

SUSAN FRUIT
ASID

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DESIGN TRANSFORMATIONS

a design newsletter from Susan Fruit Interiors

Design Trends

Lighten Up



Good lighting is crucial to a room's success and contributes immeasurably to a room's long-term enjoyment. Lighting plays a far more important role

in the overall feeling of a room than most people realize, until they finish their remodeling or redecorating project. Then they start to think about the lighting. Once walls and ceilings have been freshly painted, people are reluctant to have electricians make cuts in the sheetrock in order to install recessed ceiling fixtures and wall switches. So, the time to design your room's lighting plan is **before** you begin your redecorating project.

Gone are the days of a single ceiling mounted light fixture in a room or a three-piece light kit attached to a ceiling fan. Today, it takes a combination of four different types of light staged in layers around a room in order to create a good lighting plan and create drama and interest. These four types of light are: ambient, task, accent and natural light. The trend in good lighting today is to **see** and **feel** the **affect** of the light, but not the light source.

Ambient light is general lighting that illuminates the main portion of a room. It provides substantial light for one to move around a room and is an important light

Tip of the Month

Have you ever waited years to replace your upholstered furniture pieces, area rugs or carpeting and then had them stain? Isn't it disappointing and frustrating? Well, be frustrated no longer. The solution is at hand. **It's Ultra-Guard!** One application of Ultra-Guard provides a lifetime of protection from stains without altering the color or texture of the treated fabric or carpet. In fact, it provides additional benefits by imparting greater abrasion and fade resistance, thereby causing fabrics and carpeting to retain their new appearance longer. All fabrics can be treated, from cotton, wool and chenille to silk, suede and even leather. And, Ultra-Guard offers a **FREE lifetime service warranty!** If after the initial treatment you should need the service of Ultra-Guard's skilled technicians for stubborn spot removal, there is no additional charge for a service call.

What sets Ultra-Guard fabric protection apart from their competition?

- Their quick dry formula.....it dries almost instantly.
- Ultraviolet inhibitors (sun-block) are included in the formula.

source for cleaning purposes. Living rooms generally need a minimum of four recessed down lights to provide adequate ambient light.

Having good light to read by is also important in Living rooms. This is called **task light**. It can be provided by attractive table lamps or small recessed ceiling pinhole fixtures placed behind sofas, chairs, game tables, etc. for light over one's shoulder.

Accent lighting is crucial in Living rooms to highlight artwork, accessories, bookcases and niches. Artistically placed low voltage lighting is what accomplishes this and adds the drama in a room.

With accent lighting, artwork and accessories come alive at night and bookcases and niches become beautiful features in a room.



Natural light adds warmth to a room and brings out the best in paint colors, fabrics, furniture and area rugs. It's always ideal to have natural light streaming in from two different locations in a room, from adjacent walls or from a wall and the ceiling. This adds depth to a room because it brings in exterior views. And, don't forget to add candlelight at night. Small votives placed in layers, like on a fireplace mantel and on a cocktail table, add warmth and a soft glow to a room that nothing else can.



Lastly, it's very important to have all light fixtures on dimmers so you can control the level of light and create different mood settings. I always use Lutron's Diva dimmer switches for all light fixtures. For larger lighting installations and to create numerous light scenes in a room, there is Lutron's GrafikEye or RadioRA dimming systems.



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- **Their permanent stain protection is guaranteed never to come off.**
- **Ultra-Guard offers a FREE LIFETIME SERVICE WARRANTY!**



Look at the difference Ultra-Guard makes! Notice how the fabrics **treated with Ultra-Guard** (silks and velvets) do not allow the coke to soak in. It just beads up on top of the fabrics. The silk fabric on the bottom has **NOT** been treated with Ultra-Guard so the coke just soaked right in! Which scenario would you prefer? Don't let an accident spoil your beautiful fabrics or carpeting. **Call Ultra-Guard today at 800-485-9575.** Your fabrics and carpeting will be glad you did.

Q & A

Q: My husband and I would like to **update our kitchen** but we don't want to go through the expense (and mess) of a major kitchen remodel. What can we do to update our kitchen without a major overhaul?

