

Living in style

Stanton designer gets it right the first time with her timeless, elegant designs

By **JENNIFER COLERIDGE KLECZYNSKI**
Correspondent

For your information

WHAT: Elizabeth Guest, Interior Designer
WHERE: Stanton
FYI: Rates vary for interior design work.
INFO: (908) 310-6696 or www.elizabethguestinteriors.com

With everyone's busy schedules these days, it takes a lot to run a home — and even more to decorate it. For some, pulling together textures, colors, furniture, home accents, window treatments and more comes with a bit of ease and delight — but for the majority of us, it does not.

Enter Elizabeth Guest, Interior Designer of Stanton.

Like other professional, domestic services (landscaping and lawn care, house cleaning, etc.) interior designers truly make better use of time and money. It's simple cost savings. If you are going to take the time and



where to go for urns or side tables or lamps ... That is the time savings for clients."

Guest recommends that you have one or two really great things that come from designer sources only.

"It does not have to be all high-end," she reassured. "And there's not a lot of redoing an entire room all new. We use the couch and other pieces and just add window treatments and new color.

money to decorate, you might as well do it right the first time.

"That's exactly what it is," Guest agreed. "People are finding the service to be practical. Often people buy something at the store that they think would be great, then they come home, have trouble finding a spot for it and end up with a collection of all these random things. When they don't have a central plan to guide them, it ends up looking a bit disoriented."

After listening to clients' likes, dislikes and ideas, Guest draws up a completed plan or "map" to guide them.

"People need something they can follow, a list. A simple drawing or room plan ... Two tables, three side chairs, an arm chair, so you know what you need," Guest explained.

One of the biggest advantages of working with an interior designer is their source knowledge. Guest enjoys helping clients with a blend of interesting things at some mainstream shops (Pottery Barn, Crate and Barrel, Bombay Co., Pier 1) and designer sources in New York City.

"I'm in the City every week. Even if I don't have a specific job that I'm working on, I'll go to the show-rooms," Guest said. "I know just

It really does help to bring a fresh eye, just rearrange things or suggest different colors."

Guest comes to clients with years of experience in art and art history. From her internship at a Parisian gallery to her years of art expert experience at Sotheby's in New York City, Guest applies her artistic knowledge and talents to the home.

"Instead of paint, I'm now using fabric and textures and colors," said Guest who also has travel extensively through Europe and Russia. "Traveling opens your mind and your eye."

Elizabeth Guest Interior Design began in 1996, and until just recently, the up-scale service was exclusive to Hunterdon County. Two New York State projects include a hotel lobby in the Adirondacks and a home in Saratoga Springs.

"She makes everything so simple," said client Sue Michels of Lebanon. "She has an unbelievable eye and she really learns about you. She helps you envision how things will look and helps you get there."

Michels says she's been to other homes that Guest has decorated, and while they are all beautiful each one is unique to the owner.



Interior designer Elizabeth Guest draws up a completed plan or "map" for her clients to guide them through the home decorating process. Pictured is some of her work at a client's home.

Tips from Elizabeth:

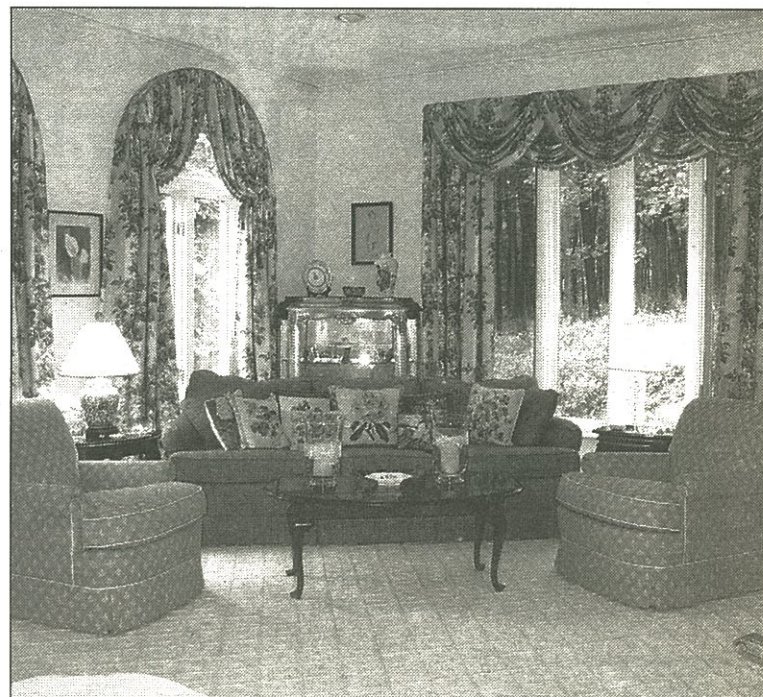
— Collect a "visual file" of rooms and things that you like from magazines, etc.

— Do one room at a time for budget and continuity. When you scatter around, nothing is ever finished and it ends up being more expensive. Taking over a year for a room? That's fine (and more common than you think). Wait and do it right.

— Don't try to get everything you need in one shopping trip or even in one week, it takes time to find the things you like.

"She really learns about you and what you like so your home is an expression of you, not a decorator."

"I focus a lot on designing around families with children and pets, since that's how I live," said Guest, mother of three boys under the age of 13. "I spend a huge amount of time listening to what people want and I try to fulfill their vision. I just guide them a little bit."



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