

# Finding Serenity

This Wichita home gets a fresh, tranquil look

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IMAGES STEVE BROWN PHOTOGRAPHY

**T**he '70s have been called "the decade that taste forgot." But was it so bad? Let's see...micro mini-skirts, the Bee Gees, the Chevrolet Vega, Richard Nixon. Ugh.

So when Vickie Flores, ASID, senior designer at Accent Interiors, got a call from the owner of an east side Wichita home in desperate need of updating, she feared the worst. When she saw the home, she found more sins of omission than of commission: not so bad.

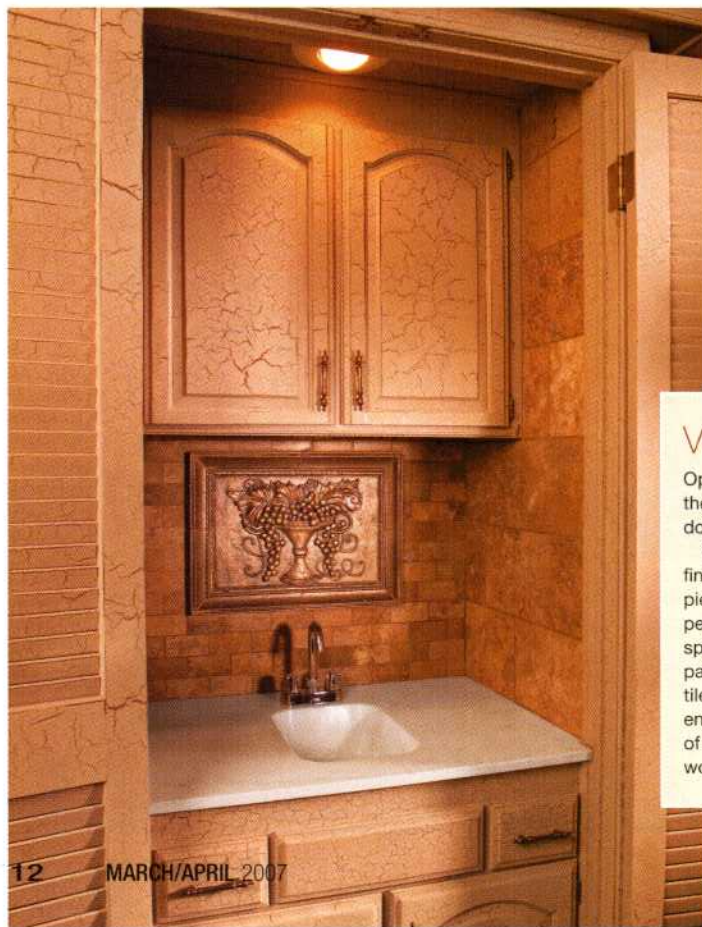
"The house had a lot of personality," she says. "It was very open, but had a dated look. The challenges were to make it as up to date as possible and to create a romantic, comfortable feel."



➦ The work is done. The trendy remodel adds warmth, style, and timeless beauty.

➦ The 1970s home before the remodel.

➦ Crackle paint and custom tile work add a "wow" factor to the wet bar.



The home's owner was unsure as to where to start and engaged in a dialogue with Flores that quickly took direction.

"I would see lovely things in the furniture store, but I just couldn't see how they would work in the home," says the owner. "I wanted someone to help me put it together, I wanted a feeling.... If I could just have the feeling of comfort and peacefulness, I would be happy."

Inspiration came after a visit to the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, "the most beautiful place I've ever stayed," she says.

The two agreed on a destination—a peaceful, comfortable environment—and on some means of achieving that goal: a traditional look with European and Tuscan notes, warm colors, and an emphasis on texture.

Another inspiration was a fireplace the owner saw in a magazine.

"I loved it," she says. "I asked, 'Can we do this?'"

Flores set to work, beginning with the fireplace.

"It was painted brick—there was one large mantel that ran the width of the wall, and a firebox to the side," she says. "The fireplace was off scale and dominated the room. And the wall was

## Voilà!

Opposite the fireplace there's a set of louvered doors. But it's not a closet.

Open them and you'll find what looks like a piece of antique furniture, perfectly recessed into the space. Painted with crackle paint and featuring custom tile work, the wet bar enhances the main themes of the room and raises the wow factor.



⌚ Once a flat ceiling with florescent lighting behind panels, the now recessed area was treated with plaster that was texturized, painted, and glazed. The light fixture is Venetian blown glass with a bronze metal band.

just a huge chunk of white.”

Flores created a soaring vertical presence with large, faux finish, vertical tiles directly over the fireplace and wall, integrating the two. The tiles were created by artist Rock Lacey. A smaller, rustic mantel was installed, supported by carved resin scrolls resembling ancient wood. The wall was then covered with a dimensional, brown ochre paint.

While warm tones dominate the room, they are not monolithic. Flores varied the palette, constantly challenging the owner to see beyond the individual elements to the whole.

This included adding wallpaper and chairs in the adjoining dining room with moss and jade notes, fawn carpeting, and dark red accents in the kitchen.

“We wanted to warm up everything and give the home a cohesive appearance,” Flores says. “We used a blend of colors and textures to make the room larger, appear more comfortable, and make all the elements work together.”

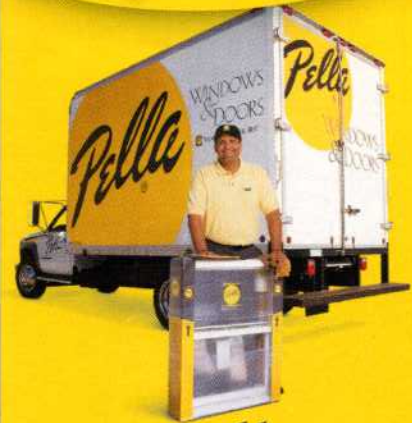
“When Vickie showed me the fabric and furniture, it wasn’t matching up with my ideas,” says the homeowner. “But she pulled me out of my little cocoon. She helped me take that leap into a different dimension.”

Since the space was the product of careful collaboration, the owner says she has been happy to leave things as she and the designer planned.

“I hate clutter,” she says. “I have refrained from buying anything other than what we put in here. Vickie did a wonderful job with accessorizing, and I just don’t want to screw it up.”

“This has become my haven. It’s quiet, serene, and I love it.” ■

  
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