thing holding it in place is corrosion. Once the ring is disturbed when installing a new sink, you might have to replace it—an unexpected expense.

"The new cookbook shelf, reeded glass doors and cubbies for mail and remotes are ideas I would not have considered," Ruth says.

I supplied them with a list of questions to ask contractors and gave them tips on shopping for their on-sale Jenn-Air appliances from The Great Indoors. On their own, the couple found their new glass pantry door at The Home Depot to match the reeded glass for the cabinet doors (which they found at Kingwood Glass Company).

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trade secrets

- **Think outside the box.** Reeded glass added to existing upper cabinet doors and a new matching pantry door can transform an older kitchen.

- **Paint consistently gives the most bang for the buck.** The best paint quality is still way cheaper than new cabinets.

- Sometimes the most effective strategy is to not add on to your kitchen but first **rethink the footprint** under roof that is already paid for.



Using my written master plan, source ideas, emailed photos and "homework assignments," Ruth says she felt motivated to use every free minute of her time and got Paul involved, too. Ruth started off wanting red granite counters but after going to stores I suggested where she could see the stone en masse, she knew red was way too much.

tip For improved resale value, it is best to stick to a neutral palette with any expensive-to-remove granite or tile, and add punches of color with easily changed paint, fabric and accessories.

Ruth found baskets for the new cubbies behind the breakfast table at World Market and made the handles with beads from Bella Beads in Atascocita. The red-trimmed custom Roman shades were made by Drapery Center & Upholstery in Kingwood.

Turns out the big stressor for Ruth was the tile floor, selected at the last minute. She wanted real slate but everyone—Paul, the builder and owner of the tile store—talked her out of it. Instead, she selected a faux slate 20" x 20" ceramic tile from Humble Carpet & Tile.

Ruth has some tips for would-be remodelers. She says they were fortunate with their contractor Sergio DiSevo of Pride Quality Home Remodeling because the entire process took only 6 weeks.

"Expect your life to change a lot during the renovation because it is a hassle. Thank goodness for crock pots, microwaves and paper plates," she says, smiling, "and be prepared to wash dishes in the bathtub." The couple recommends making sure you and your contractor have every expense and detail spelled out up front in writing—like who will buy the paint.

When the project was finished, Ruth says, "Our friends and family have loved the changes, including our sons, who were speechless."



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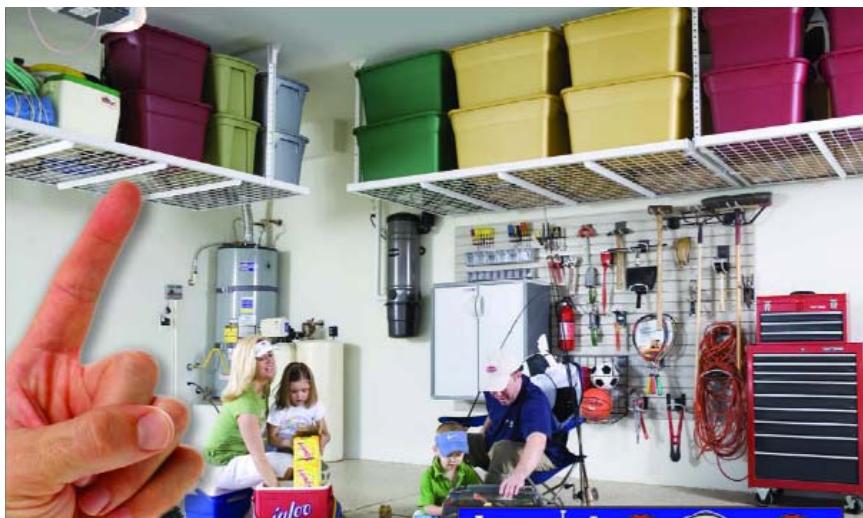
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OhLine custom wooden shutters from The Shade Shop not only control light, they create interesting shadows in a room.

Sometimes less really is more. It can especially be true for simple window treatments where you have the light control and privacy you want while still showing off your personal style.



Panel with topper by Woodlands Fabrics.



These tailored, operable Roman shades with slouched ends and contrasting color cap valance and banding are from Drapery Montage.

"You can go simple and still have a custom look," says Nancy Charbonneau, owner of Woodlands Fabrics & Interiors. All it takes is creativity. For her simple treatments, she likes to combine textures, as she did recently for a client when she used linen, detailed with 2-inch gimp (a flat braid) along the border. For another client, she mounted a 4-inch cornice embellished with a scroll pattern over the window and then had the molding faux-painted. "It brought texture to the treatment, which I think is important. It was simple, but elegant," she says.

At The Shade Shop, "One of the best choices, both monetarily and for the clean line look, is plantation shutters," says showroom manager Mitch Jarmin. "They add an architectural element to your home, similar to investing in custom cabinetry. When it comes time to sell the house, prospective buyers tend to think—'Oh, good. We don't have to do the windows.' Plus plantation shutters lend themselves to any decorating style."

THINK MINIMALIST

- Perk up simple windows by splurging on creative hardware. Rods, finials and tie-backs in wood, metal, glass or ceramic look almost like jewelry.
- Draperies with grommets create a clean, modern look and are part of a continuing popular trend.
- Add movement to your windows with sheers, using dramatic colors like cinnamon and smoke. Also effective—combining two tones of sheers.
- Show off your eco-friendly side by choosing organic materials such as bamboo, blinds with exposed wood grain, and natural woven shades.

BEFORE YOU BUY

Window treatments are an investment—whether you prefer little adornment or a lot. Edith Williamson, window fashion designer and owner of Drapery Montage, suggests starting a new window treatment project with a pre-planning session. It begins in your home. "The architectural aspect of the window impacts your design style for the window treatment," she says. "Your window treatment style is further established by the interior design of the room—whether it is traditional or contemporary, for example."

When considering how to dress your windows, she recommends you familiarize yourself with the three broad categories of window treatments and their functions:

1. Light control (simple). This section includes hard materials like blinds, shutters and wovens. Or soft materials such as sheers, draperies and fabric shades.
2. Decorative application (enhanced). As the name implies, this category adds decorations like valances, cornices and side panels.
3. Multiple layers (embellished). More elaborate styling that combines the first two categories.

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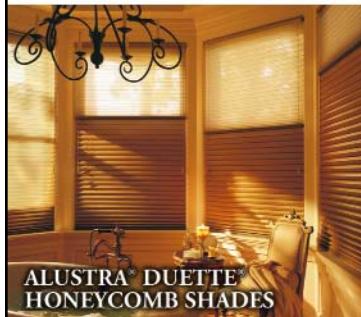


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REPORT FROM MILAN

Belgian designer Bart Lens created this oversized light fixture for Eden Design.