A: The obvious choices are to replace all the cabinets and countertops, appliances and plumbing fixtures. However, this can be expensive and as you've said, "messy" to live through. Although it's always difficult to give **remodeling advice** without seeing the actual space, here are a few alternative ideas. I hope these suggestions

switches for all light fixtures. For larger lighting installations and to create numerous light scenes in a room, there is Lutron's GrafikEye or RadioRA dimming systems.



A room lit with these four types of lighting and placed on a good dimming system will be well balanced, warm and inviting. When used along with the right fabrics, furniture, window treatments and accessories, you will have a room that people will long to be in and long remember.

Did You Know....

Susan can customize your accessories and make them into works of art. She can faux finish, antique, age or glaze just about any accessory to give it a special look.



I bought these two antique garden urns from England for a client's home. I faux finished them to match the client's blue velvet occasional chairs and gold silk table skirt. To see how they look in the client's home on her French buffet, see the Before and After section in this newsletter.

Design Events

**Mark your calendar!
It's coming!**

The 13th annual New Home and Remodeling Show will be July 16 & 17, 2005 at Reliant Center. This year's show is called **Plan on Big Results** and is all about helping you prepare for your remodeling or

will work for your kitchen.

- Replace solid cabinet doors with glass doors (clear or frosted glass) on a few of your wall-mounted cabinets. Then add glass shelves and low voltage lighting inside the cabinets to show off pretty dishes or glassware. This is very "in" right now and will make your kitchen look brighter and more updated.



- If the cabinets are stained, sand them down and stain them a new stain color with a glaze finish. This is also very popular right now.
- If your cabinets are painted (a dated white paint color), paint them a darker color and then add a glaze finish.
- If you don't want to touch the finish on your cabinets, paint the walls a dramatic color or add a faux finish to the walls to contrast with the cabinets.
- Don't forget to explore the ceiling. If your cabinets don't go all the way to the ceiling, perhaps you can add small-scale lightweight wood beams to create an old world look.
- Don't forget the lighting. Outdated light fixtures can date a room more than anything else. Change out any ceiling mounted fluorescent light fixtures with white

redecorating project.

Susan Fruit Interiors is excited to announce that we will be there in **Booth 637!** Be sure to visit our booth as we will be discussing and displaying the latest trends in home remodeling, interior design, lighting, window treatments, paint finishes and more.

As an added feature, we will also have other design industry specialists and technical experts in our booth to help you with your remodeling or redecorating needs. So, bring your house plans, photographs, paint chips and fabric swatches and come on down!

Susan will also be working at various times in the Home Show's *Ask The Expert* booth. She will be available to help you with your remodeling and interior design questions there as well.

Susan's Spring 2005 Design Class Offering:

Location: The Women's Institute
2202 Avalon Place.

To register, call The Women's Institute at 713-529-7123.

To read the course description, visit their website at <http://www.wih.org/>.

The Finishing Touch ACCESSORIZING THE HOME

When:

6 Tuesday mornings
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
April 26 – May 31, 2005

Cost:

\$135.00 - Includes course manual

For additional information, email Susan at Susan@SusanFruitInteriors.com

recessed can fixtures for ambient lighting. Consider hanging small-scale pendant light fixtures over a counter or island for task lighting.



- Lastly, be sure to change out dated kitchen cabinet knobs and drawer pulls. Satin nickel, frosted glass, colored glass or oil rubbed bronze cabinet hardware will instantly give your kitchen a fresh new look.

Got a Question?

email me your design dilemma at

Susan@SusanFruitInteriors.com

About Susan

Susan Fruit, ASID is a licensed interior designer and state registered remodeling contractor with 30 years of professional interior design and remodeling experience. She has designed interiors for homes in Texas, Florida, California, the Midwest and South America, and her work has been published in numerous design magazines. Susan is a recognized expert in solving difficult design dilemmas, whether it's finding just the right accessory, creating the perfect window treatment, or tackling a major home remodeling project.

Susan is the featured interior

Bus Tour



Back, by popular demand, Susan's next

Design-On-The-Go Bus Tour!

This latest bus excursion will be a special **Art and Accessories Tour**, which will be offered after my Accessorizing The Home course at the Women's Institute ends. We will discuss and explore all kinds of art, paintings and accessories, from the modern and contemporary to the timeless and traditional. You won't want to miss this fun and informative new tour!

