

MAGAZINE ARTICLES:



Boulder County Home and Garden magazine (summer 2003) shows Monica's work as an interior arranger:

[The New Face of Design](#)



Monica describes how she implements the one-day room makeover concept:

[Design in an Instant](#)

"... use nature's colorful palette as a guide for your decorating inspiration."

"Choosing the right colors can calm you or energize you,

Articles on Space and Design

- **A Home For All Seasons**
- **A Room Of Your Own**
- **Decorating Beyond Your Back Door**
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A Home For All Seasons

(September 2002)

When it's time to reach for your favorite sweater and get reacquainted with your fireplace, consider decorating your home for fall. Spring and summer might be the seasons for bright florals, cotton cushions and sisal rugs, but fall is time to enrich your rooms with warmth and fall color. If you are just starting out furnishing your home, select your larger pieces carefully as these items will remain the same for many years. You can adapt the latest design trend into your décor easily and inexpensively by adding or editing a few accessories and accent colors.

To decorate for fall, change out your accent pillows with ones in rich colors and textures such as berber fleece, chenille or wool plaids. Roll up your rag rugs and light-colored floral rugs and replace them with dark patterned area rugs. Pack away anything pastel in color and replace with darker accent colors. Baskets and wooden bowls filled with fruit, pumpkins, gourds or pinecones add natural color and interest. Collect branches with bright-colored leaves or berries and place in a tall vase for vertical impact. Collectibles, display cabinets and fireplace mantels should also be changed to reflect the seasons.

By searching your closets, cupboards, and basements for long-forgotten accessories, you can continuously create new and exciting spaces throughout your home. As the weather changes, seasonal decorating transforms the look and the feel of your rooms with the artful rearrangement of items you already own. Winter, spring, summer and fall, use nature's colorful palette as a guide for your decorating inspiration.



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A Room Of Your Own

Creating a Comfortable Home Work Place

(January, 2003)

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"Treat your patios, decks and shady backyard niches like you would your interior rooms; however, be bold with color, add unexpected details, and show off your personality!"

"Color can be a useful tool when you want to alter the apparent proportions of a room, creating illusions of making a large room seem smaller and cozier, or a small room calm and more spacious."

Whether you require a full or part-time home office, a hobby area to complete your projects, or a place to manage the household paperwork, home offices are becoming an increasingly essential room in the house. Ever-improving technology is making it easier and more convenient for people to work from home. Personally, I enjoy the pleasure of rolling out of bed, pouring a cup of coffee and getting right to work while still wearing my pajamas and slippers. But, that's my secret!



When planning for your home office, begin by evaluating your needs. How much room do you need? What tasks will you be doing? How much time will you spend in your office? What furniture and equipment is necessary? Will you need to accommodate clients? Your answers will determine whether you require a designated private space, such as converting a guest room, attic or garage, or whether a section of the family room or kitchen is sufficient to accomplish your tasks. If space is limited, look further into

transforming an empty corner, a closet, wasted space beneath stairs, or even a hallway into a comfortable office area.

Once you have your office space selected, the pleasure of decorating begins. Do your surroundings influence how well you concentrate? Are you easily distracted? What color schemes do you like? What mood do you need to create? Choosing the right colors can calm you or energize you, depending on the result you desire. If the remainder of your home is conservative, now is the time to go all out and decorate your space to achieve greatest inspiration! Select furnishings and accessories that make you feel comfortable. Computer desks and shelving come in a wide assortment of woods, laminates and metals. Do you prefer high-tech stainless steel or would an antique writing desk best suit your personality? Make sure to have adequate lighting for all your tasks. Arrange your furnishings to maximize the room's function and appeal. Evaluate your office equipment needs to stay organized and keep overflow of paperwork to a minimum (there's nothing like clutter to start the day on a negative note). Finally, adding personal touches such as window treatments, baskets or storage bins, family photos, art work and collectibles, a throw rug, a favorite desk lamp, a comfortable chair, a soothing water fountain, greenery or fresh flowers pulls it all together and creates a private place you will enjoy working in!

Working from home provides many people with the conveniences of being closer to family, eliminates commuting time to and from the office, and allows for greater productivity. Whether your taste is elegant, cozy or high-tech, your home office should be a comfortable work space that is attractive, functional, and fulfilling.

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Decorating Beyond Your Back Door

(June, 2002)

Summer has officially started, along with celebrations of graduations, Father's Day, birthdays, and family barbecues. When your interior space limits your entertaining during the fall and winter seasons, now is the time to extend your boundaries beyond your back door. Treat your patios, decks and shady backyard niches like you would your interior rooms; however, be bold with color, add unexpected details, and show off your personality!

For a patio or deck, search your basement or garage for an area rug to define your outdoor space. Along

with adding a splash of color, this is a cozy and safe area for toddlers and children to play. Bring out your old abandoned wooden or wicker chairs and feel free to mix and match your furnishings. Colorful cushions and pillows will pull everything together and welcome your guests to sit and relax in comfort. Hang a hammock or swing to lure you to a quieter place. Group containers of flowers together for maximum impact. Watering cans, wagons and wheelbarrows overflowing with flowers add "fun" to any space. For larger gatherings, cover your picnic tables with bright fabric, sheets or quilts (the "old door on two saw horses" works great for extra seating or serving).



Next, add unexpected touches to suit all your senses. Set up a tabletop fountain to listen to the sounds of trickling water or hang soothing wind chimes that catch the slightest breezes. Place tea-light candles in colored glasses or string white miniature lights underneath your umbrella or in nearby tree branches for an elegant nighttime display. Bring out knick-knacks which reflect your personality such as dragonflies, frogs or bunnies which peer out of corners or flower pots. Decorate your walls with birdhouses or a collection of garden tools. When it comes to summer entertaining, there are no design rules. Look closely throughout your home- you already have what it takes to create beautiful outdoor spaces. Sit back, relax with that pitcher of lemonade, and celebrate the long dog days of summer!