HOW ARE THE WORLD'S DESIGNERS HANDLING THE GLOBAL CREDIT CRUNCH? WITH HAPPY COLORS AND *joie de vivre, mais oui!*

By ANNE BREUX

At Milan Design Week this spring, Barbie went for design and so did I.

The fashionable doll by Mattel took the spotlight when the furniture manufacturer Kartell debuted a Barbie chair designed by Philippe Starck. It's essentially his famous clear polycarbonate Ghost chair for Kartell with a faint pink tint and a line drawing of the pony-tailed doll on the back of the chair. Kartell is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, and in addition to its new Barbie chair, the company is offering Barbie-sized miniature models of many of its best-selling modern furniture pieces. After seeing Kartell's display of mini rooms with Barbie dolls amid the furniture, I knew those pieces were going to be instant cool collectibles.

The global credit crunch, the Recession, the Correction, whatever you want to call it, was not allowed to ruin this celebration—and celebration was very much the motto of Milan Design Week, which celebrated 500 years of Italian furniture, 60 years of Kartell designs and even 20 years of Italian design with Ikea.

The design displays throughout the entire city of Milan were a feast for the eyes and the spirit: exhibits celebrated joie de vivre, happy memories, bright colors and the amazing use of plastics like polycarbonate and resin. High tech mixed with romanticism and poetry. For one too-short week, it was an antidote to the global recession.

This year's event drew the biggest crowd ever—some 313,385 designers, manufacturers, media and others came from all over the world to view miles and miles of exhibits. Three fairs were held simultaneously at the Milan Fairgrounds: The Salon Internazionale del Mobile, the oldest and largest now in its 48th year; SaloneSatellite featuring some of the newer and younger designers; and Euroluce, a biennial lighting design show. Outside the Fairgrounds, the whole city turned into a design party, with most of the major events occurring in the Zona Tortona.

On these pages are photos of some of my favorite things I saw.

Lighting genius Ingo Maurer wowed me with his newest piece, Lacrime del Pescatore—the tears of the fisherman—a shimmering light sculpture lit with sparkly LED lights that hangs from the ceiling. A trip to Venice, where Maurer saw water drops on fishnets sparkling in the lights of the lagoon, inspired him to create this piece.

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Kartell's Louis and Lou Lou Ghost chairs, Barbie style, designed by Philippe Starck.



Alias' chair installation called Mezzoterra Mezzomare The Mediterranean Seas Love Difference chairs by Michelangelo Pistoletto are an example of the eco-green movement in furniture design today.

BELOW: This spring, Kartell introduced a line of the company's classic modern furniture sized to fit Barbie dolls.



With Patricia Urquiza's new Frilly Stool for Kartell, slim pleats appear to fall from the seat to the floor.

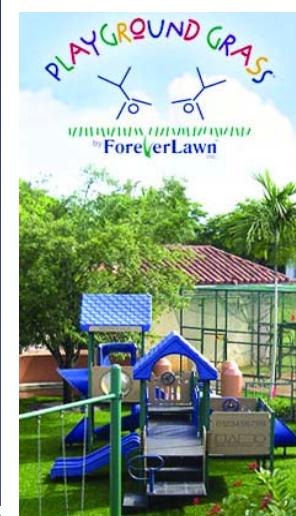


The Bugatti Racing Chair by Cappellini looks as if it might be made from dented auto parts.



The Antler chair by Cappellini has a sense of humor. ▶

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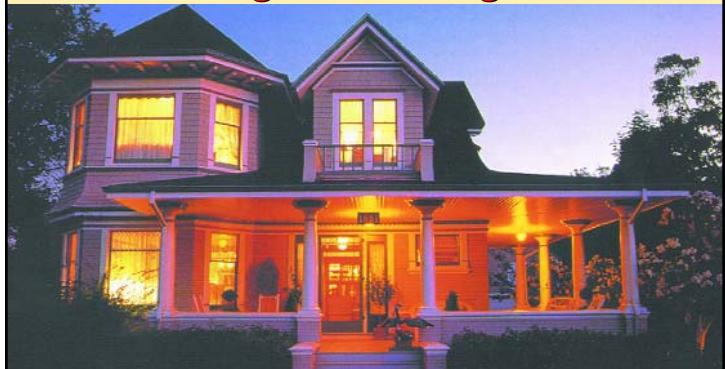
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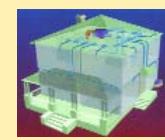
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ABOVE: One of the most important pieces I saw in Milan, the intricate *Vegetal* chair by Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec, features flat branch structures to create an organic looking piece that can be used indoors or outside.

RIGHT: Piero Lissoni's 22 Radar cupboard for Cassina is an exquisite piece of craftsmanship, reminiscent of Jean Michel Franck's work in the 1940s.

Paris native Anne Breux, architecte d'intérieur ESAM Paris (713.301.0143), practices interior design in Houston and Los Angeles. Noted for her devotion to modernism, she attends furniture and design fairs annually in Milan and Paris. Many of these new designs will be making their way to these retailers in Houston: *Sunset Settings*, 2610 Sunset Blvd.; *Kuhl-Linscomb*, 2424 W. Alabama; *Ligne Roset*, 1992 West Gray; and *Mody & Mody*, 5801 Westheimer Road.



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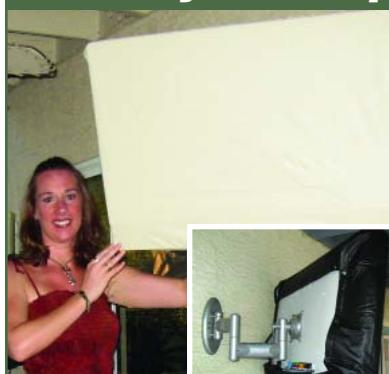
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COUNTERTOPS COUNT

RENOVATING YOUR KITCHEN? NOW YOU HAVE MORE OPTIONS THAN EVER FOR COUNTERTOP SURFACES

By LEIGH BELL

TOP LEFT: Brazilian Mahogany Granite countertops by ICM Marble & Granite in a house designed by architect Val Glitsch and built by Sanders Construction & Management Co. Photo by Miro Dvorscak

TOP RIGHT: Houston kitchen designer Baroque Fineberg specified white Carrara marble for this kitchen in a landmark historic home in Woodland Heights. photo by Miro Dvorscak

BELOW: No-nonsense stainless steel countertops easily hold hot pots. Scratches? They're expected and give the steel patina. This countertop is by custom metal artisan Guido Schindler of Schindler Metalworks.

