

GULFSHORE LIFE

HOME

THE DIARY OF A MEANINGFUL + WELL-DESIGNED LIFE

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Form & Function

DESIGNER SPACES

Southwest Florida's accomplished interior designers are always inspiring us—so what exactly inspires them? Five local designers share the concepts and materials that make them tick.

By
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"I always incorporate a live element in the room," says Louisa Parsons, founder and designer at Pure Design. "It just as important as linen and wood. One breed makes or something more alive."

"I tend to go into a space considering who is going to be using it and how I can best create a space that is going to nurture that person," says the Kolbe Interiors designer and CEO at Lisa Kolbe Designs.



LISA KAHN

Interior Designer and CEO, Lisa Kahn Designs



LISA KAHN,
Interior Designer and CEO,
Lisa Kahn Designs

What is your favorite material?

I love wood. I'm so inspired by trees; it's just my thing. I particularly love black walnut. I use it in floors, for ceiling details, we make furniture out of it. Nature is so important ... and anything we can bring inside that can tie us back to nature—it is so healing.

What are some concepts that move you?

I tend to go into a space considering who is going to be using it and how I can best create a space that is going to nurture that person. A space to open its arms and welcome those people in and hug them every time they come in. I call it a sanctuary—it's evocative of a safe place, a refuge, a place to refresh your spirit.

What is your design philosophy?

I really believe that when we create peace in our environment with the elements and energy we put into it, I believe it helps inspire peace inside of us. I find that one of the greatest ways spaces can help our creativity (is by having) a place to do that on an everyday basis.

**DIANA HALL &
ELIZABETH MANCHEGO,**

President; Senior Designer,
Diana Hall Designs

What are some of your favorite materials to work with?

Hall: Wall covering, because it's a product that ... (is) a great way of incorporating texture to a wall. We've used it in backsplash material; they add so much dimension to an area with colors. Some are natural fibers. They can get really customizable. Mica is a natural material with a natural sparkle to it. Grasscloth has come a long way and has incredible depth; they do them a lot in silvery and gold tones, as opposed to earthy tones. That adds texture richness and depth.

How have you incorporated these materials in projects?

Manchego: (We'll use them) behind shelving to add some interest to floating shelving ... we'll cover a whole wall behind picture frame molding with mica inserts. We'll do one wall behind the headboard—in one area not to overdo it; it just gives it that special effect.

How do you determine what concepts you'd like to incorporate into a home?

Hall: We draw inspiration from clients. What's the ideal use of the space?



LAURIE WALTER,
Interior Designer, Cardamon Design

What are your favorite materials to work with?

I get excited by the combination and juxtaposition of material you may not normally put together, but they make such a statement when you combine them: a mirror with a ceruse wood detail. ... I love doing a custom concrete counter, and the juxtaposition of maybe also then combining that with things like a sheer fabric, something sheer and luminous, along with something that has a cool feel, like a nail head in a pewter.

What is a recent project you've done where you used these materials?

One project I'm doing now ... is a whole gut and remodel. With that home, we did a mid-century modern-inspired flavor ... all the lower cabinets and the cabinets for the island are a natural, soft, flat-panel cerused wood, big floating chunky shelves, and a complementing champagne flat-panel, high-shine upper cabinets. The backsplash is in those two tones with a mirrored glass that's chisel cut, so that gives depth and dimension.

