



ON DESIGN

A Conversation with Jeanne Collins of JerMar Designs
 Story by Kathleen Syron | Photography by Jane Belles



dence in their delivery times and inventory. I've also sourced more things locally than I did before. For example, I will often have a chair made locally or ask a local vendor make cabinets instead of sourcing them from other locations. Using local vendors allows for more control over the process, the final products are always of a higher quality, and supporting local is always good to do!

D+D: What advice would you give homeowners who are interested in redesigning their homes and would like the assistance of an interior designer?

Jeanne: The first step is to start finding images of things you like, whether it be on Pinterest, in magazines or on Google images. It doesn't have to be the room as you want it designed, as that is the interior designer's job. Focus on images you like for whatever reason you like them. It could be that you like a piece of artwork, the floors, the room colors, the lighting, the sofa or the overall vibe the space gives off. Then ask friends for recommendations of designers—even if your friends have a different design style than you do! While designers have styles they prefer, they are all trained to design in many styles, and often have projects not shown on their websites that could be a good match for your needs.

Resource:

Jeanne Collins
 JerMar Designs
 163 Pocconock Trail
 New Canaan, CT 06840
 203.253.0649
 jermardesigns.com

D +D: Your designs run the gamut of the color spectrum. Where do you see the trends for color and neutrals?

Jeanne: First you need to understand that there are industry trends that I keep abreast of all the time, and then there are the trends I see in my local community as reflected in my clients. The industry trend is definitely shifting into a color phase of big earthy tones, such as yellowy spring greens and flat muted oranges. Autumnal colors are gaining relevance again as well. However, there are still homeowners who are afraid of color and opt for a more monotone look. My clients tend to fall into either camp—bold and colorful, or soft and neutral. I rarely have clients who want a combination of the two, or even a pop of color in an otherwise magnolia color scheme. So I take the lead from my clients and design for their needs and desires, and not the latest trend. Unless the homeowner is planning to sell their house in the next several years, then it is best to design for a style they can live with until they move on.

D+D: Is it a wise design decision to give an active (read “messy”) family a white sofa?

Jeanne: Yes, yes and double yes. I design with white fabric all the time. Since the invention of Crypton, a special treatment that can permanently protect fabric from spills, stains and odors, I find no excuse to dismiss any fabric out of hand. And just because it is considered a performance fabric, that doesn't mean it's rough. The treatment also makes the fabrics very

soft, so you can have cozy and carefree furniture. I've created a video that I show my customers of red wine being spilled on white fabric treated with Crypton. The stain magically disappears under running water with a little dish soap. If the stain is overly large or particularly gruesome, you may need to take it to get professionally cleaned, but the stain will come out. The fabric works by attacking the stain as soon as it hits the fabric. The liquid will bubble up and pull away from the fabric.

D+D: What is the one element that every designed room should contain?

Jeanne: I firmly believe you can't design a room without the use of plants—real or faux. Plants, flowers and other vegetation can soften the room and make it more inviting. And plants can be used in a variety of ways to make the design more interesting. While an indoor tree can ground the space and not look out of place, a large succulent terrarium can make a big statement, even given its low profile. Plants also work with any style. Neutralists/minimalists don't mind the natural colors plants deliver, and most color schemes are compatible with nature.

D+D: How are you dealing with the supply chain issues?

Jeanne: It is a challenge for sure! First is to set expectations with clients so they know that everything takes a long time right now—even Amazon! I've reduced the number of vendors I source from, so I have greater confi-



SRW Architects



Windigo Architecture



APD Architects