

Design

SHOWCASING The Beauty of a Home

By Ruth Bashinsky

When Michelle and John Camus moved into their 1950s colonial in Manhasset two years ago they were eager to decorate, but could never seem to find the right items to define their personal style. Their spacious 5,800 sq. ft. home that boasted three bedrooms, an office, four bathrooms, a formal dining room, living room, kitchen, den and finished basement was sparse and only partially decorated. The couple wanted their home to feel warm and inviting without looking ostentatious.

"When I decorated I couldn't find the things I wanted to put in the house that would show the beauty of it," says Michelle. "I don't want people to walk in my home and feel uncomfortable because they feel it is too formal and cannot sit down anywhere. I want my house to look lived in. I want our home to feel like us."

Interior designer Wendy Garfield of La Strada-Meuble, Objet, Décor, a boutique-style design firm on Long Island that creates unique spaces clients "fall in love with," worked with the couple to help them achieve the look they were striving for. A trained soprano who performs across Long Island and the tri-

state area, Garfield applied the same passion she uses for singing beautiful music to create a magical space for Michelle and John to treasure.

The dining room, a room that had been virtually empty, was one of the rooms Garfield transformed into a spectacular oasis. She incorporated the red, green and yellow hues that Michelle favors into the design by selecting an array of interesting patterns and textures that brought the room to life. Garfield had the chairs around the French country walnut dining table painted a cream color, giving them an aged finish. She also upholstered the chairs with a gold brocade pattern on the fronts and a contrasting pattern in green on the backs. She added two wooden rattan armchairs with custom cushions, which not only balanced out the room but also made the seating more comfortable. Silk plaid panels dressed the window and a handmade Aubusson rug with a floral design brought all the colors





together. Additional details include a French chandelier that adds a hint of glamour and an English country console to display Michelle's ceramic plate collection.

"I like to mix and match furniture and accessories. It makes it more exciting," notes Garfield. "Michelle wanted a lived-in look and combining different chairs and patterns and accessories makes the room much more interesting visually. It looks as if the room has evolved over time."

Another dramatic point of the dining room is the hallway leading into the room. Previously it was an awkward space, but Garfield transformed it into a charming alcove by displaying French Parisian crystal sconces on each wall and placing a small oil painting beneath. The curtains that were used in the dining room were also hung on each side of the entranceway into the dining room, giving the room a flair of old-world opulence.

"I would have never thought to do this," says Michelle. "The curtains make such a statement when you enter the room. I am not a plaid person but Wendy encouraged me to mix and match and told me it would all come together in the end and she was right!"

The final look is more than the couple expected. In fact Michelle, who has never entertained in the room, cannot wait to throw a dinner party. "I absolutely love it...when you walk into my dining room now you feel like you are walking into a different era," she says. "Wendy is really helping me make the house as beautiful as it can and should be. It's really exciting."

For more information on La Strada-Meuble, Objet, Décor, visit www.lastradadecor.com or contact Wendy Garfield at 917-922-2072.●

