

SCRIBBLES...POSSIBILITIES...& DISCOVERIES



Gobble. Gobble. Gobbler.

I'm as much of a Scrooge as anyone when I see Christmas decorations going up before Halloween. Bah, humbug! But here's a holiday trend that melts my heart: people are not going as hog-wild about decorating their homes for Christmas as they used to. It seems everyone I talk to is planning to simplify and declutter for the holidays - I thought it was just me!

My friends and clients tell me they are going to focus on displaying a few pieces that have meaning for them and their family, and leave the rest of it in the attic or the basement. They want more time to focus on family and friends, and I agree. When there is too much "stuff" in my house it feels weighed down and messy. No one needs three trees, or even one humongous tree, or a bazillion outdoor lights - remember Chevy Chase in "Christmas Vacation?" He was a sweet fanatic, and a lot of us can relate to that desire to make Christmas perfect for the family.

Check out Beth's "Get the Look" article for some sensible holiday decorating ideas and then take a big breath, relax and enjoy Thanksgiving with your loved ones. I think it is so fitting and proper that before the Christmas madness starts we slow down and give thanks for all the important things in our lives. May we carry those thoughts with us throughout the holidays and into the New Year. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Sincerely,
Susan, Beth, Jennifer, Tod, Becca
The Sweet Peas Design Team

what's **in** what's *out*

WHAT'S IN



1. WELL PLACED THROWS on beds, sectionals, sofas and chairs to add texture, warmth and an accent color.

2. TEXTURE, TEXTURE, TEXTURE... Primarily in neutrals!

3. METAL ON FURNITURE - Table tops, accent tables, table bases, drawer insets

4. "LIVE EDGE" or "NATURAL EDGE" table tops made with slabs of wood that preserve the natural curves and angles of the wood. They're organic, earthy and sophisticated.

5. THE "INDUSTRIAL CHIC" LOOK FOR HOMES: open ceilings, exposed vintage brick wedded to glam chandeliers and white leather furniture.

6. WHITE PLATES in various shapes to mix with colored or patterned soup and salad plates or linens.

> furniture photos: Sutherland-John Dickinson Tin Table, Bradley Accent Table

WHAT'S OUT

1. Stressing over the holidays.
2. Over the top decorating for the holidays.

sweet
tip

Tree Tips!

After you have found the perfect tree (freshly cut) and the right spot to locate it in your home (away from high traffic areas, fireplaces and heat ducts) it's time to bring on the TLC - Tree Lovin' Care!



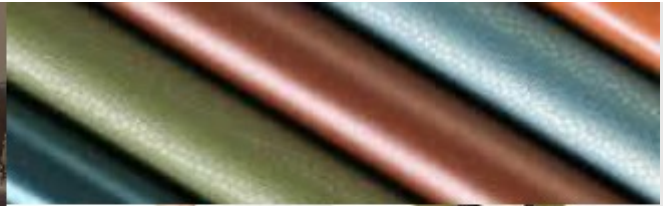
Immediately put your tree in a bucket of water. You can add aspirin, hydrogen peroxide, Sprite or sugar - only if it makes you feel good as there is no study that proves any of these will make your tree last longer. However, you might add a product called "Tree Preserve" - an additive that will keep your tree looking fresh through the New Year.

Depending on the ages of your children in your household and if you have pets (think dogs and cats), you may consider anchoring your tree to a wall using a rope or a wire and bolt it - just an added safety measure to keep your tree vertical as nobody wants a horizontal tree and broken ornaments.

Check your light strings first before putting them on the tree. Start at the top of the tree and work down from the inside (close to the trunk) and moving outward toward the tips of the branches . . . then reverse!

Best tip - water, water, water!

FABU FABRIC



FAUX PAS

Faux leathers have come a looong way since the days of plastic-y, stick-to-your legs furniture. We are selecting loads of faux as "fabric" for vanity stools/chairs, family room ottomans, benches for halls and foyers, kitchen chairs and even dining room chairs. They are a smart choice anywhere you need a piece of furniture that is kid proof, or for that matter, adult proof if you happen to have a serial spiller in the family. (My aunt is the one in our family, so is my son...) Faux leather wipes off easily, looks as handsome as the real deal and doesn't develop that well-worn look of aged leather. It always looks as good as the day you bought it...hmmm...I wish someone could do that for me! But probably not in my lifetime.

> *clockwise: Sweet Peas Design, Kravet, Calvin Klein, Calvin Klein, Sweet Peas Design, Calvin Klein, Kravet*



A Place to Primp

Vanity chairs, ottomans or stools make it so much easier and more relaxing for women to apply makeup, put on jewelry and dry and style their hair.

I know I would rather save my legs for my endless running around than stand in front of the mirror while primping, and a lot of my clients agree. We included many of these handy sit-upons in bathrooms we renovated this past year.

Go classic or be daring with acrylic or faux leather which are easy to clean up if you spill some makeup. You can opt for a back or go backless and no matter what, it will be a handy spot to put on shoes or tights, apply nail polish and experiment with your new eye shadows.

Must haves- a large mirror, excellent lighting from above and throughout the space, too, and perhaps a glass of wine before a big night out? Just sayin'...



> projects by Sweet Peas Design and clockwise photos courtesy of: Megan Chaffin, Jerry Kalyniuk, Megan Chaffin, Jay Wilde

At Sweet Peas Design we don't let any grass grow under our feet. Here's an update of our comings and goings.