Kitchen countertops drastically affect aesthetic, convenience, cost and resale value of a home.

Technology has vastly widened our choices in countertop material with the production of sealants, installation methods and brand-new materials. Each surface has a personality and traits of its own, making the decision sometimes overwhelming. However, the choice is like any other in life: Balance what you can and cannot live with.

And, we're not talking hairdressers, so there's no allegiance to one — you can use two or three or more materials. Mixing them organizes workspace, appeals to the eye and satisfies the indecisive.

When helping clients choose countertops, Christine Bailey-Navarro, designer at Designer Bath and Kitchen, asks what purpose their kitchen serves.

"Are they single? Do they have a young family and prefer easy maintenance?" she says. "Or maybe they sim-

ply want something beautiful and they don't care about cleaning because they have a maid."

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MARBLE

\$50-200/square foot, installed

The name even sounds elegant, and marble is the No. 1 choice for high-end kitchens, says Micqui McGowen of Kitchen and Bath Concepts. Most popular — in fact hard to get these days — are the Calcutta and Carrara varieties. Adding to the mystique is a recently developed sanding process (also available for granite) that adds surface texture. Marble is porous and, thus, prone to stains and etching from cleaners and spills (avoid lemonade). Regular application of sealant is required.

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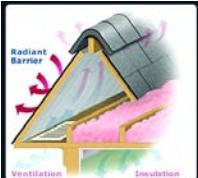
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Minds in Motion installed these concrete countertops for a home designed by Collins Architects. The concrete contrasts with the bold white cast-iron farm sink.

CONCRETE

\$75-200/square foot, installed

Probably not the first thing you think of in countertops, but concrete is becoming popular with its elegant surface and endless color choices. Inlays make it even more unique. But be prepared for small cracks, chipping, and the need for sealant and occasional waxing to prevent stains. "When it starts getting stains and chips, you have to look at it as added character," McGowen says.

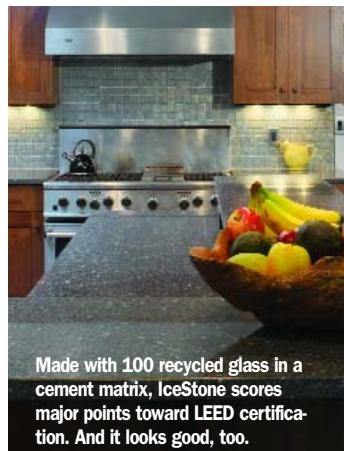
BAMBOO

\$25-35/square foot, installed

It had us at eco-friendly. Because bamboo is plentiful and grows so quickly, using it doesn't tax the environment. Still a product nouveau, it wows company and works well in the kitchen because it's naturally bacteria resistant and more durable than most typical woods (Teragren sells a bamboo countertop that's 154 percent harder than red oak). But bamboo is not bullet-proof and does require sealant with a penetrating finish.



Teragren's end-grain strand bamboo is made with rapidly renewable Optimum 5.5 Moso bamboo. Its polyurethane finish protects against stains and spills.

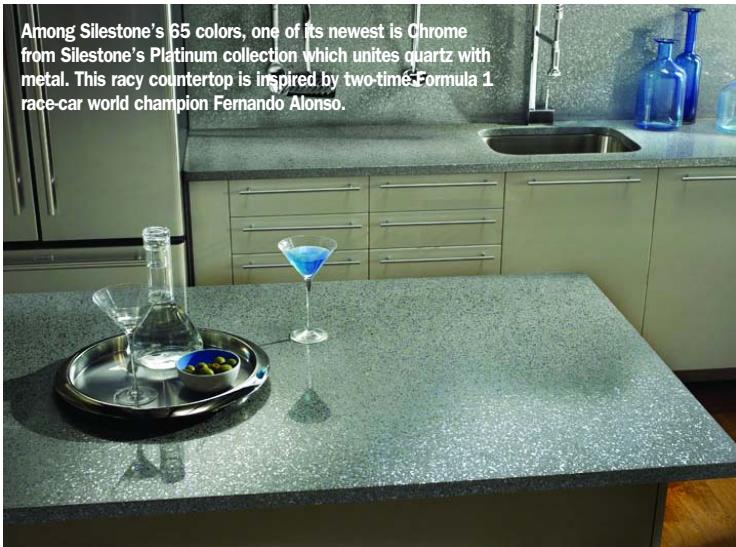


Made with 100% recycled glass in a cement matrix, IceStone scores major points toward LEED certification. And it looks good, too.

ICESTONE

\$95-150/square foot

Another green product that wins us over: IceStone is made with 100 percent recycled glass in a cement matrix. It's produced in slabs like marble and granite and comes in a wide variety of colors. It needs to be sealed. When water no longer beads up on it, you know it's time to re-seal and wax the surface.



Among Silestone's 65 colors, one of its newest is Chrome from Silestone's Platinum collection which unites quartz with metal. This racy countertop is inspired by two-time Formula 1 race-car world champion Fernando Alonso.

ENGINEERED STONE

\$40-125/square foot, installed

It's not a fake. Engineered stone is about 93 percent quartz. It's less needy – doesn't stain, scratch or require regular sealing – and offers many more colors than its natural counterpart. "I usually recommend engineered stone for young families worried about spills, staining and maintaining the countertops," Bailey-Navarro says. Familiar brands are Silestone, DuPont Zodiaq and Cambria Quartz.



Glass countertops are as strong as any common natural stone. This ThinkGlass countertop is customized with a texture so dust and fingerprints are nearly invisible.

GLASS

\$200-300 per square foot (installation varies)

Crisp. Clean. Glass is an alluring choice for modern to traditional kitchens. It's durable, heat-resistant and hygienic. Some types do require sealant, but not as often as granite, and you can find some made in part or mostly from recycled material. McGowen likes a product from Thinkglass.com that allows LED lighting beneath the glass countertop to create a nighttime glow. The look is unique but "not inexpensive," she says.



Laminate definitely has a place in today's kitchens because it's durable, stylish and affordable. Show here: Wilsonart laminate countertops.

LAMINATE

\$10-20/square foot, installed

It gets a bad rap, but Formica isn't an ugly word. "We've always considered laminate a great material, and the colors and patterns are pretty outstanding," says Natalye Appel, of Natalye Appel + Associates Architects. Laminate is durable and easy to maintain – no sealant required and even bleach is OK on some types– but it will scratch without care, it will scorch under a hot pan, and it doesn't provide the luxury of stone.

