



### *Loving Where You Live*

While we're in the month of Valentine's Day and thinking about love and commitment I'm facing my third move in just four years - yes, I'm relocating again! - and I've been contemplating what makes us love (or not love) our homes and why that is important.

Buying a new home is a little like committing to a new relationship, I plan on spending a lot of time at home, so I need to be sure we're happy together!

For me it's always the "bones" of a home that capture my heart. Do the rooms flow together well and do they have nice proportions? Are there a lot of windows, which translates into a lot of sun light? Which direction do the windows face and what is the view?

Now that I'm living downtown full-time, I need more space than the pied-a-terre I have now and I want to have some of my favorite amenities. I always look for a kitchen with windows and plenty of seating because everyone gathers there while I'm cooking or entertaining. I no longer need a huge master bathroom, however a vanity is a must for beautifying. For my upcoming move at the end of March, (from one condo to another in the same building!), I insisted on having office space that can be closed off from the rest of the condo.

I often ask people, why don't you love your home? I think it's because their home doesn't match their personalities and lifestyle, and they don't give themselves permission to change it. It may sound corny, but when you walk into your home you should feel like you're getting a big, warm hug. My mantra for moving into any new space is to make it my own. There are so many easy and not too expensive ways to do that: Paint the walls a new color. Change light fixtures. Choose a new stain color for the hardwood floor, change door and cabinet door hardware. I'm adding crown molding to my new condo because it's one of my absolute must-haves.

Will I fall in love with my new place? Yes! And I can't wait for that first hug.

Sincerely,

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

## WHAT'S IN



**1. Layering Mirrors** Layering mirrors on mirror - it's the hot new trend in bathroom design! Why not mount a framed mirror on top of a large plate glass mirror? We think: the more the merrier. Not only do mirrors make a small room feel more spacious but they amplify light as well - a win-win when it comes to any space. For even more of the layered effect: try a mirrored frame, too!

**2. Monochromatic Walls/Trim** Create a seamless backdrop from top to bottom by painting all walls, trim, and ceiling the same color. This look is dramatic and moody, perfect

for intimate and calming spaces like a study or living room

**3. Animal Leg Furniture** We all know about claw-foot bath tubs, but what about animal leg furniture? This trend has been spotted absolutely everywhere, in contemporary design as well as traditional and brings a sense of whimsy to any space. Spoiler alert: We love this Oly table so much we're using it in our lady's retreat at the 2015 Lake Forest Showhouse in May! What do you think: cool or creepy?

**4. Oversized Art** The bigger the better, right? When it comes to artwork, this principle still applies! We've been spotting massive pieces of art everywhere! Whether it be abstract paintings or photography, art covering nearly the entire wall is a trend that has been seen in epic proportions. Go big or go home!

**5. Collection Of Items As Wall Decor** Not every wall calls for a standard rectangular or square piece of art - sometimes, something a little more organic is exactly what your space needs! We've been seeing collections of items, big or small, being used as a decorative feature on walls everywhere lately and we're obsessed! Plates, glasses, masks, trays, mirrors... you name it! This will allow for you to add a unique touch to your home that is completely yours. Don't forget - when it comes to your home, let your personality shine through.

**6. Lucite And Wood Combination Tables** We love contrasting combos... black and white, masculine and feminine, salty and sweet (hello, dark chocolate and sea salt?!) Currently we're all about lucite and wood. Creating perfect harmony between modern and rustic, these funky tables have been popping up everywhere! Geometric yet organic all at the same time - what more could you ask for in a fun statement piece??

*> clockwise photos courtesy of: [interiorcollective.com](http://interiorcollective.com), [housebeautiful.com](http://housebeautiful.com), [Sweet Peas Design](http://SweetPeasDesign.com), [homeadore.com](http://homeadore.com), [plastolux.com](http://plastolux.com), [elledecor.com](http://elledecor.com), [marthastewart.com](http://marthastewart.com), [hometalk.com](http://hometalk.com), [apartmenttherapy.com](http://apartmenttherapy.com), [olystudio.com](http://olystudio.com), [mydesignchic.com](http://mydesignchic.com)*

## WHAT'S OUT

**1. The Kitchen Desk** For years, the kitchen desk was a must-have in kitchen design. In theory it was a great concept - a place to pay bills, store cookbooks, and place your landline telephone. We're advising our clients to skip the desk -- mostly because those needs no longer exist. (People are using their iPads instead of cookbooks, bills are all paid online, and telemarketers are the only ones who call landlines these days, right?) Replace the kitchen desk with counter space you'll actually use!

