

# Finding the Finds

## Local Designers Hunt for the Right Piece

KERRY MCMANUS



PHOTO BY KRISTIN BURKE

Fairfielder Alessandra Moore knew the lengthy renovation of her Stratfield area home would include lots of dust and displacement. What she didn't anticipate, however, was the myriad of design choices she had to make in order to move back in to a finished home.

Realizing she needed help—and lots of it—Moore called on local Fairfield designer Jackie Fucigna, who runs No. 299 Design Gallery just a short distance away from Moore's home. Fucigna was more than happy to offer assistance as well as a keen eye and inspiration. "I wanted my home to be as functional as possible for my family of four kids and a dog," says Moore. "I found that I liked so many—too many—things. But working with Jackie has helped me to discover the pieces, colors, and light fixtures that I really love."

Hiring an interior designer is not just for the select few these days. From supervising the renovation of an entire house to choosing paint colors for a room, designers routinely work with clients with varied budgets, and can be a valuable resource for the overwhelmed or those simply pressed for time.

Fucigna, who also offers curated gifts, vintage accessories, and hand-painted repurposed furniture in her shop on Villa Avenue, says her clients "know what they want, but they also want to get it right." In design, mistakes can be costly, so it's my job to keep clients on point and help them make decisions that work with the big picture."

For Patricia Orsini and Ed Bocchino, both Fairfield residents for over 20 years and owners of Lexington Home & Garden on Hillside Road in lower Greenfield Hill, the key to being successful designers boils down to one word: relationships.

"It's really all about that," says Orsini. "You have to trust me and the relationship."

Like Fucigna, Orsini and Bocchino have a retail shop that showcases their design taste and aesthetic. And they tackle all different kinds of projects with budgets that range from high to low.

Recently, a longtime client with limited resources asked them for help finding mirrored nightstands for her bedroom. The duo was unable to locate an affordable source, but still wanted to help. After a quick search on eBay, they discovered the perfect pair delighting their client and keeping a key relationship intact.

“Our ultimate goal is to keep our clients happy,” says Bocchino. “It’s easy to buy expensive pieces, but you don’t always have to,” adds Orsini.

So, what are Fairfielders looking for in home design these days? Orsini and Bocchino say transitional—blend of traditional and contemporary—is au courant. Keri McKay, who is a member of Allied ASID, of the newly launched Keri McKay Interiors, notes that comfort and family friendly décor rules.

“Indoor/outdoor fabrics are great for families,” she says. “I see many requests for neutrals with pops of rich and vibrant colors, like marsala. Mixed metals are popular and gold finishes are back—even textured vinyl wallpaper is making a return.”

Vintage continues to be a classic trend, but gone are the days of the matching bedroom set,” says Orsini. She’s seen an increased demand for vintage accent pieces among her clients. And she and Bocchino always find a place for a family’s sentimental objects in a newly reworked space.

Fucigna, who travels to the Elephant’s Trunk Flea Market in New Milford most Sunday mornings, says, “I have always and still do love the treasure hunt. I think a space feels warm and comfortable when it houses a piece (or two) of vintage reworked in a fun, updated way.”

And while McKay herself prefers an eclectic look, she admits that she enjoys “breathing new life into vintage pieces and incorporating them into a contemporary room.”

The bottom line? Fairfield interior designers want their clients to love their décor.

“I live by the idea that we are no longer directed by rules in design,” says Fucigna. “Ultimately, I want my clients—and their whole family—to love living in their homes.”

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