

ANTIQUES IN STYLE

THE ARTFUL MIX OF PAST AND PRESENT

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PHOTOS Inessa Stewart

We are living in a wonderful age of revived interest in decorating our homes. There are so many superb and different sources of design and décor at our disposal.

The goal should be to use this immense wealth and wellspring of knowledge to make a home unique with the design of your own. It does not necessarily mean that all the elements of your interior should be antique or period pieces. I believe we should gravitate to materials that feel real and that even recreated pieces need to possess integrity of design and the ability to evolve with time. Of course I love spaces that celebrate the beauty of old, but very often we mix new recreations with our antique finds in our client's homes, as the design of any room demands the comforts and functionality, as well as the aesthetics that we may desire. The careful mix of antique and modern furniture helps to create an individualized and multilayered home that is a curation of the owner's unique taste and personality. Even though we treasure the allure of antique objects, truly delightful rooms strike the right balance of old and new. Here are some points to remember while mixing antique and contemporary items as you create this unique abode - your home.

DETERMINE YOUR STYLE AND DESIGN FOCUS

This is done by making a decision which style will dominate or influence the room. If a certain time in history is your inspiration, then antique pieces from the period are a perfect choice to bring the focus to such décor. Of course, in many homes today we look for more relaxed interpretations of styles, using antiques as objects of inspiration. Sometimes as you bring together elements you have collected, a new look can emerge. Special chemistry can be created from the dramatic interplay between contrasting elements of various objects. As an example, the antique Country French buffet can be a focal point of the dining room paired with a large reproduction table and comfortably scaled, recreated chairs upholstered in modern fabric, perfect for accommodating the needs of growing families.

PICK WHAT PLEASES YOUR EYE AND TOUCHES YOUR SOUL

Trust your first impressions. As particular antiques capture our love, such pieces will deliver a depth of value and warmth of character that is so intriguing. These objects are often full of rich history with emotional connections that only the passage of time can impart. As you build your collection of antiques and vintage treasures over time, each will give your interior - even a modern one - a look which you will treasure.

CREATE NEW PURPOSE

Sure, it is easy to use antiques the way they were intended, but it is much more fun to use them in a surprising way to give your interior that one-of-a-kind look and feel. An outdoor object that finds its way into your home to be used for a new purpose grabs your attention - for example a watering can may serve as a flower container in a garden-inspired tablescape. An antique buffet used in the powder bath lends a certain element of surprise for your guests, in an unpredicted fashion.

The style of the room should evolve and deepen over the years, with key elements that will meld with the beauty of the past combined with elements of the present chosen for their quality. On many occasions in our workshop we are commissioned to design great furniture recreations, either using fragments of antique items as a starting point, or designing items that are almost impossible to find. Some examples would be creating king size beds from small antique treasures, large banquet tables, fascinating television lifts and so much more. These satisfy both the aesthetics of antique style and all one's needs for comfort in a modern home. By turning old treasures into things suited for our daily lives we create something that is even better than old or new.



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