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# No Place Like Home Space: The Self-Empowerment of Interior Design

by Melissa Minetola

**T**he sun at home warms better than the sun elsewhere," an Albanian proverb points out. Who wouldn't agree? "Home" suggests a cozy, warm, personal place, unparalleled by even the best vacation haven.

Suzanne Davis, owner of I Design Interiors (idesigninteriors.com), concurs: "Home is your own little space in the world. Everyone needs their own place, where they have a sense of belonging."

According to her company's Web site, Suzanne helps people create and define their styles. "It's a questioning process," Suzanne explains. "Most people know what makes them comfortable, what they like to be around, but they can't articulate it."

Laura Magnussen, founder of Organomix LLC (organomix.com), also assists her clients with improving their home space—through feng shui (pronounced fung sh-way). This centuries-old Chinese art, Laura explains, "is a study of time and space that creates harmony in your home by tapping into a positive energy pool.... In the past 20 years," she continues, "feng shui has become harmonized with interior design."

The basic principles of feng shui, Laura notes, include "living in harmony, enhancing the best energies and surrounding yourself with what is best in your life."

"The things in your home should have stories attached to them," Suzanne agrees. "Those things are your history—although not everything needs meaning attached to it. But all of the accessories in your home should not be from Pier 1 or Crate & Barrel either."

Suzanne shares this home improvement tip: "Move around the things in your home, especially framed things, because your eye gets used to the same positions."

When she advises her clients on where to position important things, Laura looks for the most "yang" area: "This is where the home is bright, big, active." A trick of the trade: "Wherever the best energy is, open the windows there."

Laura finds the energy pattern of a home by applying feng shui's mathematical aspect. "I use a compass to figure out the energy pattern," Laura says. "The two main energies

## Décor & You

In 1994, Karen Powell and Josie Cicerale founded Décor & More, Inc. Four years later, the women launched the Décor & You® Inc. Franchise Program. The goal was to develop a network of entrepreneurial franchisees who would grow individual interior design businesses to their fullest potential.

Two local women who chose to embrace the Décor & More program for their own business growth are Tannice Jean Pierre (804-639-3396) and Nora Ramsdell (877-228-6533). Tannice, who has more than two decades of decorating experience, spends time with her clients to get a feel for their family, lifestyle and home.

As Nora of Décor & You of Goochland points out, home is more than a place to eat and sleep. "Beautiful, personalized homes increase our quality of life by giving us a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment," Nora says. "When harmony and function are well defined in our homes, they contribute to a stress-free environment where we can relax."

Nora adds, "We all take vacations as a way to unwind and rejuvenate. Every night at one's home should be like a vacation. Surrounding ourselves with the right colors, textures and patterns of that 'dreamed vacation' is what gives us a well-enhanced lifestyle."

According to Karen and Josie's Web site, "From a new frame on an existing picture to a few pillows to a makeover of an entire room, [Décor & You franchisees are] ready to help." **V**

**V**Richmond writer Melissa Minetola is incorporating Suzanne's and Laura's insights into her home improvement. She plans to paint her walls yellow, and try to locate her home's best energy spots.



Nora Ramsdell, BDA, CWTC  
Décor Designer

"Nora listened to what I liked and wanted. She presented her ideas without being pushy." - B. Beazley

"Nora went above and beyond to give us the kitchen we always dreamed of having." - D. Gribben

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