When: June 2005

Where: To be announced

Cost of tour: 59.00 per person. Price includes tour, box lunch, drinks and snacks. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes. Bus seating limited to 28 people. For questions call Susan at 281-463-2972 or email her at Susan@SusanFruitInteriors.com to be added to the tour list.

Speaking Events

In mid March, Susan will be speaking at the ASID national convention in San Diego, California. She will be giving a special marketing presentation to interior designers.

Susan will also be speaking to the Bentwater Ladies Association in Montgomery, Texas on May 11, 2005 on *Accessorizing the Home*. If you know of a group or organization that would like to have an interior design program, please contact Susan for a list of her speaking topics.

St. Patrick's Day Tip



With St. Patrick's Day approaching, you may want to add a touch of green and white to

designer this month in the Houston Chronicle's *Beautiful Home* Magazine, March 2005 issue, in the **Designers Corner** column.

Beginning with this month's issue, Beautiful Home magazine will spotlight local interior



designers and share their insights, inspirations and design philosophies through a question and answer forum. The feature this month is entitled "**Sitting Down with Susan**" and asks her questions such as, "what is your favorite element in a room?" and "what one person or event influenced your entry into the interior design field?"

To read this article, click on the following link:

www.SusanFruitInteriors

BOOK of the MONTH



Kelly Hoppen Style

Kelly Hoppen is a master of mood.

Using her signature palette of neutrals – pure white, off-white, cream, sand and taupe – the British designer creates simple but luxurious interiors that evoke feelings of calm and serenity. Her soothing design aesthetic is known to be very therapeutic for both body and soul. In her latest book, *Kelly Hoppen Style*, she says, "I am convinced that a calm, quiet and harmonious interior can be as beneficial to health as a sensible diet and regular



your table for a festive touch. To make a fun and inexpensive centerpiece, buy a bunch of white carnations. Fill a round clear glass container halfway with green M&M candy. Form a tight, round bouquet with the carnations and tie the stems together. Next, cut the stems short enough so that the carnation bouquet will rest a couple of inches above the opening of the glass container. Place the tied stems in water-soaked florist foam and then place the foam and stems in a plastic bag so the candy will stay dry. Fill the container to the rim with the rest of the green M&M candy and voila!, you have a festive centerpiece!

exercise.” “Fundamentally, it’s about feeling at home in your home.” If soft neutral colors are your color palette, and calm and serenity are your design goals, then this book is definitely for you.

Living Room Transformation **Before . . .** & **after**

Before



My client’s Living Room before restyling the window valance and replacing the red chairs with custom made blue velvet ones.

After



My client’s Living Room after the swagged drapery valance was remade using the same cream silk drapery fabric. A blue velvet cornice and side panels were added along with gold silk banding on the edges of the swags and side jabots to create drama.

We used the same blue velvet fabric to cover the new custom made occasional chairs which look attractive from all sides now with their camel backs and double tiered gold silk banding on the skirt hems. A glass top skirted table draped in gold silk fabric anchors this grouping. A custom blue velvet oval ottoman is in front of the chairs.

Before

My client had a large 16” high square



wood cocktail table that looked rather heavy on her area rug.

After



I replaced it with a lighter looking, higher (21" tall), iron and glass cocktail table that has simple but elegant classic lines. It adds an updated touch to the room and allows the new tabletop accessories to be beautifully showcased.

Before



Beautiful watercolor scenes were arranged horizontally across a French buffet.

After



I rearranged the pictures vertically grouping them over the center of the buffet, and then added two antique English garden urns that were faux finished in blue and gold to match the color of the new blue velvet chairs and gold table skirt.

Before

The fireplace niches before we painted



the interiors blue and added accent lighting. The foliage arrangements consumed the majority of the space within the niches.

After



The niches (and fireplace painting) after adding low voltage accent lighting, a blue background, and two custom made hydrangea arrangements in antique metal urns from France.

Before



My client's previous fireplace screen.

After



The new custom fireplace screen faux finished in subtle shades of teal and green to harmonize with the fireplace marble and accented with gold and copper. The circular center section of the screen is designed so that it can be opened to allow access to the firebox. The hinges are discreetly hidden.