

Nature Can Take Care Of The Outside, Homeowners Need Help On The Inside

By Jason Meilands
Special to the Times

Spring is here. Outside, grass is turning green, flowers are bursting through, and buds are swelling on the trees. It's time for yard work and spring cleaning. Nature takes care of the outside, but inside is up to you. With that in mind, consider visiting several of Montclair's new home and furnishing shops.

Business Briefs

Montclair resident **Gina Stigi** has a unique approach to interior design. Her business, **By Design Interiors**, 655-0162, works with the furnishings that the customer already owns to create a new look for the home.

Since graduating from the University of Vermont with a degree in fashion merchandising, Stigi has worked for Ralph Lauren and Banana Republic as a visual merchandiser. "I design the layout of stores to make shopping easy for customers. Basically, I utilize the space of the store to best display the merchandise and enhance customer flow," she says.

In addition to college, Stigi has studied with Laura Ward who innovated the "Use What You Have" method of home design. Stigi is a member of the Interior Refiners Network, a group that has been trained in this technique.

"Traditional interior designers dictate what and where the furniture should be," Stigi says. "I know that people have things that they love. I let them know that they can keep their treasured heirlooms. It's a matter of perception, you must see things in a new way."

"Things don't work unless you know how to use them," she adds. "Making things work takes a touch and a fresh outlook."

By Design Interiors Gives Your Home A New Look

Would you like to give your home a fresh new look without the expense of purchasing all new furniture or having a traditional interior decorator talk you into discarding your cherished possessions?

Gina Stigi, owner of the new company, **By Design Interiors**, located in Upper Montclair, believes that most people already own most of the home furnishings they need. "Often people get so used to seeing their furniture arranged in a particular way that they can no longer see the possibilities," says Ms. Stigi, who has an extensive background in visual merchandising, experience in freelance interior design, and a membership in the Interior Refiners Network.

"What I offer, in addition to my experience, is a fresh way of looking at a home. For example, sometimes the best way to furnish one room may be found by bringing in pieces from other places in the house." Ms. Stigi charges a flat rate for each room that you would like to redecorate (based upon the size of each room). Whether you live in a small apartment or a large house, the combination of Ms. Stigi's expertise and your unique style is bound to make your home a more beautiful place to live. For more information, call 655-0162.

When Stigi meets new customers, she talks to them about their needs. She learns how they use the room and what their frustrations are. "I get an idea about their lifestyle," she says. "Seventy-five percent of prob-

lems are design issues. Things aren't arranged properly," she says.

"We figure out what they want to do with the room. Then I give them a design plan. They don't have to do it all at once, but they have a plan."