CHEEKY CHICAGO INTERVIEW GOES LIVE

Yikes! It's always nerve wracking to watch yourself on video, but all things considered, I'm really excited about my interview for Cheeky Chicago's series, "Real Talk With Cheeky Women." It's running on the website now at <http://cheekychicago.com/real-talk-with-interior-designer-susan-brunstrum/> or #CheekyREALTALK.

Cheeky Chicago is a jam-packed lifestyle magazine for women that covers everything from arts and entertainment to home décor, travel, beauty and fitness, dining and cooking. It's addicting! Thanks to everyone at Cheeky for coming out to my studio in Libertyville and giving their readers a peek inside.

CONNECTING WITH BUILDERS



Sweet Peas Design is turning up in a quite a variety of publications lately! Our latest appearance is in *Professional Builder*, a 77-year-old national trade publication which included us last month in a 6-page article called "High-Style Kitchens on a Budget." Photos of several of our kitchens (look for photo credits by Jerry Kalyniuk) are displayed along with some of my comments about creating a designer look without toasting your credit card.

Thanks to senior contributing editor Susan Bady for including us in the October issue, which is mailed out to 125,000 builders and probably has readership at least twice that high. We love to spread the Sweet Peas philosophy far and wide: What inspires you inspires us!

DEVELOPING SOURCES IN RIVER NORTH

I'm thrilled to be one of the first members of the newly formed River North Design District, and I'm really looking forward to the new connections I'll make with showrooms and art galleries outside the Mart. RNDD is a neighborhood association that links designers, architects and consumers with a variety of well-established home furnishing showrooms within walking distance of the magnificent Mart. The showrooms carry everything from lighting, tiles and plumbing to rugs, kitchens and furnishings, everything we need to help create a one-of-a-kind home for our clients.

Through social media and special events the association will make everyone aware of the rich opportunities for shopping outside the Mart, and I'm always open to that! Among the 16 participating showrooms are Casa Spazio, Chicago Luxury Beds, Montauk Sofa, nuHaus, The Tile Gallery and Oscar Isberian Rugs. Not only will I be able to forge new relationships with area entrepreneurs, I'll be attending educational forums and trade events and sharing ideas with other designers and architects. Who knows the places this will go!



NURTURING THE NEXT GEN

I'm going back to school! But this time I have been invited to join the Harper College Career and Technical Programs Advisory Committee for Interior Design. The panel is a group of 10 designers who meet twice yearly with the department chair to discuss what's going on in the "real world" of the industry. The information is passed on to faculty so they can be relevant and current in the classroom. At least there's no homework or tests for me!

REACHING OUT TO DISTRICT 128

It's always fun to eat and drink for a good cause! Recently Sweet Peas Design was a lead sponsor of the "Food for Thought Fall Tasting" fundraiser for High School Dist. 128's Foundation for Learning.

What a night! We gathered at charming Café Pyrenees in Libertyville for holiday wines and beer paired with delicious food from chef Jean-Marc Loustaunau. There was a silent auction, raffle and live music by Soul Kitchen featuring Joy Bach, a Dist. 128 parent. Jennifer Tarello, our architectural associate, her husband Mike and I attended this second annual benefit for the Foundation's "Innovation Grant Program" for teachers at Libertyville High School and Vernon Hills High School. Through the program creative instructional ideas are developed to enrich programs and experiences for Dist. 128 students.

GET THE LOOK



The Holiday Look

For most people, trying to "get the look" of a beautiful holiday home is stressful, challenging and not much fun. Who has the time, patience and talent to pull it off? Combing through the pages of the pre-holiday magazines only adds to the already stress-filled season. It's probably best to avoid them. I subscribe to the KISS principle - Keep it Simple, Sweetie. Make your list of decorating to-dos and cut it in half, then use your good sense and your

senses as a guide. My favorite approach to holiday décor is to appeal to each one of the five senses, in a minimal way, like this:

Hearing: Put on some fabulous Christmas music for a festive atmosphere.

Smell: Bring in the pine tree and voila - that's really all you need. But if you must go a step farther add some aromatic candles that mix well with pine, such as cinnamon.

Sight: Select just a few places to decorate - the dining table or a buffet, the fireplace mantle, the front door, and maybe one or two other spots, plus the tree, of course. If you over-decorate the eye won't know where to land. You don't have to drag out all of the decorations that you've displayed year after year. Be selective and work within your color palette. There is no law that Christmas has to be red and green. Instead, embellish what you already have: Add shiny, glittery objects and mix silver, gold and white. They go with everything. Remember too that you can put away some of your everyday pieces instead of layering Christmas on top. It will help keep your home, and your mind, uncluttered.

Touch: ...the people you love and don't forget the dog!

Taste: Stay with recipes you know and love and ask for help. People want to be a part of the kitchen chaos. Mix store-bought sides with homemade to lighten the load, or consider hiring a caterer. Sip a glass of wine while decorating the tree: you won't be as picky with ornament placement and it will still look beautiful.

The best sense is your good sense to decide to enjoy yourself!

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> **Website:** www.sweetpeas-inspired.com

> **Blog:** www.susanbrunstrum.com

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email susan@sweetpeas-inspired.com

SWEET PEAS DESIGN

507 East Park Avenue
Libertyville, Illinois 60048 ([map](#))
tel 847.816.1296 / 312.572.9090

100 East Bellevue Place
Chicago, Illinois 60611 ([map](#))
tel 312.572.9090

Sweet Peas Design, Inc., 507 E. Park Avenue, Libertyville, IL 60048

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