

My Yummy Home

by Diane Pruitt



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INTRO

I never realized how important the visual impact of communities and areas surrounding my home were until I moved to a condo in a dense urban area. Even though it held the diversity and energy I enjoyed, I often found it noisy and depressing. My creativity was stifled because I was so removed from silence and nature - trees, birds singing, panoramic views and stars shining in the night sky. I yearned for a peaceful space, for quiet contemplation.

At the time, I couldn't change my surroundings but I could change my interior space and the way I approached my life. When I decided to start my journey into peaceful living, I left my job and started my own business. I created a nurturing home environment that I could retreat to in order to refresh and renew. I rearranged my commitments in order to improve my health and my outlook on life. In short, I created a new story for myself that was all about savoring moments, nurturing my creativity and designing my yummy home to nurture my yummy life.

Diane Pruitt



Abodwell Interior Design

Chapter 1: What is a Yummy Home?

Having a sense of home, its comfort and its visual appeal are all very important in nurturing your spirit. Enjoying home is much like describing a great meal. When food looks good and tastes even better, it can create a marvelous sensual experience that is both pleasing and comforting. When it is less than that, we really can't savor it.

Good design like good food is an exploration in tastes, preferences and comfort. A delightfully designed home can be a refuge for relaxation, renewal, reflection and contemplation. It can represent your unique tastes, style and creativity.

I love good food and great design. On weekends, I like to explore different areas of the city to find new culinary experiences and unique decor. That my first book would be about the sweet and savory aspects of interior design and life seemed natural.

I once wrote, "The life we live is a mirror of our thoughts . . . our home, its reflection." Our homes are a representation of our tastes, our values and how we present ourselves to the world.



Garrison Hullinger Design

Chapter 2: The 7 Key Ingredients

The initial sensation of entering any room in your home should be one of sheer delight, a sense of "ahness". I define "ahness" as that feeling we get when we experience something that takes our breath away. A room that makes us go "ahhh" lightens our spirit, makes us smile and soothes our soul.

The design and care of a space enhances the appeal and feel of that space. It can lift us up, help us relax or make us feel overwhelmed. A design, well done, contributes to the scrumptious ambiance and peace of the entire home.

There are 7 key ingredients for a 'yummy' home:

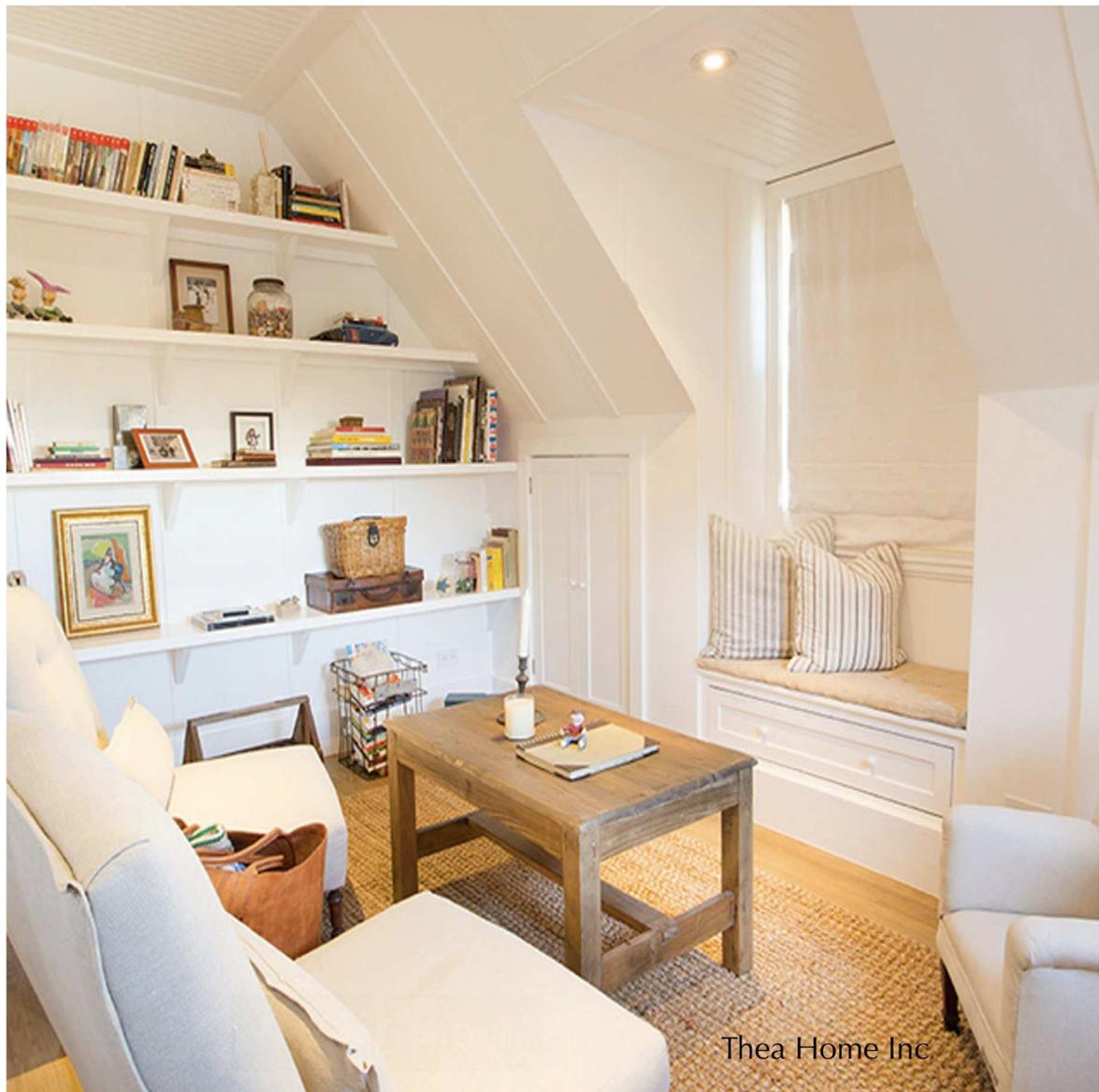
1. Levity. Keep it uncluttered, clean and fresh. Dust, dirt and messiness affect the energy of the home and anyone in it. A "weighty" home can be oppressive and, ultimately, have a negative affect your health and well-being.

