

'Bones' and other interior design trends making an impact

Interior design, like fashion, is an ever-changing industry. Styles, materials, furnishings and décor similarly follow trends and seasons. Good interior design will provide flexibility and scalability, allowing a home or business owner to remain current in its aesthetic.

Texas interiors expert Elaine Williamson of Elaine Williamson Designs (www.ElaineWilliamsonDesigns.com) offers this glimpse of what's currently trending in the design and décor-scape:

"Bone-dacious" furnishings: For the past few decades, designers have purchased furniture that served one particular style purpose for a specific room. This meant that, as soon as the property owner or manager decided to redecorate a space, all new base furnishings had to be purchased. Lately, however, it's become popular among designers to purchase a quality piece of furniture that has desirable, style-transcendent "bones" with the intent to reupholster it as fashions change, rather than simply discarding it when it's time to update the look of a room. This trend has resulted in an increase in purchases from domestically based manufacturers that make quality furnishings built to last.

Dodge disposable décor: Designers are no longer purchasing one-time use "disposable" décor items, be it furniture, rugs, window treatments and decorative items. Instead, they consider a piece's reusability in another future design when considering a purchase. This is the most effi-

cient and cost-effective way to make over a room ... now and later.

Color craze: The world of color has undergone a make-over of late, too, with yellow and gray paving the way. Together, these colors add a level of calm to the feel of a room, while still adding eye-catching pops of color. The gray, a rather neutral color, works well as a base color on upholstered furniture, especially when coupled with another hot trend right now — espresso-stained wood. This stain color, which exudes an air of sleek sophistication, is an enduring classic that has realized a surge in popularity. The yellow, best utilized in small bursts, serves as an impactful infusion of excitement in the room. For instance, a yellow throw pillow on a gray sofa can make a stellar statement.

See the light: Lighting is currently making a huge push in the marketplace. As the design of table lamps have waned and the style of homes have begun to embrace cleaner lines, pendant and other types of overhead lighting are popular choices for making a major design statement. Beautiful materials, unique shapes and versatile sizes simply cannot be overlooked.

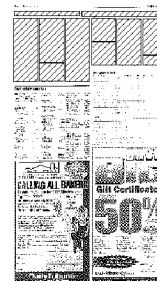
Ground control: Natural wood floors also are making a major comeback, and other types of natural flooring such as travertine, limestone and honed marbles are in high demand. Recyclable flooring, either in wood or carpet, is in fashion. Currently, consumers are investing in and embracing their home environment (think "staycations") and are seeking to upgrade responsibly. Therefore, all things natural and recyclable are at the top of the style scene. I am seeing and using natural gemstones in flooring as well. Tiger's Eye, Sodalite, Malachite and Mother of Pearl are just a few of these fabulous new materials being put to creative flooring use.

Bringing the indoors out: Gone are the days of wrought iron outdoor furniture. If you can imagine outdoor furniture used at a posh Vegas resort pool, the same is available for your own outdoor living space at home. Think a tufted white leather sofa won't work outside? Think again! Simply spray with a hose when needed and, voila, let the party begin!

Outdoor fire elements are trending this year in a big way. Glass boxes with eco-friendly fire burn elegantly through the night as you entertain your guests in your fully furnished outdoor living room.

Simple swaps = big impact: If you're searching for a new look for a room, you can build on the baseline furnishings already installed and switch out accessories, including pillows, picture frames, vases, candles, statues, artwork and other portable items. This allows you to introduce fresh style elements as décor trends change without having to change the entire composition of the space.

"Interior design and décor trends change with every season," Elaine notes. "But, with a strategic foundation of base-



line elements like furniture and flooring, you can easily keep up with the trends without sacrificing essential style elements of the space."