

Fabulous FURNITURE 2002

Dare to be different when accessorizing

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
CORRESPONDENT

When it comes to accessorizing your home, think about using the usual in an unusual way.

For instance, bring a watering can in from the garage, fill it with plants, give it a perch on a laundry room cabinet, and the mundane becomes interesting, said Noreen Desilets, interior designer of Laurel Furniture in downtown Plymouth.

"Sometimes you have to look at accessories as having alternate purposes," she said. Nice dishes don't have to be tucked away in cabinets. Show them off.

Tapestries have also found their way into homes as table scarves; decorating fireplace mantels; and hung with brackets on tall walls, said Sharon McGowan, interior designer of Ethan Allen in Livonia, Birmingham, Auburn Hills, Ann Arbor, Novi, Saginaw and Sterling Heights.

In fact, family photos and collages that are stored away in cabinets add an inviting, personal flavor when they're on display, especially in family rooms, she said.

"They help to make a house a home," Desilets said.

Keep in mind, too, the correlation of sizes between the accessories you place on tables.

If you have a big coffee table, don't use something small and squat, said Lisa Wolfe, interior designer with Walker-Buzenberg in Plymouth.

"Especially in a tall room, you need to put something substantial on it," she said.

LIGHT TOUCH

Adding greenery, from trees to flower arrangements, brings warmth to a room, Desilets said. Randomly placed ivy and other plants fill in empty space from the tops of chairs and tables, the entertainment center to the ceiling.

Use mirrors to make rooms look lighter and bigger. Be creative and place the mirror just right to reflect something special across the room.

Adding accent light is a more obvious technique to brighten dark corners.

Glass vases, bowls and other glass accents also offer an airy look, said Wolfe. She said she likes to use accessories in multiples of threes and fives.

For instance, on a fireplace mantel, she'll use three or five different sizes of candlesticks from various collections, grouping them together to add interest.

RUGS

Rugs definitely are considered the heart of the room, said Kamran Karimpour, who owns Woven Treasures in Birmingham with his wife, Kristi.

He also sells and buys antique rugs, offers repair service and provides free verbal rug appraisals.

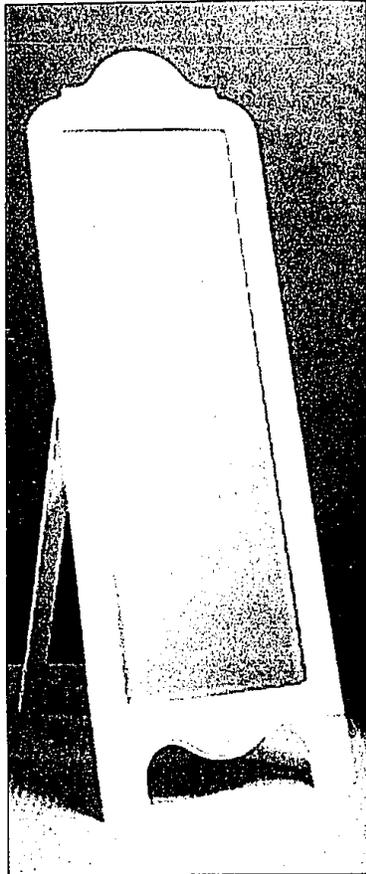
The best way to add a rug to a room is when it is the first piece and all the furnishings and accessories build around it, said Karimpour.

"If the room has already been decorated it's a little harder, because you have to find a rug to match the existing colors," he said.

"But, it's not impossible to do. We do custom-made rugs with original designs and in colors that they can't usually find in a rug."

The rug defines the seating area and adds warmth to the room.

"And it's a great conversation piece, especially with Persian pieces," said Karimpour, pointing to designs that range from tradi-



Use mirrors to make rooms look lighter and bigger. Be creative and place the mirror just right to reflect something special across the room. This white bevel floor mirror from Kentwood Manufacturing Company, www.kentwoodmfg.com, is an example of the kinds of mirrors and other home accessories you'll find at Laurel Furniture in downtown Plymouth.

especial above a sofa or love seat."

If your walls are full or if you want to try something different, think about using easels to display your art, said Kopec.

The shops feature the work of Thomas Kinkade, Howard Behrens, Anthony Benedetto and Simon Bull in downtown Birmingham, Rochester, Ann Arbor and Novi.

MIX IT UP

Before you buy all your accessories, think about avoiding tendencies to make everything in the room have symmetry or match, Wolfe said.

Even though most of us grew up in homes where lamps always came in pairs, Wolfe said, break the rule here, too. Mix different styles, textures and colors throughout the room.

"You want it to coordinate, but don't be afraid to mix," said Wolfe. She said her pet peeve is pictures that are hung too high.

"I like it a little lower than usual, but you have to pay attention to the size of the wall, too," she said. "You don't want them too small or too large."

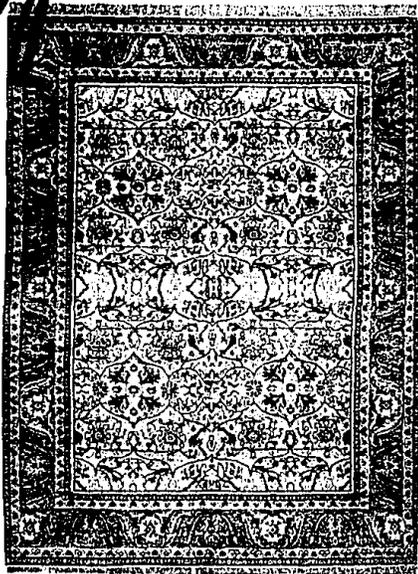
"And, I like to intermix pictures with mirrors. It adds a little variety and helps add your personality to the room."

Pictures should be hung 60 inches off the floor, which is generally at eye level, according to Lori Kopec, gallery director of Thomas Kinkade Avenue Gallery.

"That will vary based on whether there's a piece of furniture under it," Kopec said. "People tend to hang pictures a little higher than need to,

Azar's

Oriental Rugs



AZAR'S FAMOUS OCTOBER SALE

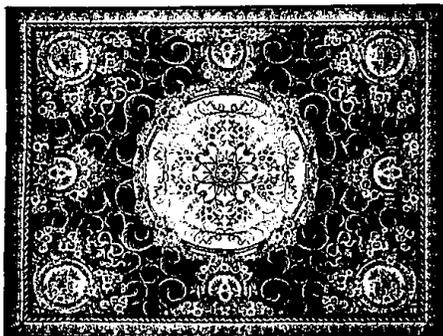
Simply Beautiful

Simply Priced

The Once a Year Oriental Rug

Sale that's too good to miss!

40-60% off



670 S. Woodward
Downtown Birmingham
248-644-7311