

Decor Score: Put some brown in your life if you want to keep hubby happy

by *Rose_Bennett_Gilbert*

Q: I am getting ready to do our living room over and need some advice. The problem is my husband (don't laugh). He always has an opinion about decorating: colors, fabrics and everything. His idea of a good-looking living room would be all browns. I hate brown! But I love my husband and want to humor him if I can. But how?

A: What's a 10-letter word for domestic bliss?

SPOUSE-PLEASER - A living room done up in robin's-egg blue and Stetson brown works for her and him. CNS Photo courtesy of Waverly. C.o.m.p.r.o.m.i.s.e.

That doesn't mean giving in or giving up your own preferences. You just have to find a way to make your Other Half think he's getting his way.

I offer the living room we show here as a suggestion. You'll no doubt spark to the lovely robins' egg blue that dominates the decor at first glance. But look again, and there's no mistaking the presence of brown - lots of brown - at the windows, fringing the table skirt, covering the French chair.

You could point out that blue is mainly the background color, that it's really brown that rules the room. In fact, most men claim blue as their most favorite color, so it's probably a safe choice. Moreover, teamed with brown, it's a fashion-forward color combination that showed up time and again at this month's High Point Furniture Market. Be sure to tell him that, too.

P.S. The source for the fabrics in this room is Waverly, a company with coast-to-coast distribution, so you should have an easy time duplicating the combo ... if Hubby agrees.

FURNITURE NEWS

What the latest news? Depends on where you look at the High Point Market in North Carolina, which opened its doors last week to some 85,000 retailers, who will be bringing the goods home to your local store early next spring.

With more than 12 million square feet of exhibit space, there was a lot to see. Among the highlights:

- Green furniture. Not the color, of course. Today's green is the green of the bandwagon onto which more and more furniture manufacturers are climbing. They're making it a selling point because they think you, the consumer, really cares a lot about saving the forests, clean water and air. So from now on when you shop for furniture, it's not enough to ask about size, color, and stuffing: find out where the piece was made, and how? By underpaid workers? By felling rain forests? By using pollutants like formaldehyde and toxic glues?

- Animal prints. Love that leopard, at least, its spots. Leopard, zebra and giraffe patterns are still going strong. Personal favorite: the Louis XVI chest at French Heritage, a serendipity in painted zebra stripes.

- Bling! It has come out of the nightspots and into the furniture spotlight, and we don't just mean an occasional touch of gilt. Hollywood fashion designer Bob Mackie, who has dressed Carol Channing, Diana Ross and Cher, put brass bracelets on the beds he designed for American Drew. Los Angeles designer Casey Fisher threw jewel-embroidered French silk skirts on his outrageously glam sofas, and tufted chairbacks with rhinestone buttons. But the OTT award has to go to Marge Carson's overscaled, out-of-sight collections. Huge crystals marched around table aprons. Dining chairs wore cast medallions in their inner backs, and bands of Swarovski crystals sparkled across end table tops. It was dazzling ... and no doubt headed to Dubai or one of Russia's newly minted millionaires.

More about High Point's more downhome news in a next column. Remember, there were 12 million square feet to report on!

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