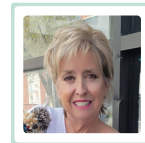




# SPACES

*March into March: Revitalize!*

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LICENSED INTERIOR DESIGNER



Revitalize! One of the first things I do in a consultation is to assess the spaces and their contents. I want to know how, and with what, people live. Then we start the discussion about why. What works and what doesn't. It invariably results in rearranging one or more things to put them to better use, a better position, or even location. Yes, you can move pieces into other rooms to give them a new purpose or better placement – good save!

It's often not "the thing," it's the placement of the thing. "Context" is as important as the "balance" that I frequently reference. Often, things around you are made relevant (or not) by their context – what is placed adjacent to them, the color of the wall behind them, and the collection of things around them.



Before  
This armless chair was found on an open-air porch. It is now an elegant, expensive piece in a living room.



I have had clients say "I don't like this thing. I'm ready to get rid of it." But before I encourage them to let it go, I evaluate it for itself – not where they have it placed nor the many other things competing with

it. Just it. Often, we make other changes that revitalize the piece in the eyes of its owner.

The same can be said of reupholstery and refinishing. Many good pieces get tired if not seemingly ruined. And if they have "good bones" or fine characteristics, they can be revitalized and given a new life.

Craftsmanship is being expeditiously replaced by mass production - void of strength and integrity, detail and care. The "good bones" of older upholstered furniture are often much stronger and better constructed. So, look at the lines, the shape, the scale and overall design of a piece and imagine it in another fabric/finish.



Before  
Here even unique antique chairs can have new life and added whimsy with multiple fabrics chosen for their revitalization.



Looking at the before and after (above), exposed adobe bricks, brick floor and original wood paneling were existing architectural elements. The chocolate brown painted wooden room-dividing screen was painted white to lighten and refresh - as were the ceiling beams. The newly thrifted table was



Before



After

painted blue. We built a new top and placed it on the surface, salvaging the clean lines and depth of the angled skirt, creating a perfect, new, solid wood tabletop. The fastidious paint job resulted in a virtually flawless finish. No fear - that oak dining table had a leaf removed and stored - and is now being repurposed for a game table in another room.

New is not always best. Yes, we can acquire new friends to build our circle, we can discover new things, and experience new places, but in our haste to gather and acquire, we run the risk of missing the value of things we already know or own.

Reupholstery, refinishing... certain modifications will revive, revitalize and restore the life of pieces that have merely become tired. I often hear people refer to things being "dated." I find this term is sadly misused. Misused - as an opportunity to discard or achieve some semblance of attempting to stay "on trend." But that phrase itself is a moving target because trends constantly change.

The gift of recognizing the value of pieces is precious. It can result in the salvage of good things which have been neglected and become tired. Like polishing silver or a classic car, oiling good wood or repainting/refinishing worn surfaces – it's really about a maintenance issue. Recognizing classic, timeless design and caring for it will last indefinitely. Updated, refreshing, and revitalizing are good terms for taking care of good things.



The most interesting design is eclectic. Even an on-trend room can benefit from the insertion/inclusion of surprise elements from classic, timeless designs. So, what is the difference between "dated" and "classic?" Classic is enduring. Its appeal and functionality transcend its time of origin. Dated pieces run their course as they are not timeless in their appeal nor their functionality.

Good design is timeless. I learned early in my education that there is no such thing as bad taste, just bad design. And conversely, good design is innate. It can be honed with desire, exposure and experience. It is not a question of taste, rather it is an appreciation for what works and why. So, March forward in March and enjoy revitalizing your spaces!

Cover photo: Featured here a whimsical collectible Royal Doulton "Leprechaun" – Toby mug - handmade and decorated in England. Complete with the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Courtesy: Kelli Cooper, Resident

Your Neighbor,

**Patti Harrell Hoech**

Licensed Interior Designer

To ask Patti a question please scan the QR code!



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