

## Stylish Solutions

# Creating Sanctuaries in the Home

By Ann McDonald



Here we created transitions in a small spa bath designed as a European Wet Room Space. Material changes force you to adjust your purpose. You step up to remove shoes on the teak floor; place slippers in the box and step down again into the overhead shower. The vessel contains your soap; you must slow down to find it.

Photos courtesy Couture Chateau llc, photography by Couture Chateau llc

How do we keep our peace on as the world seems to fall apart around us? Have you ever asked yourself that question? As designers, we are constantly challenged to create functional spaces for everyday living. The truth is, those spaces must bring us back to proverbial center to be successful projects.

Here I share some of my stylish solutions so you can create a sanctuary at home no matter how little space, time or even money you have. If you don't know where to start, try this: What sends you over the edge in your home? Is it the constant tripping over soccer cleats, ballet shoes or lacrosse sticks in the front hall or the retired spouses' collection of putters or tennis visors that drains your emotional reserves? What about the work-at-home spouse who comes out of their office for coffee while you are in the middle of something?

We all have things that shouldn't send us over the cliff but for some reason do. It's life. What's a stylish suburbanite to do?

**1) Create Intentional Transitions.** One of the biggest pitfalls I see, especially in suburban homes with lots of square footage is that we forget about intentional transition between spaces. Because we have so much space to work with we end up designing "must haves" – the library, gym, master suite, guest room, so much so that we forget about transition.

Consider this: Why is it we can head to the spa in a downtown location with less than half the space of our typical master bath and somehow relax, but in our own oversized master bath suite we feel chaotic?

They have been intentional about creating a transition. As ancient as the cultures, we find that archways, doorways, mats, material changes, even bells or shelves have been used to indicate you were moving from one type of space to another. You came in, changed your breathing pattern, slowed a bit, put on a robe in a calm room, slippers, drank water from a pretty glass. The transition component forced you to switch gears.

In our own large homes we fail to cultivate that transition process. Especially with the beloved open concept, we forget how critical this is.

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