



# LIVE in STYLE *Newsletter*

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***"He is the happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home."***

--Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

**LET'S SAVE SOME TREES:**

***If you are still receiving my newsletters printed on paper, PLEASE send your e-mail address to [mila@liveinstyle.ca](mailto:mila@liveinstyle.ca) to receive future issues electronically***

***Your ideas and suggestions for the following issues are always welcome***

## **Style File: Eco-Friendly Bamboo**

Bamboo is considered a grass, but it varies in height from dwarf, one foot plants to giant timber bamboos that can grow to over 100 feet. It grows in many different climates, from jungles to high on mountain sides.

A grass that grows extremely quickly, bamboo can be harvested in just 3 to 5 years compared with many species of trees, which can take 10 to 20 years or more to mature. Bamboo can be grown without pesticides and fertilizers, and it never requires replanting because of its extensive root system.

In the past decorative items made from bamboo have been reserved for homes that have been specifically designed around an Asian theme. Now bamboo home decor has transcended cultural design lines, and they are being used for just about every style.

Bamboo is both decorative and useful. In many parts of the world it is food, fodder, the primary construction material and is used for making great variety of useful objects like bowls, cutting boards, utensils, plates, sheets, towels, rugs, baskets, bath mats, mirrors, picture frames, place mats, window shades, and other decorative accessories.

## **Furniture Tips: Rearranging Furniture**

You can transform your family room by rearranging the furniture you already have. Just follow these basic design principles:

Define the functions of the room. Clearly understand how you use the space.

Establish a focal point or two. You might include the television, fireplace, a window or an aquarium just to name a few. You must decide where you want to focus attention so you can arrange the furniture accordingly.

Don't block traffic flow with furniture. Some good rules to follow:

- Allow three feet for pathways in and out of a room.
- Chairs and sofas should be no more than eight feet apart (too much distance makes conversation difficult).
- Keep about 18 inches between the sofa and coffee table.

## **LIVE in STYLE**

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## **Décor Ideas: Old Piece, New Purpose**

With a bit of imagination, furniture and found objects can do double-duty in your home. Chairs as easels, closets as cupboards ... there really is no end to the way furniture can be repurposed. And even items that were not at all intended for residential use can bring beauty and function to your home. A dining table can look perfect in your front hallway, can also be used as a library table, and if the table is small enough and the room large enough, a breakfast table could work quite nicely next to a bed. The store's stack of sweater shelves may turn out to be the best place for your books. With a bit of creativity, furniture can be put to all sorts of uses other than the ones their manufacturers had in mind, bringing a unique flair to every room in your home and proving that in design (as, indeed, in most things) it's best to think independently. With a bit of imagination you can give old pieces brand new — and very beautiful — lives. It absolutely does not matter what a piece of furniture is really intended for. All that matters is whether it works well in the space.

There really are no rules about what can be used where, if you love it, go for it!

## **Practical Ideas: Kitchen Design Don'ts**

### **Don't #1: Skimp on storage**

People will buy a large double oven or 48-inch range so they can do a lot of baking, but don't plan storage space for oven racks and cookie sheets. Some people want a lot of glass doors and open shelves to make the room look pretty, but the reality is you have to have some concealed storage, some doors you can't see behind. Do you really want to look at those half-eaten boxes of cereal and bags of kidney beans every day? And what about the juicer, toaster, blender, mixer and other small appliances?

### **Don't #2: Hang on to the old**

A family just moved into a new kitchen with lots of added appliances. But they still have all their pots and pans and accessories from their old kitchen. Do you still need a George Foreman grill and 20 different pans when you have a built-in grill? People need to focus on their new space and how they'll use it, and get rid of whatever they don't need.

### **Don't #3: Insist on the kitchen triangle**

The "working triangle" philosophy the refrigerator/sink/range was developed for smaller kitchens. In today's large kitchens, design works better in "stations" — a station for clean up, a station for food storage, a station for cooking.