

# Wrap It Up

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A white lacquered Parson's table adds a modern touch to this traditional entry. Photo courtesy Brandon Neff Design

Try adding a pair of lidded ginger jars painted with a rural landscape to dress up your fireplace mantel, or choose from the myriad chinoiserie wall coverings to add drama to a powder bath – mix with a Chinese Chippendale style mirror and lacquered vanity for the ultimate in glamorous hand washing.

Colorful ceilings. What? No way, Brandon! Impossible! Yes, Virginia, you can paint your ceilings in something other than white. In fact, I haven't called out a white ceiling in a client's home for years. With all of the dynamic colors and finishes available today, why would anyone settle for white? It's just unnecessary. I advise the uninitiated to start with a pale grey, or soft mushroom hue – two colors that work beautifully with any wall accent. For a bedroom, add a touch of blue to the white tinting base for a dreamy (and complementary) shade reminiscent of a clear sky above – it's subtle, but very restful. And, for those

wishing to cast a flattering glow in a dining room, try painting your ceiling in a metallic – bronze and silver leaf are two of my favorites. Ralph Lauren makes wonderful Regent Metallic paints. The refracted light from your chandelier kissing the warm metal tint will throw a warm and magical light over you and your guests – like a room filled with candlelight – it'll take your dining to a whole new level.

Brass. I am continually being inspired by brass – in kitchen cabinet hardware, in fittings for showers and baths and in sconces and chandeliers. Its warm patina and depth of color add a luxe dimension. As a child of the '70s, I had thought of brass as a "second class" metal – it seemed to always pop up in hippie fern bars and was ubiquitous in all those pharmacy lamps used in pool halls and used to clad foot rests in bars. But today, I have a new appreciation for brass. For me, it evokes the glamour of Studio 54 decadence and Top

Of The Mark cocktails – burnished, shaken not stirred. Look for brass to make a comeback in everything from furniture to mirrors and from faucets to cutlery. La Cornue offers a range and hood in brass that reminds me of a French bistro – mix with limestone floors and marble counters for the height in gastronomic chic.

A Parsons Table. Named for New York's New School of Design and created by design luminary Jean-Michel Frank, this table should be a staple in your home. Versatile, simple, elegant, it was a standard issue in almost every Billy Baldwin Park Avenue project for good reason – it works with everything. One of my favorites is at West Elm – use it as a desk, or for a small dining area. Place it against the wall next to your bed as a nightstand or use it for a vanity. Their squared shape and clean lines are being enhanced with colorful finishes, mirror cladding and even wrapped in raffia. Mix it up with a Louis Ghost chair, or a Wegner teak armchair. You'll keep it around for years.

To all my design enthusiasts, here's wishing you the happiest of holidays and happy decorating!

## I want to hear from you!

Write me and tell me what trends you're following. What looks are inspiring your design decisions? I'm putting together my column calendar for 2014, and I'd love to know what topics and stories interest you. Don't be shy, drop me an email and say hello!

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