RICHLITE

\$33-55/square foot

Rock, scissors ... Richlite, a material made of paper composite has been a popular choice in commercial kitchens for more than 30 years because it's scratch- and heat-resistant and durable despite heavy use. Chefs like it because it's low maintenance. Homeowners like its warm, natural look.



Richlite, a paper composite countertop brings a warm ambience to this Houston Heights kitchen with countertops installed by James Dawson Design.

resources

Note: Some companies listed as resources sell and install multiple types of countertop materials.

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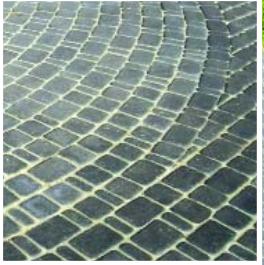
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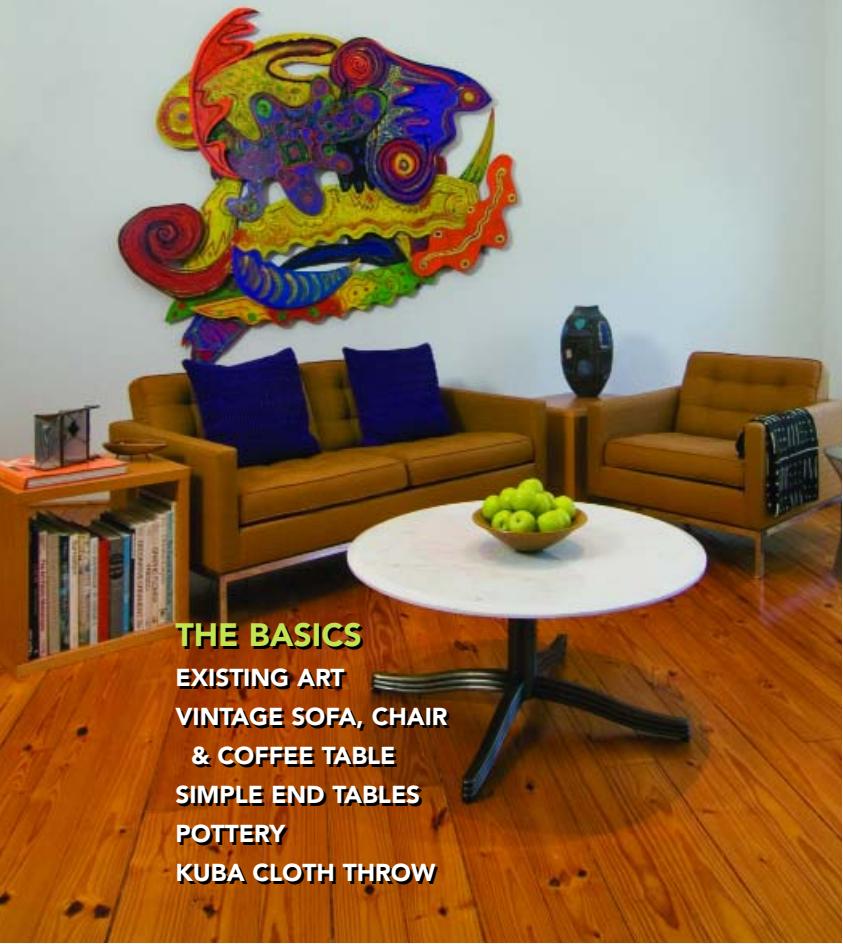
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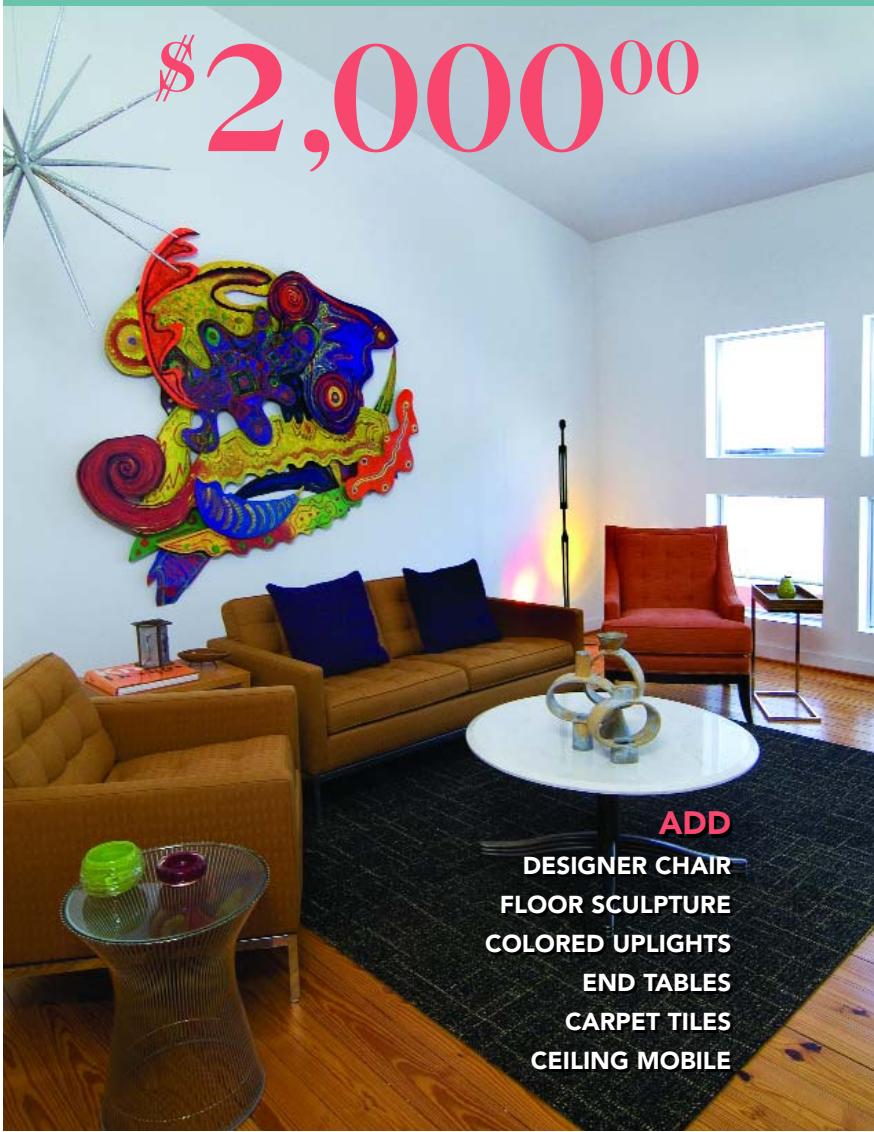


THE BASICS

- EXISTING ART
- VINTAGE SOFA, CHAIR & COFFEE TABLE
- SIMPLE END TABLES
- POTTERY
- KUBA CLOTH THROW

WHAT CAN YOU GET FOR

\$2,000⁰⁰



ADD

- DESIGNER CHAIR
- FLOOR SCULPTURE
- COLORED UPLIGHTS
- END TABLES
- CARPET TILES
- CEILING MOBILE

It's no easy task, we know. But pocketbooks are thin these days, and if you can't afford a new home, the next best thing is a new room in your existing place.

