

Simple changes, colour choices and complementing styles can yield big results

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.

“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 re-usability in another future design when considering a purchase. This is the most efficient and cost-effective way to make over a room...now and later.



Colour craze: The world of colour has undergone a makeover 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 colour. The gray, a rather neutral colour, works well as a base colour on upholstered furniture, especially when coupled with another hot trend right now - espresso-stained wood. This stain colour, 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 are also 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 also



Allowing for the proper light and colour in a room can make a big difference in creating a space that is welcoming for visitors.

in fashion. Currently, consumers are investing in and embracing their home environment (think “stay-cations”) 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 also 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.

— Elaine Williamson Designs is a full-service, award-winning design group specializing in luxury residences, high rise living and commercial properties. For more information, visit www.ElaineWilliamsonDesigns.com



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Cemetery walks a good way to experience history

There's no need be afraid of visiting monuments of those who've come & gone



Some might call it morbid. Others might see it as creepy or a little too weird, not to mention the obvious irony of discussing walking through a cemetery in a column bearing the title of “Calgary's Living History,” however many of Calgary's most colourful characters lie buried in Calgary's oldest existing civic burial grounds.

And this summer, those Calgarians who wish to get a little more up close

and personal with those characters can take part, as the City of Calgary Parks tells these fascinating stories through free guided walking tours of Calgary's historic Union Cemetery, Burnsland Cemetery and St. Mary's Pioneer Cemetery.

According to Tanya Marshall, program advisor for City of Calgary parks, environmental & education initiatives, the idea of approaching the cemetery as more of a place of celebration rather than somber-

ness goes back to the formative days of Calgary's history.

“Our first parks superintendant, William Reader, believed that cemeteries should not be a scary place to be,” said Marshall. “He believed we should actually make them a big monument, and in the Victorian era, they were a nice place to go. He wanted them to be a special place.”

During the tours, which are now in their seventh year, knowledgeable and entertaining volunteer tour guides lead walks through local history, recounting the fascinating stories behind the colourful characters of Calgary's past. Visitors can travel back in time to discover the stories behind the names etched in stone, of lives lived and lost, from the famous to those unsung.

Some of those historic figures buried in Calgary's cemeteries include Sam Livingston, Colonel James Macleod, Sir James Lougheed, Thomas Edworthy along with several other notable historic figures.

— The City encourages Calgarians to participate in a tour, to find out more about who's buried in Calgary's oldest cemeteries. The 2010 tour season begins on Sunday June 6. These tours are free and no registration is required. Please visit calgary.ca/parks for the tour schedule.



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