

JUNE 2008

# House Beautiful

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## ACCESSORIES ARE CLASSIC

Start with a great rug, then build around it. Add pillows—never forget pillows!—that pick up the colors. It's all in the details, the little touches

*Interior design by*  
NANCY BOSZhardt

*Interview by*  
LISA CREGAN

*Photographs by*  
FRANCESCO LAGNESE

The mood of this suburban New York living room is directly related to the Persian rug: "Once we found the rug, everything fell into place—the color palette, the mix of antiques and modern furniture," says Nancy Boszhardt. She designed the coffee table, inspired by the iron furniture of Gilbert Poillerat, "to inject a little French Art Deco." Accessories like the midcentury Danish ceramics on the table "add punch," and the lacquered 1940s French Art Moderne screen "gives the room an edginess."







Boszhardt designed the stair runner in the entry hall "to acknowledge the influence of Arts & Crafts—its focus on nature—on Tudor style. I used leaves and vines and elongated them to make the design contemporary. It's one of my favorite things here." To the right of the stairs is a collection of African wood sculptures. OPPOSITE: She wanted the breakfast room to connect to the kitchen, but to have its own identity. The family "stocks the étagère up with plates and food and uses it as a buffet." The chandelier, from Sentimento Antiques, is made from a French cloche, a glass cover that protects plants from the cold.







**FOR THE BEST ACCESSORIES**

**NANCY BOSZARDT  
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**LISA CREGAN:** When the painters pack up and the furniture goes in, you're just getting started, in a way, aren't you? The finishing touches in this beautiful old Westchester, New York, Tudor are amazing.

**NANCY BOSZHARDT:** It's all the small touches that make a room come alive, simple things like silver reflecting so beautifully against the dark black paneling in the library. And that Art Moderne screen in the living room, which plays off the formality of the antique Russian chair and the newness of the iron and bronze coffee table so nicely, I can't imagine this living room without it. It gives the room an edge that we wanted to bring to all the rooms of the house.

**I notice you used a zebra stool in front of the library fireplace, and two stools in front of the living room fireplace.**

I love little stools. They're great for pulling up into a seating group. Large upholstered pieces should never take center stage—that's something I learned from working with Bunny Williams. It's the details, that's where it's at.

**Is there a detail—an accessory—that makes the living room?**

The rug. The rug is the most important piece in any room, I think. When you start with a great rug, you can build off of it. It's the foundation for the room. That's how you make your decisions about whether the furniture should be modern or antique. Don't get me wrong, the sofas can be modern if the rug is antique, but without the rug, you can't make those kinds of decisions.

**And what decisions did the rug help you make here?**

In particular, it gave us the colors for the room. It's an antique Persian Malayer rug, and the warmth of the blues and rusts was just what we wanted. I picked out the happiest colors for the pillows and ottoman—the pale blues and the apricots.

**Is there an accessory that every living room needs?**

Pillows. Pillows on a sofa help bring color and pattern into a room. A sofa would feel naked without pillows. They can be simple, of course—the pillows don't have to have fringe or anything. They can be very understated and still be cozy.

**Did you feel constrained by such a robust architectural style? I mean, this place even has a turret.**

Not really, because we were gutting and redoing almost everything. The owners have two teenage daughters and they wanted the house bright and young. So we decided we'd use classic Tudor details, but slick them up a bit.

**Give me an example.**

Kitchen cabinets in a Tudor house would have originally been very dark wood, but my client had just gotten back from an island vacation and she said, 'Do you think we could do them the color of sand?' That color makes the kitchen so fresh. The island is large, so we painted it dark midnight blue rather than the glazed painted beige on the cupboards, so it would recede a bit.

**You mentioned the owner wanting the house 'bright and young.' Is that why there are two chandeliers in the master bedroom?**

Yes, she said she wanted the room young and cool and fun. So we did that pair of playful 'galaxy' chandeliers, and painted the room pale, pale blue with just a wisp of stenciled leaves and vines on the cove of the ceiling. Stenciling was a common decorating touch when this house was built, but here it's very subtle. I imagine my clients lying on that four-poster bed and staring up, all of it feeling kind of soft, ethereal and so beautiful.

**And what's that unusual piece of art?**

Framed plaster medallions, intaglios, of historic figures. They're so gorgeous—and so rare. I won't see anything like them again, I don't think. The fact that they're white and they're large and they're very old makes them so special.

**Those six framed pieces in the guest room are so effective, too, the way they go almost from floor to ceiling. What a focal point for the room!**

Those are mounted butterflies we found in a Paris flea market. Art on the walls is the one accessory I'd never part with. I mean paintings, to be more precise. A house is not right without paintings that you're passionate about. There's nothing like a painting that clearly shows the hand of the person who painted it, the hand that made it. I'm not talking about expensive paintings, just works that you fall in love with. You cannot do without that in a house.

**Earlier you said detail is where it's at. Does that mean you pay more attention to accessories than to the backdrop?**

I pay close attention to every aspect. For example, in the foyer we used Venetian plaster, but it's plaster with finesse, waxed and hand done. There's very little in the house that's machine made. So much was done by hand, and that's one thing that makes it so inviting. We all worked incredibly hard on it—but it was a labor of love.

PRODUCED BY TODD MOORE AND WHITNEY ROBINSON

"The owners didn't want a white kitchen, but they did want it to be a bright, interesting room—the whole family spends a lot of time here," says Boszhardt. "It's also a great working kitchen. The wide plank floors are great to stand on while you're cooking, the island is large, and they've got that incredible La Cornue range." The hood was designed by architect Radoslav Opacic. Countertops are Jerusalem Gold limestone slab. Custom barstools are upholstered in Brunschwig & Fils leather. Faucet from P.E. Guerin.





1. The dining room was enlarged with a bay, so the room could seat sixteen. 2. Pottery on the living room mantel is casually arranged to "shake up the symmetry in there a bit," says Boszhardt. 3. A whitewashed wood sculpture paired with a gleaming silver planter adds textural contrast in the dining room. 4. The painting on the limestone mantel in the family room is *Aspen Crop* by Gregory Bott; flanking it are sconces by Paul Ferrante, from John Rosselli. 5. A red 1950s bubble floor lamp adds "a bit of humor" next to the family room game table. 6. Boszhardt's way with accessories is evident in the library; a mercury glass lamp, French molecular models, and a checkered flea market cup work brilliantly together. 7. Framed butterflies hang in the guest bedroom. 8. Boszhardt loves the flexibility of stools, like this one in the library. OPPOSITE: The copper and silver hues of the master bedroom were pulled from a fabric Boszhardt discovered in India and used to upholster the Louis XVI bench. The framed oval plaster medallions of historical figures are from Daniel Barney.









"We were so lucky to come across this marble. It's no longer available and there was just enough for the master bathroom. The architect paid a lot of attention to the placement of the veining to show off the beauty of the stone," says Boszhardt. Bathtub from Ann Sacks. The house originally had arches throughout, and Boszhardt restored that architectural feature, even in the bathroom—right down to the glass insert in the door.  
FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES.





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