So, we asked local design professionals to make over a room on a budget between \$1,000-\$2,000. And we're talking about a real update – not just a new throw pillow and some paint. A true feat, considering that the average cost to completely remodel a kitchen is \$15,000-\$26,000 and \$6,500-\$11,600 for a bathroom, according to the National Kitchen and Bath Association.

Our designers took the challenge and ran with it. Here are their ideas to refresh a room for \$1,000 and \$2,000, depending on your fancy and how greatly your financial portfolio suffered this past year.

A caveat: The listed prices are often estimates and reflect savvy and creative shopping skills at local sales, around resale shops and online.

A warning: Paint is mentioned quite a bit because it's the most effective way to spruce up your room on a tight budget.

A treat: The beauty of DIY remodeling is the personal freedom you have to take this and leave that. Use these lists as a guide to staying within budget but feel free to add and subtract jobs to achieve your personal look.

What can you get for \$1,000?

Houston interior designer Chandra Stone has furnished her own living room (see photos on opposite page, at left) on a budget buying pre-owned office furniture—a Florence Knoll sofa and chair purchased from McCoy Workplace Solution. She reupholstered the pieces with Unica Vaev fabric on sale for \$10 a yard. The end table at right is a Mid-Century Platner chair purchased from Jiminez Contract Services (JCS). She removed the center shelf of the end table, at left, from Ikea to give it a cleaner square look. The charcoal-colored vase is from Foelber Pottery. The African mudcloth draped on the chair is from her collection of African textiles. Photo by Miro Dvorscak

THE TAB

\$125	Florence Knoll sofa & chair purchased used from McCoy
175	New Unica Vaev upholstery fabric for sofa & chair
200	Vintage Platner end table
40	Ikea end table
250	Marble-topped coffee table
100	Charcoal-colored pottery from Foelber Pottery
40	Two purple pillows from Marshall's
45	African mudcloth throw
25	Murano glass from an English antiques shop
\$1,000	(Art on wall she already owned, so not included in total.)

What can you get for \$2,000?

Do the same as in the \$1,000 version, and add a designer chair (see opposite page, photo at right, bright orange chair to the right of the sofa). Stone purchased the chair on sale from the Kravet showroom at the Decorative Center Houston. To the right of the chair is an end table from west elm. Interface carpet squares warm up the floor. For more interest in the room, Stone added an African sculpture and colored uplighting. A glittery modern star hung from the ceiling was about \$30 from the now-defunct Cities shop on West Alabama.

ADD TO THE \$1,000 TAB:

\$500	Kravet chair purchased on sale
150	Interface carpet squares
130	West elm end table
250	African sculpture
30	Uplighting with colored bulbs
30	Ceiling star mobile
\$ 1,090	(Different set of Foelber Pottery seen on coffee table)

\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

These are Stone's recommendations for furnishing your own home economically.

ARTWORK \$165

Poke around online, especially at museum gift shops where a poster or art print can run between \$10-\$100. Add a frame for about \$65, and you have a new piece of art for well under \$200.

*Hint: For a different look, Stone says, frame Kuba cloth, available at Art.com from \$45-\$200.

Free

CLEAR OUT THE ROOM AND PLAY WITH IDEAS:

You might have some hidden gems you never considered, either in the room you're refreshing or other rooms around the house. "Move things around and try something new with your existing accessories," says Colby Weems of Eclectic Home. "You might be surprised what a little movement can make."

ESTABLISH A FOCAL POINT:

Every room should have a centerpiece. "It can be the fireplace or a great view, which are obvious, but it can also be a piece of furniture, such as an armoire or large painting," says Chandra Stone, interior designer. "In today's home, the flat-screen may also be the focal point for the family."

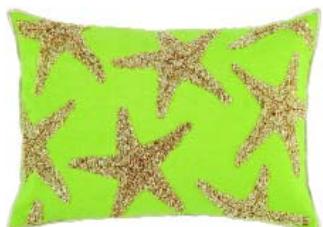
REARRANGE THE FURNITURE INTO A TIGHTER CONVERSATION GROUP:

Imagine the room with people in it. What makes sense? "I like to use approximately 10-12 feet as the maximum, appropriate distance across the seating group, or what interior designers call the 'arc of conversation,'" Stone says.

EDIT PIECES. "Remove a side table or chair," says Cari Brookbanks of Scene One. "There's always more than one way to use the existing furniture and accessories."

FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU NEED: "If you must buy, locate items in the room that date your look and focus on replacing these items," Weems says.

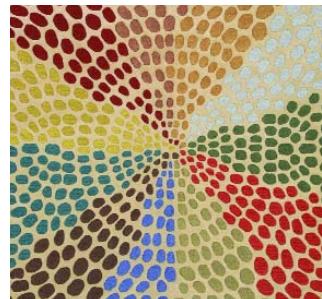
FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO KEEP: Choose things that mean the most to you or have the most visual impact in the room, Stone says. "If there is not a large piece that might be placed over the fireplace or console table, that maybe one of the purchases you need to make," she says.



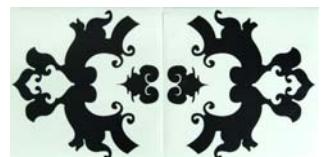
Pillow Company C Starfish come in an array of colors for your living room or den, \$63 each at Eklektik Home.



Find posters and frame them with inexpensive picture frames. These are from west elm.



This colorful hand-tufted wool rug is about \$450 from Overstock.com.



Wall decals like these from chiasso.com are an inexpensive way to add interest to a wall, Stone says. These decals were from a larger set, about \$38



This Dwell Studio pillow for Target, about \$25, brings a pleasing silhouette to a chair or sofa.

RUG \$400

An area rug pulls the room together without much money or effort, and an usual or funky print or color adds spunk without being obnoxious.

**Hint: Try Overstock.com, where Stone has found 8x10 area rugs from \$400-\$1,200. Or she suggests Ikea, where "great" rugs can be had in the \$250 range.*

WALL DECALS \$35

Painting is the most obvious inexpensive makeover, but it's not required. Take an alternative route with wall decals that, Stone says, are becoming "popular and can add a fun element and/or pattern."