# sweet tip



## Mixing Pattern

When it comes to pattern, the theory is "not too much, not too little." Nothing is worse than being matchy-matchy with the same fabric on the pillows, upholstery, and window coverings. Try mixing a variety of patterns with one or two driving colors to create continuity within the mix. When it comes to pattern, it's all about color, scale, and proportion. For example, we love mixing a bold floral with a subtle geometric and solid textural base.

*>photo courtesy of: Sweet Peas Design*

# FABU FABRIC



## SHIBORI - INK DIED FABRIC

Shibori - never heard of it, you say? Shibori is a Japanese term for several methods of dyeing cloth with a pattern by binding, stitching, folding, twisting, or compressing. Sounding like the tie dye we all

used to make at summer camp in middle school? Actually that's not far off. Shibori is made using a similar method with a much different result (not to mention more advanced materials than an oversized white t-shirt.)

Traditionally known for its distinct indigo-blue hue with patterns that range from grid-like to star bursting to streaky and really anything in between, we love this print! It's contemporary yet organic, and can vary in saturation ranging from a bold, contrast of ground fabric to saturated die, to soft and almost watercolor-like blending fluidly from fabric to died areas.

We love this funky fabric and have been using it frequently for our current projects. What do you think: would you incorporate shibori into your home?

*> photos courtesy of: remodelista.com, claytonjane.co.uk, wsj.com, housebeautiful.com, fschumacher.com*



## Wingback Chairs

Is there anyone out there that doesn't own at least one wing back chair? These iconic chairs have been around for hundreds of years and remain popular today. The concept behind the wing chair's design is quite practical - they were meant to be used fireside to capture heat and trap it between the chair's wings. The wings also served to protect its user from cold drafts.

Wingback chairs have come a long way. Had you asked us 10 years ago if we could envision a "modern wingback," we would have laughed in your face! But now, there are so many fresh styles flooding the marketplace. We're seeing these updated loungers in unique scales and proportions - many have tall backs, giving them a fun and almost whimsical attitude. The shape of the wings themselves can update the piece as well rounded, angular, wide, or narrow - we've spotted forms all across the board. Finish and fabric can style these upholstered beauties as masculine or feminine - leather, wool, and tweed for guys, velvet, floral, and prints for gals! Needless to say, wingback chairs are versatile as ever!

What are design aficionados to do? We're coveting all of them!



>photos courtesy of: [crlaine.com](http://crlaine.com), [bpiladeisgn.com](http://bpiladeisgn.com), [brueton.com](http://brueton.com), [olystudio.com](http://olystudio.com), [tomdixon.com](http://tomdixon.com), [baker.com](http://baker.com)

At Sweet Peas Design wintry weather doesn't slow us down. Here's an update on our comings and goings...



### "BEST IN DESIGN" 2014 AWARD!

Nothing warms up a cold winter day better than an award for "Best Living Space 2014" from Modern Luxury Interiors Chicago magazine for our family room in the Gracious House Showhouse last spring. The magazine selected us for its annual "Best in Design" picks for 2014 featured in the current issue of the magazine.

<http://www.modernluxury.com/interiors-chicago/digital-edition>

This was truly a team effort by everyone at Sweet Peas Design: senior designer Beth Kweton, senior architectural associate Jennifer Cioni Tarello and business manager Tod Snyder-Grube. Many thanks to (former) editor-in-chief Diana Bitting for recognizing us. "The room feels both comfortable yet refined: Expertly edited modern pieces are balanced with eclectic finds for both luxury and livability."

That's our signature style: LivableLuxe!

### ANOTHER SHOWHOUSE INVITATION

Mark your calendars now for the 2015 Lake Forest Showhouse April 25 to May 17. Sweet Peas Design has been selected again to participate in this prestigious event sponsored by the Lake Forest Chapter of the Infant Welfare Association.

We'll be working on the former estate of the late screenwriter, director and producer John W. Hughes, Jr. He's famous for gems such as Ferris Beuller's Day Off, Breakfast Club and the Home Alone series.

We have named our room the "Fashion Blogger's Retreat," the headquarters of a nationally known fashion blogger. Interior and fashion design in one room equals: Fun!

