



# WHY THIS SPACE **works**

## Designer Spotlight: Betsy Homan Interior Design

By MAURI ELBEL | Photography by MICHAEL HUNTER

WHEN A RETIRED MILITARY COUPLE WHO HAD BEEN LIVING IN HAWAII AND JAPAN MOVED TO A NEW HOME NESTLED ON A SPACIOUS PROPERTY IN FAIR OAKS RANCH, THEY CALLED ON DESIGNER BETSY HOMAN FOR HELP. “THIS WAS A NEW HOME FOR THESE CLIENTS AND THEY WERE OVERWHELMED WITH THE SCALE AND SIZE OF THE ROOM,” SHE SAYS. “THEY WANTED THE SPACE TO BE WARM AND INVITING.” FROM THE MOMENT HOMAN SET FOOT IN THEIR HOME, PERCHED ON A HILL IN FRONT OF A WINDMILL AND SURROUNDED BY MATURE OAK TREES, SHE HAD ONLY ONE OBJECTIVE: TO MAKE THE SPACE FEEL LIKE THEIRS. WITH 35 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE UNDER HER BELT, THE SAN ANTONIO-BASED INTERIOR DESIGNER UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING DESIGNS THAT SPEAK TO HER CLIENTS’ PERSONALITIES AND PREFERENCES. “THEY HAVE A CASUAL LIFESTYLE, LOVE TO ENTERTAIN AND HAVE REFINED TASTE,” SAYS HOMAN. HERE, SHE CHATS ABOUT HOW SHE CREATED THIS REFINED, COMFORTABLE AND INVITING SPACE THAT RECENTLY GARNERED AN HONORABLE MENTION AT THE SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS’ AWARDS.

### What did the clients envision for this project?

**BH:** They wanted a family room built around the sofa and rug they had purchased. Above all, they wanted the space to be warm and inviting.

### How did you translate their desires into the design?

**BH:** Since the room was expansive with 16-foot high ceilings, I brought in rich color high up on the walls with a 9-foot tall bookcase and 10 feet of rusty red linen draperies. I also painted the television cabinet and niche above in a caramel color in order to tie the wood floor and wood ceiling together. These moves helped reduce the scale of the room. It’s very dramatic at night when the light casts shadows on the turquoise Tahitian bells. I also selected an oversized piece of art by Caroline Korbell Carrington for the mantle. Bringing in color through various large objects helped bring the room to a more human scale and made it feel more comfortable.

### What was the main inspiration in this space?

**BH:** The tall ceilings. They were just waiting to for something exciting to happen to them.

### Please tell us about the furniture selections and how the different pieces work together in this room.

**BH:** The client had purchased the sofa and leather chair, as well as caramel colored high back French chairs and rug. So those pieces became my starting point. Then, I wanted to bring in texture and color through terra cotta and sage green with pops of turquoise to complement the rich-colored leather. I chose terra-cotta chairs — they are Guy Chaddock with sheep carved legs and hooves upholstered in Kravet high performance terra-cotta and camel herringbone with chocolate ultra suede trim. The coffee table, purchased locally, grounds the room with its heavy wooden top and large strap-iron legs. The Old Biscayne tall, rustic, sage double library unit, with its antique walnut wood interior, is the perfect spot to display the clients’ art collected from their travels. And it also provides the perfect complement to the warm colors in the room.

### Did you reuse or repurpose any existing furnishings or did you gravitate exclusively toward new items?

**BH:** I love to “shop my client’s house.” You never know what you may find to repurpose. In this case, my client’s had a large red lacquered Japanese drum, which we used as an end table.







is the painted media cabinet and niche. It's just so amazing how it ties the floor and ceiling together, keeps the room from looking too large and recedes into the background making the fireplace the focal point.

**If you could give folks one piece of advice when it comes to making oversized spaces feel livable, what would it be?**

**BH:** I would tell them not to be afraid to use large, tall pieces which tend to bring scale to the room. Scale — and using color — is what's going to create a warm, inviting space.

**From a design standpoint, why does this space work?**

**BH:** One of the reasons why this space works is because as you enter the house you see through the furnishings to the fabulous pool and outdoor entertaining area. The room is open and airy with great flow around the island of furniture. The colors and textures are warm and inviting whether the homeowners are having a quiet family night watching television or they are entertaining a large group. ❖

**BETSY HOMAN INTERIOR DESIGN**  
210.824.1959 | Betsyhomandesign.com

**The sculpture on the coffee table, the art above the mantle and the piece above the media center are very unique — what did you like about those pieces?**

**BH:** The client had the sculpture on the table and it fit perfectly in their ranch house. We did a lot of shopping for the perfect piece of art that was the right scale for the room as well as a subject that the client's loved. My client found the fabulous turquoise patina bells hanging on an old oxen yoke in Boerne. They are stunning at night when lighted by spot lights.

**While the sofa and chairs are simple and timeless, you've added some varying textures and prints in here. Tell us about that.**

**BH:** Accent pillows always add warmth and a finishing touch to any room. In this case the animal prints and brush fringe add contrast to the sofa and chairs and pull the colors together across the room.

**Reflecting back on what the space was like before, what would you say your favorite thing about it is now?**

**BH:** From before to after, my favorite addition to this room