**Hint: Use decals in lieu of wallpaper. Stone likes selections at Chiasso.com or Etsy.com.*

THROW PILLOWS \$60

At \$20-\$40 a piece, it's hard to go wrong.

SMALL TABLE \$120

Look for interesting tables so every chair has a convenient surface.

**Hint: For modern flair, shop for tables and lamps, at office-furniture dealers that sell pre-owned wares. This is where Stone found most pieces in her dining and living rooms.*

NEW LAMP \$60

A new lamp or two distributes light around the room and "always enhances good design," Stone says.

**Hint: Floor lamps are more expensive, so unless you stumble upon a steal, shop table lamps.*

DRAPERY \$300

"Adding drapery side panels on an exposed rod can add a new color/textured to the room," Stone says. Let's say you have three windows. Shopping retail stores, like Pottery Barn, for the needed materials – panels (\$475), rods (\$175) and rings (\$180) – bring the total above \$800. But ...

**Hint: Search import stores for cotton panels, and choose less-expensive hardware, bringing the cost to about \$300 – panels (\$90), rods (\$147) and rings (\$60).*

CLEAR VASES WITH DECORATION, LIKE SEASHELLS \$60

Take three cool glass vessels and fill them with something interesting, like shells, marbles or pine cones.

**Hint: These things are free, if you want to go hunting, and if you don't, hit any arts-and-crafts store for both the vessels and fillings.*



The print, above, of the Fab Four is from High Fashion Home's new shipment of giclee and lithographic prints on canvas ranging from \$25 to \$330.

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

Do the \$1,000.00 option plus ...

INCREASE YOUR ARTWORK BUDGET TO \$250.

Pay a little extra for a larger piece, higher quality print or outstanding frame.

**Hint: Many artists reproduce their original work in Giclee prints, which are created digitally using ink-jet printers to give the look of fine art. One may fit your budget.*

PAINT, \$220

This is a redecorating "given," and for good reason. It's inexpensive and highly effective. But on a \$2,000 budget, you don't have to DIY. Good-quality paint costs about \$30 per gallon, and Stone estimates, a room will require two to three gallons for a total of \$60-\$90. Hire one painter for one day at \$160, and you're on target.

**Hint: Shop around. Cost for painting varies.*

STONE TOP FOR EXISTING FURNITURE, \$625

Add a stone top to a table or console for about \$50 per square foot and \$75 for delivery. The total comes to \$612.50 to top a 42-inch coffee table and well worth it.

**Hint: Further transform and update the piece by painting or refinishing the piece itself for about \$20.*

SPLURGE: Add an interesting ottoman or club chair but budget about \$600.

Additional touches to consider...**AN INTERESTING THROW BLANKET (\$20 and up).**

REPLACE SWITCH PLATES and electrical-outlet covers, which can "add a sparkle beyond the regular white ones," says Ellen Belcher of Smart Start Spaces. (Switch plates run anywhere from \$3.50 to \$80ish.)

RECOVER A CHAIR. Depending on the fabric you choose, an armchair – and sometimes a couch – can be reupholstered for well under \$1,000, Belcher says.

WHATEVER YOU MIGHT FIND AT RESALE SHOPS AND DISCOUNT STORES.

Use your imagination to refinish, repaint or renovate an inexpensive

item to make it your own. "Plus, it's green," says Cari Brookbanks of Scene One. "I really like to re-purpose items as much as possible."

REFINISH WOOD FLOORS. The investment is larger than some of the aforementioned ones, but the payoff is great. Brookbanks estimates the job at roughly \$2-\$2.50 per square foot, and for a typical 250-square-foot room, the total is \$600. "However," she warns, "such a project usually includes adjacent rooms, increasing the cost." Still, the impact is dramatic, especially with a new stain color.

Stay in budget: Refinishing the floors, rearrange the furniture and throw in a few accessories. You have a new room.

\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

LIGHTS, \$350

Add a ceiling fan with a large alabaster bowl or switch up the look with a chandelier (\$200 each). Supplement with two indirect light sconces and a dimmer switch.

DECORATIVE ITEMS, \$230

Of course, you can use this budgeted amount to add any touches, but Manica suggests a few items she found on sale: an area sitting rug (\$50); a resin wicker chair (\$100); two two-tone silk pillows (\$10 each); and a reversible throw (\$40). Other options include a new bench – with storage is a bonus – or one new chair to “make a fast transformation.”

FLORALS AND PLANTS, \$270

“A splash of green or color – a simple or elaborate flower arrangement – can sweeten a room,” Manica says. She suggests the following: one large, realistic silk palm tree (\$150), one medium plant or pot of flowers (\$50), and one flower arrangement (\$120).

**Hint: Make your own arrangements with store-bought faux elements. Change with the season for a fresh look.*



A ceiling fan with alabaster bowl brings a formal look to this living room by Ultra Design.

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

Do all of the above, plus ...

You can develop your own plan to reinvent your living room with this guide for pricing options. For instance if you do not need paint or new drapes you can take \$1,050 off the total expenses with this project to add other décor or save for another day.

Optional Expenses for \$2000.00 Budget

1. Paint - Labor and Materials	\$ 550
2. Lights - Ceiling fan plus installation labor	\$350
3. Decorative items	
Area rug	\$230
Pillows	50
Decorative reversible throw	40
4. Drapery plus rods plus installation labor	\$ 500
5. Realistic silk flowers and green plants	
Realistic silk tree large (sale price)	150
Flower arrangements	130
Total	\$2,000

PAINT, \$550

“A thoughtful selection of wall colors can turn an otherwise drab room into a show piece,” Manica says. Add some crown molding for a more dramatic look.

**Hint: Don’t forget about the endless wallpaper options available these days. Wallpaper may be a bit more demanding to apply but worth the effort.*

DRAPEY, \$500

This amount will cover two large windows. “Utilizing sheers, scarves, suede and/or silks, you and your decorator can fashion standard drapes into reasonably priced customer-design drapery, adding a unique ambiance,” Manica says.

**Hint: A rich fabric with classic design creates a sophisticated, formal look.*



For this home office, Manica specified a silk banana tree and fern.



These York Wallcoverings designed by HGTV's Candice Olson are available through Sherwin Williams paint stores.



Robert Allen Blome drapery hardware is a splurge, but it dresses up a window beautifully.



\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

PAINT AND SUPPLIES, \$100

"Paint, paint, paint – one item that changes a room the most," Weems says.
*Hint: For this budget, it's better to DIY.

