



BY ADENE LUCAS

REAP THE REWARDS

with design professionals

DESIGN PROFESSIONALS GIVE YOU THE LOOK YOU WANT and keep you on time and on budget.

Let's look at what your design professional's expertise and experience can do for you and your home.

SPEND ON A DESIGNER TO SAVE

If you believe that hiring a designer is frivolous or only for the wealthy, think again. For many of us, our home is our refuge, so why not spend the money on that one space. A designer can help you, if you don't have the expertise or time required to source the products, then deal with the suppliers and installers. A designer can also keep you from making costly mistakes. Remember that piece you loved at first sight, but loathed after living with it for six months. Let your designer guide you to the looks and products that you'll happily commit to long-term. Designers can also save you money because they've already comparison-shopped on your behalf. Some designers also enjoy special discounts of 15 to 40 per cent, which they may share with clients like you.

LEVERAGE THE DESIGNER'S FRESH PERSPECTIVE & EXPERTISE

A designer will see your home with a fresh, objective eye and the expertise required to provide new and unexpected solutions to your decorating challenges. When I go into a client's home, I assess it using design principles that include colour, unity, scale and cohesion. If your art is too high or too low, I tell you how to reposition it for maximum effect. If the wall colour doesn't do the hardwood floor justice, I let you know which paint colour will make the most of that beautiful wood. Even though I'm a designer, when other designers see my home, they notice things that I don't because they're seeing it from a different perspective than mine.

ASK YOUR DESIGNER TO FIND IT!

Even when homeowners know exactly what they want and can afford, they may not know where to find it.

Homeowners may find sourcing furniture, art and accessories incredibly time consuming, not to mention somewhat daunting. Some people contact me because they've become so frustrated and overwhelmed that they've given up.

Rather than roam the city in search of your dream sofa, ask a designer to find it for you.

Designers know which suppliers have the products that fit the specific clients' style, budget and time frame. Good designers build key relationships with like-minded suppliers and their clients benefit because suppliers want to keep those designers happy. As a result, you and your job may be scheduled ahead of walk-in customers.

A designer will source the products for you, narrow the options down to the top three to five, then bring those selections to your home for your consideration. When you know that the designer really gets your style and understands your needs, the decision-making process becomes so much easier and more enjoyable.

MAKE THE DECISION

As a designer, I provide you with selections that work but in the end, you need to make the final choice, because you live in that space. After seeing countless tile samples, my client couldn't pick a fireplace tile. All of the samples worked and she liked them all, but she never did select a tile or reface that fireplace. She then resented being invoiced for the selections provided because she didn't feel she'd made any progress.

To find a qualified designer, ask friends and coworkers for recommendations. Look in the Yellow Pages, where the professionals tend to advertise (dabblers and amateurs can't afford the Yellow Pages). View their website, see their work, check their references and be sure they are registered with the Better Business Bureau. Talk to the designer you'd work with to see if there is a connection or mutual understanding.

As in any relationship, communication and listening are key.

In the end, it is your home and the choices made should reflect your style and budget. A good designer only needs to tweak it, not redefine it!! ☺



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