

Decor Score: Drawn up in duplication

by Rose Bennett Gilbert

Q: Our condo has a picture window and a glass door leading to the patio. We have close neighbors, so we need privacy. Yet, the room is fairly small. Do the window and door have to match? I don't know what kind of curtains to put on them.

A: A lot depends on the size of your room. If it's small, a matching treatment on window and door will make the room appear larger. Repetition is a trick professional designers know and use well.

In the room we show here, both the wide window and the front door are dressed in simple sheer "Alouette LightLouvers," as they're called by the manufacturer (Hunter Douglas, www.hunterdouglas.com). Neither blinds nor shades in the traditional sense, the coverings have soft louvers that filter the light when they're open, and ensure indoor privacy when they're flipped closed.

ADDING SPACE - Duplicating your décor can add space to a small area, in your mind's eye. In this room, both the wide window and the front door are dressed in simple sheer coverings from Hunter Douglas. CNS Photo courtesy of Hunter Douglas.

The fabric-covered head rails and the louvers also create continual horizontal movement all across the end wall that makes the room look wider in the mind's eye. It's a value-added effect you couldn't achieve if the window treatment were different from the door.

Q: I pride myself on having special things in my home (and in my closet). Maybe it's a delayed reaction of mine to wearing uniforms all through school? Anyway, my idea of a great vacation is a two- or three-day shopping trip to a different city. This year, my girlfriend and I are heading to New York. So much to see in so little time! Any tips on where to find the best shopping for unusual things?

A: My advice: Cut to the chase. Hire a guide. An experienced pro is always the best leader behind the scenes and into the heart of any city.

New York City teems with smart guides who specialize in whatever you want. For hunting and gathering home decor, one of the best is SecretShopWalks/NYC, headed by a former design magazine editor who has spent a lifetime hunting down the perfect antique, accessory, decorative accent, or whatever, in the East Village, Chinatown, Chelsea, Tribeca or elsewhere.

Full disclosure: The chief shopping sleuth is a personal friend. To make her yours, too, Contact Ellen Frankel at www.SecretShopWalksNYC.com. And do let me know what treasures you unearth to take home.

BRING BLING

Does bling belong in the bedroom? "For sure!" says HGTV designer Candice Olson, who is busily adding plenty of "sparkle, sheen and shimmer" to a half-dozen signature product lines for your home and mine.

In her "Devine Design" re-interpretation of traditional motifs and materials, wallpapers glimmer with glass beads and iridescent colors, fabrics gleam with Lurex threads, and bed ensembles feature dazzling needle

artistry, like puckers, pleats and stitched-in textures.

Hers are "the kind of subtle effects we're already seeing in apparel fashions," Candice says. "It's not Liberace!

"I love going into a room with special effects, but not blam! in your face. They're subtle, but impactful."

Her work will be part of the Norwalk Furniture collection on display at the 2007 High Point Market running from March 26-April 1. She also designs for York Wallcoverings and Kravet Fabrics. Her most recent book, "Candice Olson On Design" (Meredith Books), includes swatches, floor plans and plenty of insider designer tips that can be used in the average - or the exceptionally sparkling - American home.

Rose Bennett Gilbert is the co-author of "Hampton Style" and associate editor of Country Decorating Ideas.

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