

**FLAIR ON THE FLOOR:** A favorite rug drove the design of Jeff and Emily Smith's Atlantic Highlands living room (right). "We worked off the rug," says Emily Smith, who subsequently selected a green sectional and red accessories that do not distract from the rug's abstract patterns. The walls are a sunny butterscotch to complement the rug. The eclectic furnishings include a 1950s Eames chair and an eighteenth century cherry lamp table; both are family pieces. The windows — which overlook the Sandy Hook bay — are bare. "I like the idea of seeing the sky and the water," the wife says. **Sources:** rug, Havana Night pattern by David Shaw Nicholls in New York City; picture, artist Abbi Marchesani in Baltimore; wall paint, Fine Paints of Europe in Woodstock, Vermont.

Photo by Jeff Smith



## Living Room Revival

THE TREND IS TO REALLY USE THE LIVING ROOM, SAYS ELIZABETH GUEST OF ELIZABETH GUEST Interiors in Stanton. A mix of styles, textures, and periods personalizes the space, the designer says. In a Hunterdon County living room (below), for instance, Guest combines antiques with Neoclassic-inspired chairs and a Venetian mirror. Leopard-pattern toss pillows introduce an unexpected punch in the traditional setting. The space features other elements popular in today's living rooms, too: intimate seating areas, moldings, an area rug over wood floors, luxurious window treatments, and a soothing palette.

So what doesn't work in living rooms? Seating that's too far apart for easy conversation, matching furniture sets, bland or all-white color schemes, wall-to-wall carpet, harsh recessed lighting, and "fake floral arrangements that collect dust," Guest says. Also out of favor is "uptight, unwelcoming, and uncomfortable furniture that says, 'Don't sit on me.'"



Photo by Melbae M. Miller