

Stylish Solutions

Creating Sanctuaries in the Home

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This corner space is intentionally pink and is used as a mid-day escape hatch. From the artwork to the petit built in desk, candles and favorite design books, it's where this designer goes to re-charge her design brain and find inspiration.

Photo Peter Medilek

Consider how and where you can manifest transition even if it's moving from the kitchen into a chair in the living room. Do you always remove your shoes? Get a cup of tea? Bring a book? A notepad? Light a candle? What is it that you can use as a singular transition to remind you it's "sanctuary time."

2) Edit for Purpose. What is the purpose of your sanctuary space? Is it reading? Having a cup of coffee? Working from home? Prayer? Exercise? It could be anything and, in fact, what is right for your sanctuary is not right for another. Be OK with that. Break their sanctuary rules and fiercely protect your own.

Remember that oxygen mask! I have several spaces in my own home and studio that function as sanctuaries right in the middle of the chaos. They are spaces edited for specific purposes and the tools, acces-

sories and look all tie into their purpose for calm. A space in the middle of my kitchen is intentionally pink. I live in a house with two sons, three dogs and a husband. Not much of the house is pink, but this corner is.

This is my mid-day escape hatch. From the artwork to the petit built in desk, candles and favorite design books, it's where I go to re-charge my design brain and find inspiration. The funny part? As soon as my son came home from college, he absconded with this space as his own. Why? Because it's "so nice to sit here mom!"

Thank goodness I have more than one corner, and for now, I have retreated to another one of my spaces: we jokingly call it "the altar." It sits in the middle of the living room window and functions as a hands-off space for mom. No dogs, pets or food allowed. It has been the feature in several photo shoots and always brings me back to center.

3) Call it holy for you. I love the thought that the mundane is somehow set apart. Great design reminds us that the every day is precious. Think about why we care so much for grandmother's silly chair when she passes. It's never going to fetch millions at Sotheby's but it does capture our hearts. It was set apart unto her. Be intentional about finding those pieces and spaces that can be set apart unto you.

Creating sanctuaries within larger projects is one of the most important things we do as designers. It often comes out in the presentation phase of a design job when we are describing the transition from pantry to kitchen or kitchen to dining room, but it's there. It's funny, when people start a design project they don't often articulate the desire for peace, calm and order, but those are the exact things needed for an exceptional design project, no matter the scale or budget.

Even the old fashioned butler's pantry was a transition space of peace between the hustle and bustle of the kitchen prep to the noise and clatter of a full dining room. Why do you think friends congregate in those spaces? By nature, they are set apart. We seek them (transition spaces, purposeful and set apart) without even being conscious of it. Even in a simple kitchen remodel, we deal with the sanctuary. Sometimes it's as small as a proper place for a favored coffee cup – the one you drink from that makes you feel special in the morning before the stress of the day hits head on.

Where will you cultivate transition, purpose and a set apart space in your home? Let me know! For now, light a candle, find some peace and live a custom life!



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