2. Vibrancy. Open your home to sunlight, color, rhythm and flow. Keep in mind that colors can calm, excite and stimulate so it is good to identify areas in your home where the different qualities of colors are best suited.

3. Ahness. Hopefully, you have moments in your life when a blissful experience makes you take a deep breath and simply say "ahhh." It may be the moment you step out on a beach and view the vast expanse of ocean before you. It might be the feeling you get from a nice warm and relaxing bath. "Ahnness" in a room can be a great asset in helping you relax, refresh and renew.

My hope for you is that "ahness" is what you experience each day as you walk into your home, close the door and leave the world outside.

4. Coziness. Create spaces that are comforting and nurturing. Much can be said for the careful placement of furniture and decorative objects in creating mood. Arranging and rearranging until you can "feel the harmony and balance" in a space is essential to creating a cozy interior.



Thea Home Inc

5. "Outside In". I think sometimes, we are creatures of externalities and as such may require an external stimulant of peace to remind us of the potential for inner peace. So, I start with the home as that external extension of self.

As you work to design your space, ask yourself, "Is this peaceful, restful?" I often refer to this ingredient as "outside In". It is a way of creating an interior environment that reflects your state of being.

It is important to have a place of peace in order to practice peace in our lives. Thus the concept, "outside in." Inner peace is our gift to ourselves and to the world.

'Our capacity to make peace with another person and with the world depends very much on our capacity to make peace with ourselves.' - Thich Nhat Hanh



6. Delightful. Using texture, color, and patterns in your decor is like plating a beautiful dish or spicing up the soul. It enhances the visual links in the room, balancing lighting, furniture arrangements and other elements of your design.

7. The Breath. Design must include consideration of the types of materials used in the design and the care of the home. The quality of the air we breath is crucial to our appreciation of home and its ability to nurture our souls.



Chapter 3: Levity

You can create spaciousness in your home that ignites a certain lightness of being.

Keeping the weight out in the form of clutter, dust and dirt can be very important.

Clutter is an oppressive weight that affects health and wellbeing. It can make you feel overwhelmed. It can sabotage your productivity. It can stifle creativity and burden your spirit.

Is there enough space for all of your "stuff"? If not, spatial requirements may dictate purging, storing, or redesigning areas to open up new a space for organizing and staying that way.

Cleanliness is another function of levity and spaciousness. Dust, dirt and messiness affect the energy of the home and anyone in it. Seldom discussed in design and decorating books, a clean space is very important to maintaining the integrity of your design and your environment.

When in doubt, throw it out.

When we attach ourselves to "things", we struggle with detaching and purging. But it serves us well when ridding our homes and our lives of the chaos of clutter. There is an old expression, "get rid of the old to make way for the new." It is challenging to bring lightness of being out of the heaviness and weight of "stuff."

If clutter is a concern to you, tackle it in small bites - 10 to 20 minutes a day. Work your way up to about 30 minutes a day, throwing out or donating as much as you can. Make it a habit and you will continue to manage your clutter long after your space is clear and clean.

It may be helpful to read my **10-Step Program for organizing** in the Appendix of this book.



Lea Frank Design



Gast Architects

Lucious Lighting

There is a sense of lightness and well-being in rooms that showcase natural light. Daylighting is important to creating spatial "ahness".

How much and what type of light a room has during the day and night can impact a room's "nuruturing" effect. The available natural light affects color and design choices for each room.

Lighting can be most effective when it is layered. It creates mood and intimacy.





Chapter 4: Vibrancy

Colors - The Spice in Your Space

Colors are like spices, they lend a richness of flavor to any room. Even in a room with neutral colors, a splash of vibrant color can enhance the mood and the visual flow of the design.

According to Kendra Cherry, "Artists and interior designers have long understood how color can dramatically affect moods, feelings and emotions. It is a powerful communication tool and can be used to signal action, influence mood, and cause physiological reactions. Certain colors can raise blood pressure, increase metabolism, or cause eyestrain."