ACCESSORIES, \$50

Choose items that have good scale and effectiveness for the price, such as wax battery candles (no mess) or vases and bowls filled with colorful rocks and/or gravel.

*Hint: "If you already have a good inventory, buy accessories for your accessories like a tray for votives or a riser for your favorite vase," he says.

TWO LAMPS, \$500

Weems opts for higher-quality lighting, whether it's classical or modern. "Something that will stand the test of time," he says. "Lighting is important – it can make a room."

ONE OR TWO THROW PILLOWS, \$50

Stay within a realistic price range. Chances are you'll eventually tire of the pattern or color or pattern and want to refresh your look later with replacements.

ARTWORK, \$300

Weems urges "give up the poster art and invest in a nice, decorative piece of art."

*Hint: Choose art you like, not what matches.

LEFT: Color is one of the least expensive ways to transform a room. Imagine this room in white; it's more soothing in Sherwin-Williams' new palette, "Local Momentum." Walls are SW7726 "Lemon Verbena." Accessories, too, make this room. Weems suggests trays for grouping votives and candles.

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

Do all of the above, plus ...

PAINTING LABOR, \$400

Paint is still important, but indulge in outsourcing.

ARTWORK OR MIRROR, \$300

"Why not double the art budget?" Weems says. "Add some more art or a great mirror."

RUG, \$300

What to look for? Good texture and something that will blend with your evolving design tastes and addition of new items.



This colorful bamboo rug from Pier 1 is only \$35.



Invest in good art, Weems says. This piece hangs on a wall painted Pittsburgh Paint's "Journey."

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See how paint changes the vibe in this bathroom. At left, Benjamin Moore's "Pumpkin Blush" revs up the room's energy; at right, Benjamin Moore's "Blue Seafoam" keeps it cool.



Have a beach house or sea-themed bathroom? These pulls by Modern Objects are available through Architectural Design Resource in Houston. Seahorse pulls are \$14 each; sand dollars, \$25; large shells, \$37; large starfish, \$28.



In this bathroom redo by Moulden, all the elements are from IKEA: a "Flaren" vanity, "Ensen" faucet and "Höllviken" sink.



DwellStudio's "Garden Blossom" shower curtain is \$73. Kuhl-Linscomb carries DwellStudio products.

\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

UPDATE HARDWARE, UNDER \$10 (DIY)

If existing hardware is in good condition and attractive, remove and spray it with paint, like Krylon Premium Original Chrome (\$3.47 at Hobby Lobby).

*Hint: Replacing hardware costs about \$70 and is feasible, if you wish to cut costs elsewhere.

PAINT/STAIN FOR CABINETS AND WALLS, \$100 (DIY)

Again, the power of paint.

KNOBS AND/OR DRAWER PULLS, \$75

BATHROOM VANITY, (\$149-\$180)

Moulden offers two options.

Replace the vanity and all its elements with: IKEA's "Flaren" vanity (\$149); "Ensen" bath faucet (\$49); and Höllviken sink (\$80).

Or keep the existing sink and upgrade to a granite vanity top from Home Depot (\$175.50).

LIGHT FIXTURE, \$100

TILE FLOOR, \$440 AND UP

Moulden again suggests Home Depot for this job. She found a tile floor there for \$447.

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

"Keep existing low vanity cabinet and splurge on a pre-fab countertop, high-end sink vessel, taller faucet and new drawer pulls," Moulden suggests. "Paint to get the most bang for your buck. Hopefully, the floor is usable."

KOHLER SINK VESSEL, \$300

TALLER KOHLER FAUCET, \$450

PAINT, \$200

QUARTZ OR GRANITE PRE-FAB COUNTERTOP, \$400

SPLURGE NOT IN BUDGET, BUT CONSIDER THIS:
SIT BACK A MINUTE AND PAY FOR LABOR, \$950

More to consider ...

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ADD AN UPDATED MEDICINE CABINET, like the Elite Home Fashions Chesterfield from Sears for \$75.

REPLACE THE MIRROR with a fresh look, like the Blomus Brushed Stainless Steel Round Bathroom Mirror from www.kitchensource.com for under \$100.

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A dainty iron chandelier brings charm to this breakfast room off a kitchen. Paint on windowsills, walls and floor is from Pittsburgh Paints' Vintage collection.

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

PROFESSIONALLY PAINT KITCHEN AND CABINETS, \$1,500-\$1,800

"It's not an inexpensive project on a limited budget," Brookbanks says. But it does transform the kitchen.

DECORATIVE HARDWARE, \$150-\$200

CHANDRA STONE, INTERIOR DESIGN

\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

BACKSPLASH SYSTEM, \$60

This is an organizational system that attaches to the wall to add style and organization to a kitchen. Systems range in price and complexity. \$59 from Pottery Barn

WINDOW TREATMENT, \$120

Price includes two tea towels for \$25 each (can be found for less), a rod at \$49, and two packs of rings for about \$10 each. "A new window treatment adds color and visual control in the kitchen," Stone says. She suggests turning estate linens or tea towels into a fun curtain with clip-on rings and a rod.

EXCHANGE SOLID CABINET DOORS FOR GLASS ONES, \$150 (DIY)

Replacing solid fronts for glass doors is less expensive than repainting or re-staining cabinets. The frames of some cabinet doors, like raised-panel and flat-panel doors, can be modified to accommodate glass.

**Hint: For DIY instructions, visit www.ehow.com/how_4844150_glass-cabinet-doors.html. Or, Sears also offers the service, Stone adds.*

\$1,000⁰⁰ Option

NEW HARDWARE, \$150-\$200

Find good-quality and good-looking knobs and/or pulls for cabinets and drawers.

KITCHEN FAUCET, \$200

You'd be surprised how it can refresh a kitchen, and these days, the selections are endless.

PAINT OR WALLPAPER CABINET INTERIORS, \$100

Remove the doors and cover a few cabinet interiors with a paint shade or fun wallpaper that complements your new walls. "While it requires a bit more organization to keep the cabinets looking neat, it can be a fun look," Brookbanks says.

**Hint: Apply to upper cabinets, not the entire kitchen.*

PAINT, \$150

It's the No. 1 recommendation for a fresh look, Brookbanks says.

**Hint: Do it yourself for \$150, but if you can't bear the task, take on another \$200-\$300 to hire a professional.*

Free

DETERMINE YOUR GOALS for both the kitchen's use and aesthetics. Utility is key in the kitchen.

ASSESS, ASSESS, ASSESS.

What hidden treasures do you already have in your house? A beautiful serving plate, China, set of glasses or the like that could be used for display?

DON'T BE AFRAID to pull from other rooms. Get creative.

