

DESIGNERS TODAY

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THE SOUTHWEST



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Sunshine and style

SOUTHWEST DESIGNERS DISCUSS THEIR THOUGHTS ON THEIR REGION

What are the hallmarks of Southwestern design?

Jamie Stoillis Design, Santa Fe, N.M.:

"Our beautiful landscape dictates how we design. Organic materials such as plaster, stone, wood and bringing the outside in."

Lauren Jacobsen, Lauren Jacobsen Design, Scottsdale:



"Southwestern design has been typically bathed inside and out in a neutral palette reflecting adobe-style Pueblo architecture. However, it has begun to change over the years ... As more people relocate from different parts of the United States, they bring different aesthetic sensibilities to the region and this has expanded what might be considered typical. You find contemporary, Spanish Mission, modern Mediterranean revival and midcentury homes. This is the new Southwest; it is youthful, high energy and affluent."

"Southwestern design is rooted in respect of the landscape, accomplished by complementing topography and vistas with the form of the home. Warm, neutral palettes enhanced with pops of color are classic staples; I particularly like incorporating white to let the warmer tones and colors really pop."

Eddie Maestri, Maestri Studio, Dallas:

"The form of the home should respect the landscape by complementing the surroundings rather than disrupting. I like to bring the outdoors into the home with views of the landscape, lots of glass, and incorporating indoor/outdoor water features and rock gardens."

Heather French (below), French & French Interiors, Santa Fe, N.M.:

"Santa Fe is a very handmade city. It's literally made of clay and mud. It's folksy and global."

Jennifer Welch, Jennifer Welch Interior Design, Oklahoma City, Okla.: "All designers approach Southwestern design differently. In my approach, I lean into Native American art and Native American designs on rugs and fabrics. The use of raw beams can be mixed in with all looks and are especially satisfying mixed with a modern aesthetic."



How does architecture in the Southwest inform design aesthetics?

Buffy Kline (left), Wiseman Gale Duncan Interiors, Santa Fe, N.M.:

"The architecture is simple. Blend into the landscape. Be a part of the

tableau. Purposefully disappear."

Melissa Fields (below), Shades of Gray Design Studio, San Antonio, Texas:

"The architecture we tend to see in the Southwest reflects a lot of Texas's Spanish and Mexican roots. There's a heavy Spanish influence on many buildings and homes. This tends to inform that same aesthetic carried into the interior spaces; however, we are starting to see more of a modern take on this. There's a lot of modernization taking place in San Antonio for instance, not just in residential design but in several commercial spaces."



Andrea Reordan, Andrea Reordan Design, Dallas:

"Scale - for interior designers in Texas, it's all about fitting the scale of the architecture (ever heard: everything's bigger in Texas?) Things that would work in a New York apartment would never look right in Texas homes."

Maestri:

"The form of the home should respect the landscape by complementing the surroundings rather than disrupting. I like to bring the outdoors into the home with views of the landscape, lots of glass, and incorporating indoor/outdoor water features and rock gardens."

Welch:

"Living in the Southwest typically means one has more land on which to build, and thus the houses tend to be large. Oversized kitchens with double islands that act as the nucleus of the house with living and dining areas that open up to an outdoor living and dining area have become the norm. Throughout the region, there is a mix of traditional, transitional and modern homes."

Is sustainability top of mind for your customers and if so, how do you address it?

Fields:

"Yes! When my clients make it known that this is important to them, I address it by what products I specify for their project. So, if we're doing a kitchen or bath remodel, I'm going to look for fixtures that conserve precious resources such as energy and water. I'll select materials that not only have a long life-span, but also provide health benefits like low or no VOCs, less off-gassing and use recycled materials."

Welch:

"So many people in the Southwest are connected to the oil and gas industry, so sadly, sustainability isn't a primary concern. However, in recent years, I've seen an uptick in client's desire to build a more sustainable home. The use of solar panels and garages equipped with outlets for electrical vehicles are a part of the build-out."



Maestri (left):

"Always! We aim to position overhangs to reduce heat gain and be very conscious of the plant material used. It is important that we use sustainable products and that the house itself is sustainable in its daily use."

Does water conservation influence your design decisions?

Daniella Villamil, Daniella Villamil Interiors, Las Vegas

"Yes, especially in arid areas. Water is an issue that cannot be overlooked in our area. There are wonderful alternatives to grass, such as Kurapia, and plants that are drought resistant and will look wonderful on landscaped areas."

Jacobsen:

"In the state of Arizona, water is a limited resource and becoming more so every year. The western region has been in a drought for over a decade. We all feel it, so anywhere design can influence water conservation is a conversation that needs to happen."

Stoillis:

"Absolutely! People living in the Southwest know water is in short supply. Cumulatively our design and building communities are extremely conservative with how we use this precious natural resource."

What are some of your favorite local go-to resources?

Stolis:

"Ahhh... so many! We are very fortunate to live in a place where just about everyone you meet is an artisan of some sort. I spend a lot of time in the shop at Wood Design Custom Cabinetry and local showrooms like Santa Fe by Design and Statements in Tile. Another fun favorite is the Rug Man downtown."

Fields:

"One of my favorite go-to local resources is a local interior design showroom (Interior Trade Cartel) that's open to the trade only. I also love to use ProSource and The Tile Shop for kitchen and bath remodels. For accessories for install days, I typically use At Home or Home Goods."

Reordan (left):



"Arteriors is local to Dallas and introduces 600+ new products annually, is always pushing design forward. Scout Design Studio is local and has some fun pieces that pop and create a break from the expected."

Kline:

"I love my local artisans. I have my beloved resources that I treasure and keep as secret as I can!"

Jacobsen:

"The Scottsdale Design Center has many multi-line showrooms. We also have many stone and tile companies, and plumbing and appliance showrooms to select from. It gives our firm a lot of selections for products, which we love. Our firm is about building long-term relationships and supporting our local showrooms and artisans. A few local favorites are Studio 41, John Brooks and Palavela."

How does the real estate market impact your business?



French (left, with her husband):

"There is definitely a correlation to the real estate market and our industry. When it's busy, we're busy. The last few years have been insane. We've been truly blessed that with this slow down we haven't

been too affected. We work with all sorts of clients, but yes, when you get into custom work, which is what most designers do, it gets pricey."

Villamil:

"Yes, many people with buying power are moving to our states from the East Coast, these clients come with a wonderful aesthetic that is producing very interesting and unique interiors."

Jacobsen:

"We have incredible weather in Arizona for eight months of the year. Arizona has always been about snowbirds and second homes and still is, but there are more people moving here permanently from major urban areas across the county. As a company that specializes in new construction and major remodels, our level of high-end projects has increased."

Stoillis:

"All of my recent projects are on the higher end. The market is crucial to our industry. Regardless of new builds or renovations for new buyers it is so important to keep that flow going and the real estate market plays a huge role. I will say, being in Santa Fe, we are in a bit of a bubble, so I consider myself fortunate that we aren't as affected by the ups and downs as drastically as in larger cities."