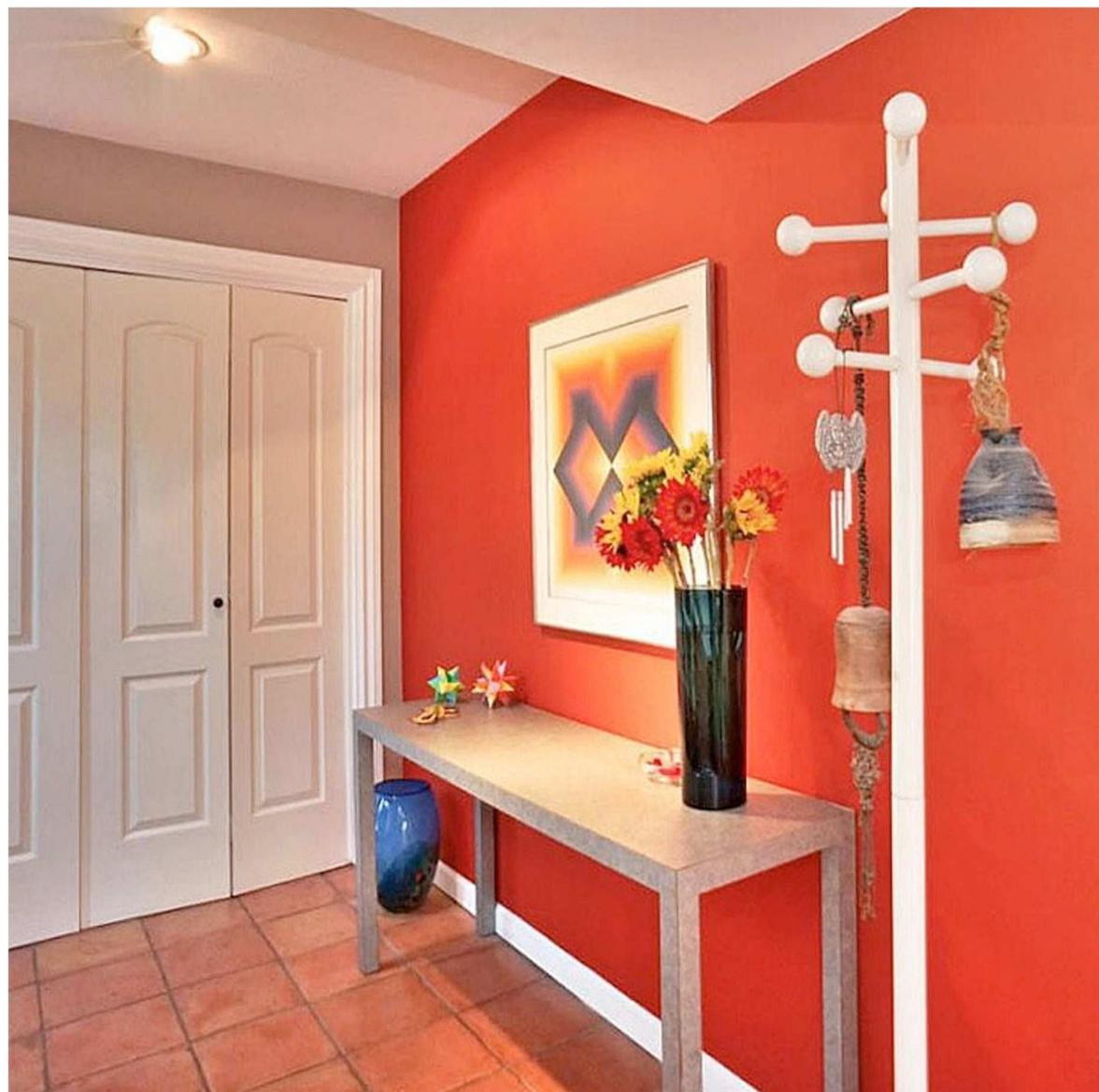
The effect of colors on you can be quite subtle, so it is important to know what colors are right for you. For instance, yellows, reds and oranges tend to stimulate the senses and should probably be avoided in the bedroom. You don't want to face a night of restlessness or wake up overstimulated. Colors on the darker end of the color spectrum might work but it is a good idea to test them on a small area of the wall you want to paint.



What's your color pallet?

Colors, like art, tend to be subjective. What might make one person feel cheerful and energetic can make another person feel irritated depending on the viewers' experiences or cultural differences.

Research has proven the effect of colors on mood and personal well-being.



Warm Colors are Delightful and Comforting

Red, orange, and yellow are considered to be warm colors. These colors can evoke feelings of happiness, optimism and energy.

Red is a dynamic color that tends to trigger opposing emotions. It is often associated with passion and love as well as anger and danger. It can increase a person's heart rate and make them excited. If you want to draw attention to a design element, use red. But use it as an accent color in moderation as it can be overwhelming.

Orange enhances a feeling of vitality and happiness. Like red, it draws attention and shows movement but is not as overpowering. It is aggressive, but balanced - it portrays energy yet can be inviting and friendly.

Yellow is associated with positive energies like laughter, hope, and sunshine. In design, it is often used to grab attention in an energetic and comforting way.



DEKOR Interiors

Cool Colors are Calming

Cool colors include green, blue, and purple. Cool colors are usually calming and soothing.