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Gathering Together

Create Unforgettable Tablescapes For Your Family and Friends

(November, 2002)

It's hard to believe the holiday season is rapidly approaching. Along with the crisp days of autumn, I look forward to returning home in the evenings and immediately slipping into comfortable loungewear, smelling the aroma of simmering stew or soup in the crock-pot, and curling up on the sofa with my favorite throw. The icing on the cake would be a good movie on cable television. Oh well, thank God for board games and books!

In these troubled economic times and uncertainty of what's still to come, spending more time at home has become a necessary yet welcomed comfort for us. Now is the time for intimate gatherings of family and friends, shared dinners, good music and memorable conversation. A combination of the right accessories to create decorative tablescapes, for a sit-down or buffet-style dinner or cocktail party, makes a stunning presentation and an unexpected surprise for your guests. If all of this seems like too much energy, here are some simple tips to get you started:

Start with a theme. What is the reason for getting together? Is it an intimate dinner with close friends, a baby shower, a football party, a holiday get-together? You can also create a theme just by the food you serve - Italian, French, Mexican, or Japanese for instance - and plan your tablescape accordingly. A checkered tablecloth, baskets of fresh bread, and candles inserted in empty wine bottles can set the mood with a simple meal of spaghetti and meatballs.

Use what you already have. You can achieve fresh, fun looks by mixing and matching items already in



your home. A woodland theme could include camping lanterns for lighting, a flannel sheet for a tablecloth, wooden duck decoys or other wildlife collections as a centerpiece, and plaid dishcloths as napkins. A string of holiday lights taped under a glass table or in between platters of appetizers adds sparkle for that special occasion. Cover the lights with a few yards of lightweight sheer or silky fabric, tie the corners to the table legs with ribbon or bows for a dramatic no-sew tablecloth. Randomly placing theme-appropriate confetti, fall leaves, glass stones, nuts, pinecones, pumpkins, gourds, ornaments or fresh-cut flowers adds that finished decorative touch.

Get creative with candles. Dinner by candlelight invokes an intimate ambiance all in itself. Floating candles in shallow dishes or goblets make a quick centerpiece for any table or fireplace mantel. Fill your glassware with water, then get creative! Add wedges of lemons or limes, colorful fall leaves, confetti, polished stones, sand and seashells -whatever goes with your theme- and top it off with floating candles. Avocados, apples, mini pumpkins or other produce can be carved to hold taper or votive candles. (Make sure the item sits firmly on the table before lighting candles.)

Accommodate all the senses. Begin the festivities as soon as your guests walk in the front door with music. Keep the volume low for easy conversation among guests. Dim the lights and have the candles flickering. (Hint: This trick works great for spontaneous get-togethers when the chore of dusting has been put off.) Scatter fragrances throughout the home utilizing potpourri in decorative containers, scented candles, or simmering hot apple cider. Keep the scents food-related, such as spicy pumpkin or apple pie, as they compliment your kitchen's aromas. Varying the patterns, colors and textures for your table decorations and place settings allows you to pull your existing items together for eclectic interest.

Some of my most memorable gatherings at home occurred at a moment's notice. Whether it's a spontaneously-organized pot luck or extensively planned celebration, the season of gathering together is underway. Keep it simple, make it comfortable, and enjoy your time with the ones you love.

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Warm Up To Color

(March, 2002)

It's March, and Spring is just a few, short weeks away...if you live in Florida! Though we have at least two more months before we see the first signs of Spring, it's never too early to get into the spirit with color.

Shortly after the holidays I started receiving phone calls from homeowners who, going through the winter blahs, were ready for a decorating change. When asked what their biggest decorating dilemma was, the majority responded with eagerly wanting to make pretty daring changes; getting away from room after room of...(gasp) white walls. It seems white is the "official safe color" for many American homes. Everything goes with white. There are no decorating challenges when trying to blend white walls with a white sofa, beige berber carpet and off-white curtains.

Albeit, the transition to color can be difficult and intimidating for some. However, think of how color

affects us emotionally, physically and spiritually. Color affects not only how a room looks, but also how it feels. Color stimulates our senses, encourages us to be calm, relaxed or excited. Color evokes moods of happiness and sadness, feelings of hot and cold. Color can be a useful tool when you want to alter the apparent proportions of a room, creating illusions of making a large room seem smaller and cozier, or a small room calm and more spacious. You can use color to focus attention on good features and disguise or camouflage less attractive ones. Color can transform the entire energy of a room.



For those courageous enough to take the plunge, below are some informative guidelines to get the process started:

- Choose a favorite furniture piece, art work, or fabric which already has a color scheme started. Leaf through the many decorating magazines available and make note of rooms that make you feel good, as well as look good. Look outside-you already have a wonderful source for inspiration!
- Start with paint samples (quart size or smaller) and apply 12x12-inch squares in various areas of the room such as dark corners and walls which receive direct sunlight. Look at them physically at varying times of the day and night for a full 24-hour period. Blues can look violet in the morning light, will deepen through the day, and warms in the evening giving off hints of mauve.
- If you just cannot commit to getting out of the neutral "safe zone," consider this perspective: Just as the little black dress can be accessorized for elegance with pearls or jazzed up with eye-popping color, choosing decorative accessories in bold accent colors will energize and personalize your overall style.

The colors you love are ultimately yours, and you should be able to enjoy them in as many ways as your imagination allows, paying no attention to color trends. Personalize your space and create your own unique style. And, above all else, show your true colors!

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