

San Francisco Chronicle

M Magazine

February 2012



Spring Home Design

Bay Area experts show how to
get the look of big-budget decor
— at reasonable prices

Luxury style at low-end cost

By Leilani Marie Labong

Call it design for the 1 percenters. Reality shows like Bravo's "Million Dollar Decorators" and HGTV's "Selling New York" brave the nation's testy economic climate by glorifying the lifestyles of the rich and famous. We're prescribing a refreshing antidote to all the blue-chip hoopla: We asked local interior designers and veterans of big-budget decor, Suzanne Tucker, Martha Angus and Antonio Martins, to put a down-to-earth spin on their most well-to-do projects. As shrewd bargain hunters with a keen curatorial expertise, they scoured local boutiques and national furniture e-tailers in the name of high style at reasonable prices — 99 percent satisfaction guaranteed.

Pacific Heights living room by Suzanne Tucker

Tucker and Marks Design, tuckerandmarks.com

Suzanne Tucker designed the capacious living room of the 2007 Decorator Showcase House — an Italian Renaissance-style manse in Pacific Heights — with fictitious clients in mind: a successful couple with a stockpile of furnishings both inherited (see the 1730s lacquered secretaire) and collected (an eccentric opium bed-turned coffee table). Despite their traditional bent, the couple are hardly conventional. "She listens to Cole Porter, and he's a closet rock star," says Tucker. "And after a party, when the fire is low and the music is right, they like to dance in the dark."



GET THE LOOK

The generous scale and "va-va-voom" (Tucker's words) faux-zebra upholstery of **Oly Studio's Sophie Lounge Chairs** make them chic substitutes for their priceless Georgian counterparts, loaned to the designer by the late San Francisco socialite Dodie Rosecrans for exclusive use in the showcase-house tableau. \$3,200; olystudio.com.



Though Tucker loves the visual strength — "the grounding," as she calls it — of the legs on the original coffee table, a transformed antique opium bed, the stocky profile of the **Elmwood Ming Chow-leg table** from China Furniture stands and delivers. \$789; chinafurnitureonline.com.



"The tribal graphics of Moroccan rugs pair well with contemporary or traditional designs," says Tucker. This **Beni Ourain shag** has a simple harlequin pattern, a 1960s vibe and a sticker price that's one-tenth the cost of the rug in the showcase room. \$3,500; themoroccanroom.com.



While Tucker used pricey horn sconces in the original room as adventurous counterpoints to the traditional architectural moldings, she loves this sleek (and PETA friendly) take on the look: a **white-resin fixture from Mecox Gardens**. \$495; mecoxgardens.com.



Compared with the showcase room's \$780,000 Italian Rococo secretaire, delicately limned with exotic chinoiserie scenes, this worthy substitute, an ornate **black-and-gold secretary from Decorative Crafts**, is practically highway robbery. \$7,000; decorativecrafts.com.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: OLY; CHINA FURNITURE; MOROCCAN ROOM; MECOX GARDENS; MICHAEL TAYLOR DESIGNS; MATTHEW MILLMAN; ILLUSTRATION BY VAL B. MINA / THE CHRONICLE