Green typically symbolizes health, new beginnings, and wealth. Green is the easiest on the eyes and should be used to relax and create balance in a design.

Blue evokes feelings of calmness and spirituality as well as security and trust. Seeing the color blue causes the body to create chemicals that are calming. It tends to be one of the most favored of the colors.

Purple is associated with creativity, royalty, and wealth. Incorporate purple to make a design look more luxurious or a lighter purple to show romance.

Neutral colors include black, gray, white, tan, and brown. In design, these colors are great as background colors.



Chapter 5: Ahness

Savoring Flow and Balance

You can begin to create "ahness" in your space by letting it breathe. Leave spaces between artwork on walls, between pieces of furniture, between walls and furniture. Keep it free of clutter and overworked design. Make sure your eyes flow easily from one area to the next.

Furniture and object placement can be very important to creating a bliss-filled room. For instance, try arranging certain pieces of furniture away from the wall, perhaps, angled. Be open to hanging artwork at different levels using various types of frames and matting. Try two or three pillows on a bed or sofa instead of six or more. Find softness in fabrics and sheer curtains.

Another aspect of "ahness" is flow. Visual links between rooms and relationships between decorative accessories and furniture enhance flow. When energy flows through a room, your body begins to respond by relaxing. Honor natural lighting, letting the sun flow through windows onto as many open spaces in a room as possible.



Texture can bring tantalizing dimension to any room. All surfaces have texture - coarse, fine, rough, smooth and shiny.

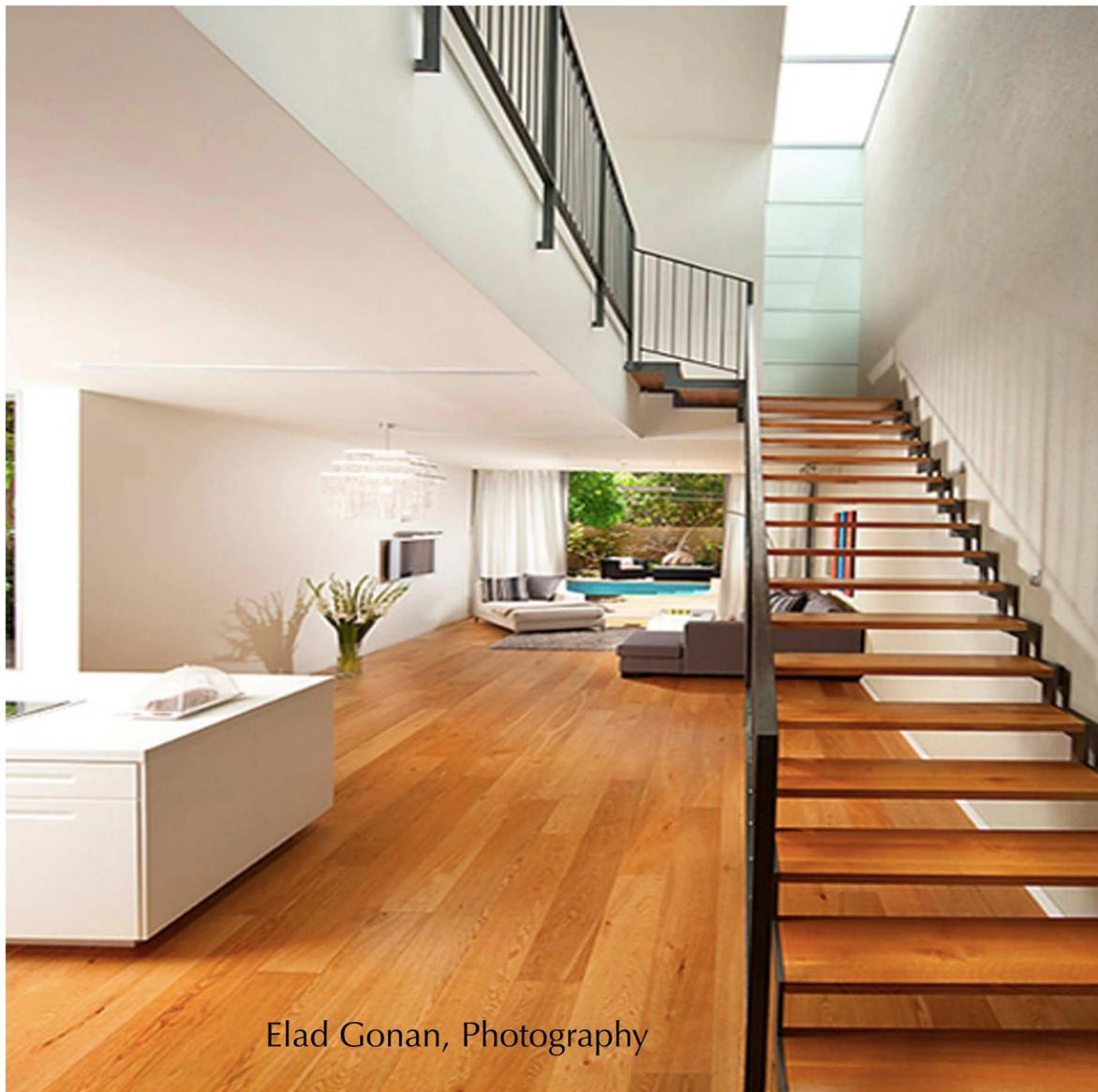
Tantalizing Textures

By adding texture, you expand visual experience to a sensual one of touch and feel. How your space "feels" speaks to your state of being and to your state of peace. After a rough day at work, coming home to soft textures can both calm and soothe. Settling into a soft sofa or bed is just what you may need at the end of the day.

