



# REJUVENATE YOUR HOME

Give Your Home a More Modern Look with the Latest Trends in Design

{ WRITTEN BY LISSA HARNISH POIROT }



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BENJAMIN MOORE

**I**HAVE HOUSE ENVY. Often, I cannot help but go into a friend's home and look at the décor and the modern conveniences and think, "I'm just so tired of the way my home looks." I've been wanting a change, preferably in the form of a new house. But with the market the way it is, I know I'm not leaving my current home any time soon. Which is why designers say with a few small changes, my home can have a new look and make me the envy of my friends.

"The desire is there for renovations and redesign, but with this economy a lot of projects are being put on hold. There are some things you can do that aren't expensive," said Julie Starcher, interior designer, St. John Starcher Designs Inc.

What are the trends for 2009, and how can you incorporate them into your

home without breaking the bank? Read on to hear what local designers had to say.

### A Fresh Coat of Paint

When it comes to redecorating, simplicity will rule in the coming years, as homeowners seek solace in our stormy economy.

"There's clearly a trend for homes to be simpler, pared down and offering relief from the pressures and anxieties of the outside world," said Eileen McComb, Benjamin Moore Paint's director of communications. "And, of course, paint is the perfect solution for simplifying a decorating makeover. Not only is a new coat of color able to provide quick and uplifting results, it's one of the most economical ways to refresh and redecorate."

Benjamin Moore lists four trends for



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2009 that combine color with other design elements to create spaces: Raw, Urban Silence, Simplicity and Private Identity. "Raw takes colors from unfinished wood, cinder block, shades of white and gray, and colors that come from nature," Starcher said. "Urban Silence mixes city tones like sophisticated grays with organic colors like terra cotta. Simplicity is similar to pixels, where a thousand dots of color create one look on the surface, such as a paint that looks black but is actually navy or purple in varying lights. Finally, Private Identity is just as it sounds. It's about personalizing a space and making it your own."

In Atlanta, senior designer Missy Wolff of Allison Havill Todd Interiors finds softer color combinations are emerging, such as apricot and sage paired with ivory and cream, lavender and plum with sage



“People have had enough of faux finishes. Wallpaper is making a comeback, especially in children’s rooms and bathrooms in bold patterns, and as accent walls that make the wall become art in itself.” JULIE STARCHER | St. John Starcher Designs



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and silver, and turquoise with gold and espresso. “Of course a monochromatic color scheme never goes out of style,” she added.

One way to really change the appearance of a room with paint, recommends both Starcher and Wolff, is to paint the ceiling. “When a ceiling is white, the room just stops and it’s like a box without a lid. It shortens the space and the white kills the hues of the room. By painting the ceiling the same color as the walls, the room appears bigger and looks more professionally finished,” Wolff said.

#### Reconsider Wallcoverings

Once upon a time, homeowners covered every square inch of a room in wallpaper,

which was followed decades later by future homeowners who had to scrape, peel or paint over dainty floral designs and outdated ’70s patterns. Wallpaper on a wall became a big “don’t,” but designers say wallcoverings have returned in a fresh, exciting way — that won’t create problems down the road.

“Wallcoverings are very hot right now and it’s a totally different animal these days,” Wolff said. “The design trade lines have produced gorgeous wallcoverings that are on heavy card stock paper: hand-painted papers; textured papers like high-end sea grass in a variety of colors; beaded or jeweled papers; or famous textile prints reproduced on wallcoverings. These are very sophisticated and timeless, and



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLISON HAVILL TODD

will be used on accent walls or as kitchen backsplashes.”

Added Starcher, “People have had enough of faux finishes. Wallpaper is making a comeback, especially in children’s rooms and bathrooms in bold patterns, and as accent walls that make the wall become art in itself.”

Papers these days are easier to apply, and better yet, easier to remove. Still, if fear of a perspective buyer pooh-poohing your home due to wallcoverings is a concern, Starcher recommends using it in rooms that people tend to redo anyway, such as bathrooms.

#### Spaces in Transition

Simplicity is also found in decorating trends, where designers are paring down on accessories and making spaces more transitional — meaning with just a few touches a space can have a new look. Hardwood floors, which are making a comeback, stained in espresso and other dark shades can be changed up with rugs

to create a new look in rooms. Fabrics are kept simple on furnishings, with textured fabrics growing in popularity for their durability so they don’t need to be recovered every five years.

“When designing model homes to appeal to a number of tastes, we’re not designing edgy or avant garde, we’re keeping it more traditional and updating traditional with a few transitional items,” Starcher said. “By decorating with a traditional formula, you can update your space by swapping out one or two items with something contemporary, such as replacing a wooden coffee table with a Lucite table in the living room or removing extra dining chairs along the walls of the dining room and replacing with winged-back, fabric chairs.”

For relatively inexpensive changes that can give new life to a space, consider “redoing” rooms with minor changes that will make a space look new again. Replacing cabinet doors with glass front door displays is a quick way to bring a

new look to the kitchen, and costs less than replacing all the cabinetry. In the kitchen or bathroom, replace current fixtures for today's newer styles and consider replacing outdated lighting fixtures.

"Use stained, polish and satin nickel fixtures; it's a nicer look than chrome and has more depth," Starcher said. "We tend to live in our homes and forget to notice

the details, but interior design is all about the details. Take a step back to notice your home again for the 'first' time, as if an outsider. What looks outdated or could be a focal point? Start there."

Wine cellars are the newest trend in home improvements, but sometimes all it takes is a little space in the kitchen to add extra oomph. Turning a pantry into a

wine room or removing a cabinet to install a wine refrigerator can add a "wow factor," Wolff said. "Get rid of the mommy desk in the kitchen. You know, the built-in desk, which has basically turned into a dumping ground for everyone's stuff? Save the granite and raise the counters up to meet the other counters. Utilize the space by putting a wine fridge at one end and fill the remainder of the space with dry wine storage. Any carpenter can do this for you," she said.

### **Au Natural**

As more and more people have become eco-conscious, so have their homes. "Design is going toward green in color schemes, a more natural setting and materials that evoke the outdoors, such as fabrics combining natural fibers with leather," Starcher said.

But as décor features natural colors and greens, eco-friendly in design means so much more: choosing less toxic paints, installing flooring made of rapidly renewable wood like bamboo, and updating appliances so they use less energy.

"Energy-saving appliances and water-saving water systems and toilets are the top design trend today. Eco-building is definitely still the trend and that will not change," Wolff said. "Sustainable products and eco finishes are still 'it' and we see them here for good. The costs of energy-saving products used to be slightly higher, but that has already changed and costs are going down. The savings in your utility bills and the planet are undeniable and unbelievable." **PN**

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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