CLEAR OUT EVERYTHING THAT IS OUTDATED.

"Take down that ugly light fixture, remove old hardware, and donate old and dated accessories and furnishings," says Nancy Charbonneau of Woodland Fabrics and Interiors. "Having nothing is better than having something distract from the space and your overall style."

TWO NEW LIGHT FIXTURES, \$250

READY-MADE WINDOW COVERINGS, \$100

(depending on the number of windows)

TASK LIGHTING, \$500-\$700 (for six under-cabinet lights) "Adding under-cabinet lighting helps put the light where the work takes place," Stone says. She prefers Xenon lamps, which are sold at local hardware stores and cost between \$35-\$120, depending on size and type. For professional installation, estimate four hours of work at \$70 per hour.

SLIP COVERS TO SEATING, \$520

Cover barstools or dining chairs to add color and texture to the kitchen. Nice slipcovers start about \$130, Stone says.

**Hint: Seat cushions for wood chairs have a similar effect for less money – about \$10 each.*

AREA RUG/RUNNER, \$50

Add it for more color and texture.

**Hint: Look at stain-resistant indoor/outdoor rugs to survive those cooking spills and splashes. "The designs have come a long way in the last couple of years," Stone says.*

PLATES, \$75 FOR FIVE

"Plates are one of my favorite items to use for decoration in a kitchen," Stone says. "Pull out Grandmother's dishes and pick the most interesting ones." Nothing on hand? Go antique shopping, paint your own at stores like Purple Glaze, or hit discount stores like TJ Maxx or Marshalls for inexpensive but decorative dishes.

**Hint: Buy some affordable, solid plates at IKEA and paint them at home.*

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A new kitchen sink perks up the kitchen. This one, which resembles granite, is a Blanco Silgranit Diamond Double sink, \$526. Some Silgranit sinks start at \$350. Available through Morrison Supply Co. and Westheimer Plumbing & Hardware.



More to consider ...

ACCESSORIES: Nancy Charbonneau of Woodlands Fabrics & Interiors recently worked on a kitchen with a \$2,000 budget and refreshed the entire space using accessories. "I suggested to the client that we start with accessorizing to make an immediate impact and then develop a plan for future wants and needs," Charbonneau says. "We simply accessorized this very large kitchen, and wow, what a difference it made."

\$2,000⁰⁰ Option

Do the above, plus ...

TRADE UP ON THE BACKSPLASH, \$316

Buy more refined system from Hafele. See www.hafele.com.

CHANGE CEILING LIGHTING, \$318

Stone suggests shopping locally and online for a "Tech rail light" (about \$180) that can professionally wired into a J-Box in the ceiling.

SPLURGE ON WINDOWS, \$350

Add a new plantation shutter.

HAVE GLASS CABINET DOORS PROFESSIONALLY INSTALLED, \$750

Expect to pay at least \$350 per door.

PENDANT LIGHT FIXTURE, \$200

Adds spice and spark to the room, something Stone calls "jewelry."

LEFT: Coral pine pendant from Design Within Reach, \$425.

MIRRORS brighten and expand the kitchen, while giving personality at a reasonable price.

BRING IN THE OUTSIDE WITH PLANTS. Hang from a bare ceiling or use silk plants for above-the-cabinet touches.

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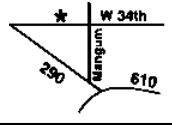
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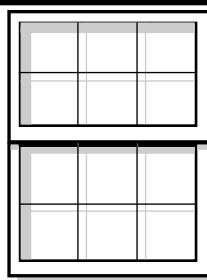
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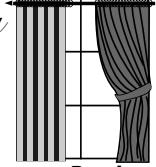
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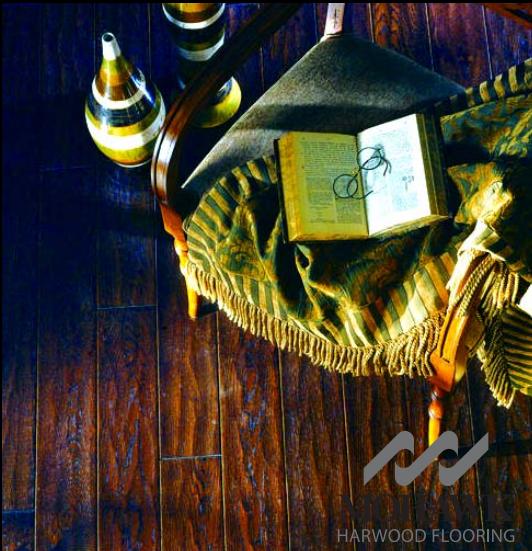
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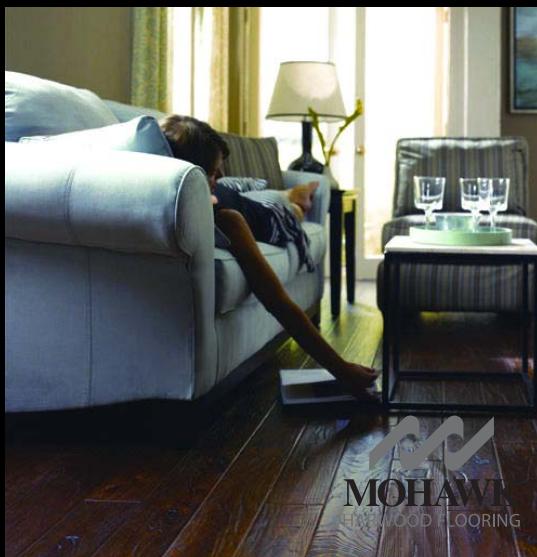
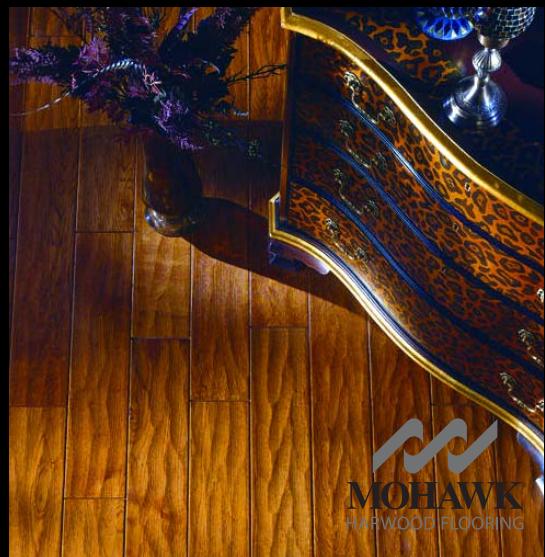
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