As you add texture in the form of pillows, throws and other decorative accessories like lamps and artwork, consider the following regarding texture. Rough or coarse textures tend to feel warmer, "weighty" and rustic. By contrast, smooth or shiny textures feel cooler, lighter and more modern.

If you want to design your space using neutral tones, it is particularly important to introduce a mix of textures.

"Without enough textured elements, a space can feel cold and sterile. On the other hand, one person might love a room bursting with textured elements, while another might view the same room as busy, or even messy. It's all about finding the balance that you like - finding your own spot on the texture spectrum." - apartmenttherapy.com



Elad Gonan, Photography



Chapter 6: Coziness

The Design "Moment"

A "moment" is a point of interest or a visual brief that represents a particular point of view. It has a singularity about it that tells a brief story about who you are.

As you create a "moment", you express those unique aspects of your personality and your style in your selection of artwork and accent pieces.

Moments are the finishing touches in a room, the tasty side dishes.



In this photo, what might have ended with just a picture on a wall became a simple, yet stylish, "moment" with the addition of the chair and side table, the throw and the orchid. This design moment reflects the simplicity and subtle artistic nature of the designer.

Any design moment can be a reflection of your taste and style. Think of creating "moments" in an entry, a small area of a room, an alcove or a hallway.

Tom Felicia



Tastes, Style, Composition

The key to creating visual moments is really about you. It is not about taking a predictable formula for design and applying it to your space. It is more about mapping your taste to a specific space.

An interior design is "lackluster" not because it lacks furniture or artwork or color but because it lacks character. It lacks "moments" of you. You "in the moment."

Jeanette Lund Media



Chapter 7: From the "Outside In"

The "outside in" work begins with honoring your home environment and developing it in a way that represents your unique being. It continues with practicing acceptance of the people and conditions we cannot change. It moves in the direction of pursuing our dreams and expressing our gifts and talents. And as we peel away the distractions in our lives, we find our essence, our style and our unique tastes in life.

I think a yummy home is about personal development through self-expression and reflection. It is the practice of finding your inner peace. We are impacted, daily, by external distractions that separate us from our inner selves, from knowing who we are.

Inner work and reflection are necessary to spiritual development and personal growth. It must be a matter of practice and of performance, of language and of behavior. I think it is a commitment to a discipline that begins "from the outside in".

It is so important to have the right objects surrounding you in your space. If you are not comfortable with designing or styling your space, it is important to seek professional support and assistance.