## KITCHEN KONFAB ROCKS!

As a long-time lover of all things culinary it was a pleasure to dish about kitchens with a distinguished panel of experts at an event this month sponsored by the River North Design District.

Should kitchens be strictly functional or should we personalize them? Are white kitchens still sizzling? Is the work triangle - from sink to stove to refrigerator - still relevant?

The shorts answers for me are: Yes, we should get personal with our kitchens. White is timeless and the work triangle may have morphed a bit but it's still vital to any cook, serious or casual.

Watch for more kitchen details in future blogs.



## SPOTLIGHT ON SWEET PEAS DESIGN

Another big thanks to River North Design District for shining a spotlight on Sweet Peas Design! RNDD is a dynamic, up-and-coming organization that is featuring me and the studio in its "Designer Spotlight" column here: <http://rivernorthdesigndistrict.com/2015/01/14/designer-spotlight-sweet-peas-design/>

I joined RNDD when it launched in 2013 as a way to support the design showrooms that thrive in the River North neighborhood and to stay on top of their hottest new offerings in lighting, tile, plumbing, rugs, kitchens and furnishings.

## ANOTHER "BEST OF HOUZZ" AWARD!

If you notice big smiles on our faces at Sweet Peas Design it's because we have just earned a "Best of Houzz 2015" award for customer service, our third award from this wildly popular online design community. (We also won for customer service and design in 2013). [houzz.com/pro/sweetpeasdesign](http://houzz.com/pro/sweetpeasdesign)

The Best of Houzz award is determined by a variety of factors, including the number and quality of client reviews we received in 2014. Many thanks to everyone who visited Houzz and raved about us. We take as much pride in the level of client communications and service at Sweet Peas Design as we do in the creativity of our design. We're certainly kicking off the year on the right foot!

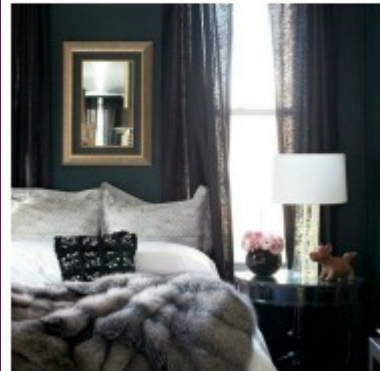
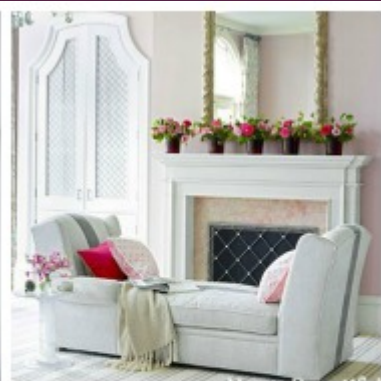
## INVESTING IN "DESIGN TRUST"

What better place to "think big about the design business" than in the massive state of Texas? Susan headed to Dallas for a four-day conference with the New York-based "Design Trust," a think tank of designers nationwide who are serious about the business of design.

She will be sharing details of the art collection at the luxurious Joule Hotel, as well as her impressions of the art studio of Pamela Nelson, a close friend of Laura Bush, and the Dallas dining scene.

Photos coming soon!

# GET THE LOOK



Romance



While Valentine's Day may just be one day out of the year, that doesn't mean romance can't be a feature of your home décor year round! This year, why not skip the overpriced chocolates and show some love with your décor? Try a seating area for two. Whether it be two cozy lounge chairs or chaises, or one piece that's just the right size for a couple, a cozy corner will encourage cuddling and conversation. When it comes to the bedroom, don't forget to appeal to the senses! Candles (or a fire if you have a fireplace in your master suite), dimmable lighting, music, flowers, or a fur throw all are small additions that can easily create a romantic ambiance in your boudoir.

> photos courtesy of: [elledecor.com](http://elledecor.com), [casasugar.com](http://casasugar.com), [housebeautiful.com](http://housebeautiful.com), [topinspired.com](http://topinspired.com), [traditionalhome.com](http://traditionalhome.com), [mrsfancee.com](http://mrsfancee.com), [apartmenttherapy.com](http://apartmenttherapy.com), [bedding\\_legacyhome.com](http://bedding_legacyhome.com)

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## 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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