



DO-OVER YOUR LIVING ROOM

(And make yourself feel better by creating a fresh space)

'Take a look at your room. Ask what is it used for? How much traffic does it get? Is it a sanctuary or a room which will welcome many guests? How is the room's lighting? Do you like your current furniture arrangement? Do you need to change the wall color or treatment? Are your window treatments dated?'

CATHI LLOYD OF INTERIORS BY DESIGNING DEN, AN INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISED IN-HOME DESIGN CONSULTANT BUSINESS

A living room is more than a place to flop on the sofa and click on the remote. It is also, says Angelo Surmelis, host of HGTV's "Rate My Space," a reflection of who we are and how we want to live and entertain.

"The power of our surroundings is as powerful as the way we feel in certain clothes," says Surmelis noting that the living room is one of the first rooms that people see upon entering a house. "You always hear about people feeling more confident or standing up straighter in a certain outfit or new hair style. Our homes and the way they look and feel have the same effect. If it feels disjointed, not finished, warm, inviting or a personal reflection of who we are and the way we want to live and entertain, it can affect the way we feel about ourselves."

That's why Surmelis, who has a line of home furnishings called angelo: HOME available through the online furnishing store, CSN, believes that a well designed, cohesive living room not only shows off our best style but also makes us feel good.

There are other living room trends as well. A recent CSN Stores / Harris Interactive Survey indicates that some living rooms were becoming both the place to lounge and the place to exercise or work. As changes in lifestyle call for additional furniture and space, families are incorporating new functions into the living room, even if that meant putting the new laptop cart or treadmill next to the couch.

The question then is how to create a living room that combines functionality with looks.

"Take a look at your room," says Cathi Lloyd of Interiors by Designing Den, an international franchised in-home design consultant business. "Ask what is it used for? How much traffic does it get? Is it a sanctuary or a room which will welcome many guests? How is the room's lighting? Do you like your current furniture arrangement? Do you need to change the wall color or treatment? Are your window treatments dated?"

she says. "Flooring options are wide and varied. If new carpeting is in your plan, remember that it will provide your room with the greatest expanse of color. Wall option selections - whether papered or painted - will give the room its excitement and splash!"

Other factors include window treatments which Lloyd says can either take center stage or be a soft backdrop to the entire design plan.

"There is nothing, dollar for dollar, that can do more for a room that a beautifully designed window treatment," says Lloyd. "Furniture will also



help pull all your design elements together when blended well with flooring, wall and window treatments. With your master plan leading the way, decorating your tired living room should become a real pleasure."

For those who want some help in redecorating, CSN Stores recently kicked off the Living Room Search and Rescue, a coast-to-coast search for a recession-weary living room in the most need for resuscitation. The grand prize featured a Room Rescue Package worth more than \$5,000.



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