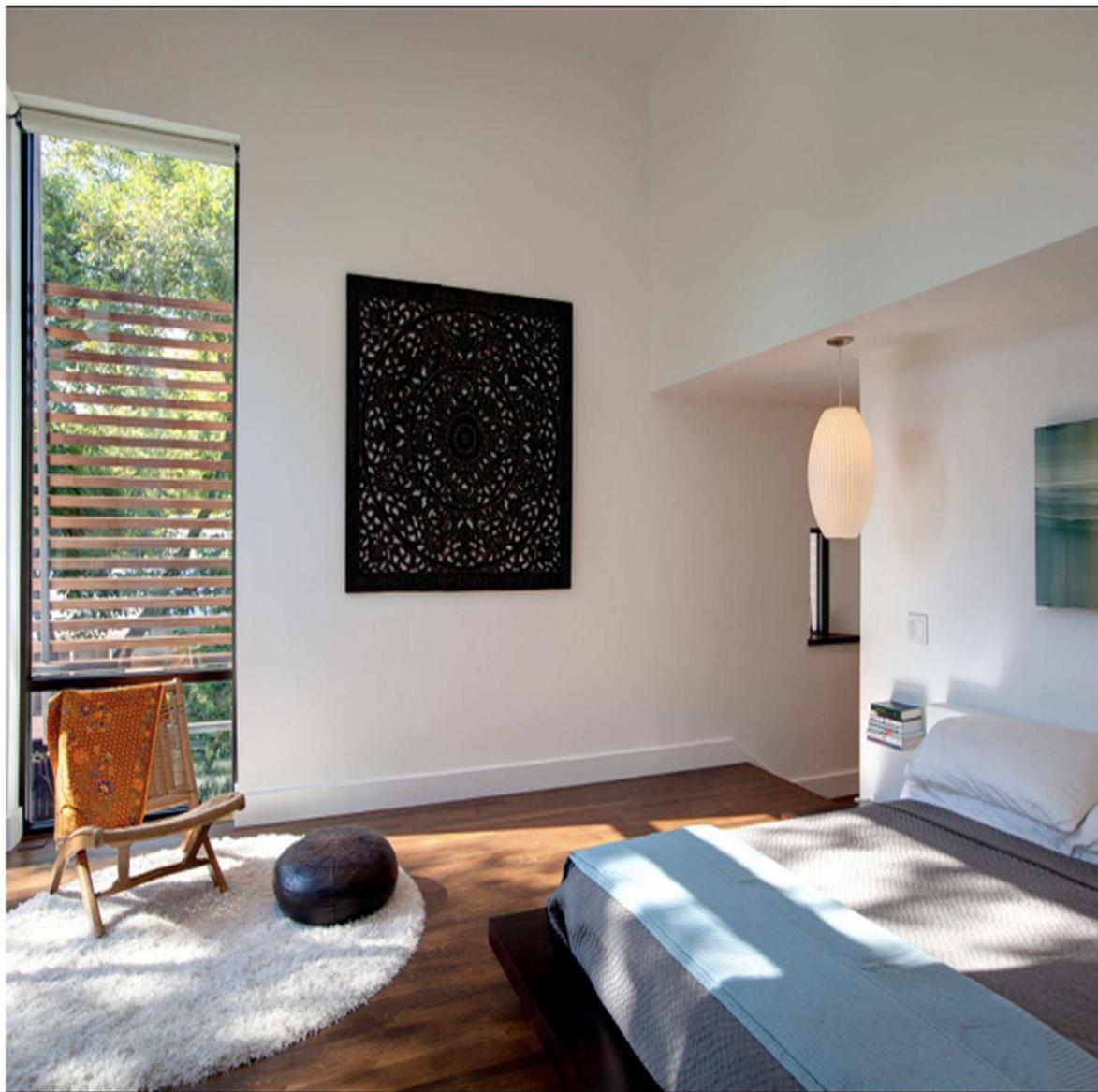
Donna Elle Seaside Living

"The house and special objects within it come to be viewed as a profound expression of the inner self." - Clare Cooper Marcus

It is always a good practice to surround yourself with objects and decorative accessories you like. And it is important to arrange those objects in ways that enhance your appreciation of them.

If you are not comfortable with placement, you can pick up some great ideas from design magazines. Houzz.com and Zillow digs are wonderful tools for accessing ideas and services for design and décor.

When I design a room, I spend a great deal of time with the placement of objects. I think they enhance the harmony and balance of the room when they are appropriately positioned. Use decorative objects in moderation with simplicity as a goal.



Once you have positioned objects and furniture in a room turn your back to the area you are styling, and then quickly turn back to look at it. If something feels "wrong", you will want to study that area to identify the irritant and change it. You may need to repeat this exercise several times before getting it "right" for you.

Relish the Peace, Embrace Simplicity

Simplicity is one way to relish peace and happiness. It may seem impossible because of the choices we've made but it does have tremendous transformative value. It often requires some modifications in behavior and a few lifestyle changes. The results can enhance your life in ways you never imagined.

Designing out waste, avoiding conflict and minimizing your "to do" list are solid first steps to reducing the stress and chaos in living. Modifying behavior and language to express core values could be next steps.

And finally, creating "purposeful" spatial simplicity in your space manifests visual links to your senses that promote peace, happiness, general well-being and quality of life. A simple, serene space transcends being just a shelter. It creates conditions for happiness and well-being.



CHAPTER 8: The Breath

Design must include consideration of the types of materials used in the design as well as the care of the home. Keeping the home free of dust, dirt and toxic cleaners is critical to the health of the home and its inhabitants. As such, the quality of the air we breath is crucial to our appreciation of home and its ability to nurture our souls.

Using paints with low VOC's, cleaning with non-toxic cleaners, changing air filters and dusting regularly, are all critical to the quality of air inside your home. It is also helpful to use a vacuum cleaner with HEPA filtration and micro-fiber cloths for dusting and surface cleaning.

Cleanliness is simply another function of levity and spaciousness. Dust, dirt and messiness affect the energy of the home and anyone in it. Not often discussed in design and decorating books, a clean space is very important to breathing and to maintaining the integrity of your design.



Sutro Architects

Chapter 9: Yummy Home, Yummy Life

In my experience, a serene home is a yummy one. Serenity is a state of being enhanced, in my experience, by design, mindfulness and simplicity. People will often say they want peace and serenity in their lives but it has been my experience that they are not interested in pursuing what that really means.

From a design standpoint, serenity requires some of the following elements:

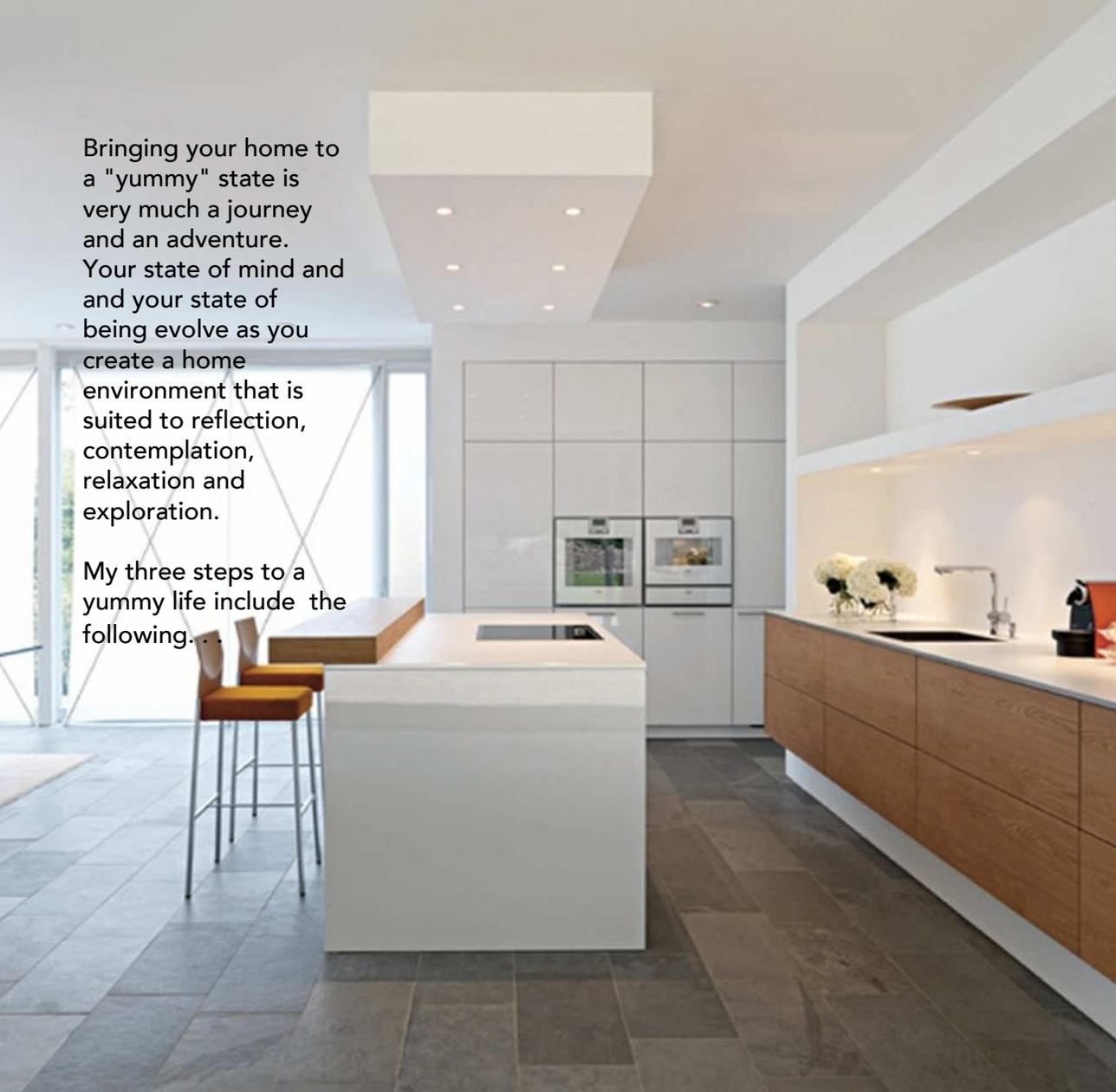
- room and time for non-activity and reflection
- an openness to the flow and rhythm of life
- quiet time, quiet pursuits

As I sit in my "peaceful space" and allow my mind to wander, I am reminded of how "yummy" my life really is. I am often filled with bliss and contentment.

My home and my life are filled with love. My home reflects all of who I am and it is comforting to me to retreat to my peaceful space at the end of the day. I have an incredible family and wonderful friends who are some of the most interesting people I have ever known.

Bringing your home to a "yummy" state is very much a journey and an adventure. Your state of mind and your state of being evolve as you create a home environment that is suited to reflection, contemplation, relaxation and exploration.

My three steps to a yummy life include the following...



1 Unplug

15 minutes a day - disconnect from all things digital. Give your mind and body a break. Sit quietly and take deep breaths, stretch your body a bit then relax and listen to it's rhythms.

2 Suspend Judgement

In every minute of the day that we are connecting to others, we are assessing, judging and critiquing what we hear and what we experience. It is okay to give ourselves permission to not judge, to not critique and just let a condition be.

3 Surrender and Let Go

All things in life cannot be controlled. In fact, on many levels, control is an illusion that narrows our perspective and appreciation for the rhythm and flow of life. Give up some of your "have to's and shoulds" for a few moments of reflection and self realization.

These three things attended to daily, can create many moments of delectable peace.



wineandglue.com



Chapter 10: Yummy Pairings

I love great food and great design. It just seemed like a good idea to find a way to "marry" the two. After all, this book is entitled "My Yummy Home." I created these pairings based on color and texture.

When I saw this sweet "design moment" of creamy colors with punches of red, pink and green, I knew I wanted to pair it with a creamy desert. This egg nog poke cake from WineandGlue.com was the perfect match in texture and color!

Recipe for Egg Nog Poke Cake

- 1 box white cake mix and all the ingredients to make it
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 3/4 tsp nutmeg, plus extra for topping
- 1 tsp rum extract
- 1 14 oz can sweetened condensed milk
- cool whip for topping

Preheat the oven according to the directions on the box. Mix the cake according to the directions on the box. Add in the cinnamon, nutmeg, and rum extract. Bake according to the directions on the box.

After removing the cake from the oven, poke holes in the top. Then pour the sweetened condensed milk over the cake, making sure to get some in each of the holes. Refrigerate overnight, and before serving top with Cool Whip. Lightly dust with nutmeg.



The combination of textures and colors in this bathroom captured my attention. I love the contrast of natural wood surrounded by white porcelain. The clear glass adds yet another texture that makes this bathroom elegant and breathtaking.

This photo lead me to a pairing with similar colors but contrasting textures. This Cajun Shrimp with Guacamole from Absolutely Guacamole seemed visually and texturally compatible.

I love the plating of this dish - the metal bucket atop a butcher block cutting board.

Cajun Shrimp Guacamole

- 4 Tbs. butter
- 1 Tbs. Cajun seasoning
- 1 pound medium (or extra-large!) shrimp, peeled and deveined)
- 3 Hass avocados
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced scallions
- 1/4 cup chopped yellow onion
- zest of 1 lemon
- 1 Tbs (or more to your liking) fresh lemon juice
- coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

Melt half the butter in a large sauté pan over medium-high. Add 1/2 Tbs. of the Cajun seasoning to the butter. Stir it all in. Let it bloom and fall in love. Add half the shrimp and sear on one side for 2 minutes. Flip and sear another minute or so. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove the shrimp from the pan and set aside.

Add the remaining butter and Cajun seasoning. Bloom for a second, then add the remaining shrimp. Sear her up, you know the drill. Set shrimp aside.

Half each avocado and remove the pit. Scoop out the flesh into a big bowl. Add the peppers, scallion, onions, lemon zest and juice, a pinch of salt and pepper. Mash it all together with your fork, until chunky. Taste it. Add salt and pepper and more lemon for taste.

Serve with the Cajun shrimp!

From Absolutely Guacamole



APPENDIX

10 Steps for Decluttering and Organizing

1 Commit

Make a commitment to organizing yourself and your space - begin a 30-day program committed to making organizational changes each day. Make it a mantra, a prayer, a meditation - whatever you do, make it routine.

2 Record

"White-board" your commitment - post it where you have to see it and be reminded of your commitment.

Commit to a minimum of 15-minutes a day making sure not to add any new clutter to what already exists. "When in doubt, throw it out". (If that suggestion causes heart palpitations, scan it and put it on disk.)

3 Dispose, Recycle, Donate

Make friends with your new tools - trash can, scissors, paper shredder, scanner and cd's. Consider making a CD library of your paper files, emails and other media you can digitize.

4 A Place for Everything - Generate Storage Space When None Exists

If you have faced the problem of not having enough storage space, you know that everything can become a cluttered, disorganized mess. Storage space can be easily added through shelving, cabinet installation, drawers, storage units, bookcases and file cabinets, and of course, ridding yourself of unused items.

5 Everything in It's Place - EVERY DAY

Absolutely no exceptions . . . if a thing has a place, put it back in it's place when you are done with it. No exceptions.

6 Manage Your Postal Mail

It's easy to let the mail pile up, but save yourself time in the long run and deal with incoming mail immediately. Sort your mail as soon as it arrives. Throw away junk mail, use organizers for mail that you handle once a week and mail you need to handle immediately.

7 Maintain an Efficient Filing System

Files that are not in use but may need to be referenced are best stored in file storage boxes. Know what you can throw away and what you need to keep. Throw away outdated information. Keep legal documents such as contracts, warranties and tax documents. Where possible photograph and digitize documents for storage on "the cloud" or on an external storage device.

Organize your files by color, alphabet, term or by type of file. For home based business owners, consider having separate drawers for different areas of business, such as clients, finances, promotions, media, etc.



8 Maintain an Organized Computer

Keep your computer organized by creating folders, clearly naming files, saving files to appropriate folders, and creating shortcuts on your desktop. Shortcuts should be created for all Microsoft Office programs, the Internet, email, and your frequent documents files.

9 If You Haven't Read It, Used It, or Didn't Remember it Existed after 2 years - Get Rid of It!

If it adds to your clutter, whatever it is, get rid of it. Either throw it out or donate it. If you haven't used it for two years, you probably don't need it and never did.

10 Restrict Purchases

If a purchase merely adds to your clutter, whatever it is, don't buy it. Get rid of the clutter first, then add what you need. Adding more stuff to your existing stuff does not resolve your clutter problem.

About Me

"My Yummy Home" is written by Diane Pruitt, creative and entrepreneur.

Founder and President of **a peaceful space inc**, and author of two lifestyle companies, Diane describes her personal style as eclectic with a vintage chic flair. "I tend toward simple, peaceful living and truly appreciate my life. "

"The design style of "a peaceful space" is as much a frame of mind and state of being as it is an approach to decorating, which is why my approach to design is wholistic in nature. I believe there is a connection between our behavior, our tastes and our appreciation of home."

Diane is a graduate of The Institute of Interior Design and has both undergraduate and graduate degrees in environmental studies and administration.

My websites are:

www.lovesimpleliving.com

www.apeacefulspace.com

www.nurturary.com

"The life we live is a mirror of our
thoughts . . . our home, its reflection."

Diane Pruitt

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Love 
Making Life Simple 

Love  *Making Life Simple*



My Yummy Home is designed to be a delectable experience. Savor and enjoy!

Diane Pruitt

