



Blending of Styles

Merging traditional and contemporary provide unique results.

by Zara Stender, CID, IDS, CMG

Contemporary or traditional and never the twain shall meet? Well, not anymore. With the financial caution all of us are exercising, we are more drawn to customs that represent a safer, saner time period. However, there is new fresh thought that will not be denied. I find that when clients want contemporary style in their home but still yearn for traditional, blending the two takes a steady hand and keen sense of balance.

Simplicity was key with this client who wanted a modern look for his new home, but found he was still drawn to the comfort and familiarity of his Midwestern/German roots.

To successfully accomplish this, we needed to:

- Blend clean, straight lines of contemporary style with the ornate qualities of 18th Century furniture
- Honor the modern architecture of the space
- Incorporate old world into the new.
- Mix metals, woods and stone
- Keep color shades, tints and tones in the same family

Mix metals, mix woods, mix styles? Sounds like a design nightmare...not so...although it could easily go wrong. Paint can solve the problem by creating a "bridge" between these elements. The trick is to blend colors to produce a hue that pulls it all together seamlessly.

Using Sherwin-Williams 7005 Pure White as a base, metallic gold and silver were added in to 'platinumize' the wall color. The brushed nickel, antique gold, and bronze [not shown] elsewhere in the space make a smooth transition. The finished result is a soft, multi-dimensional feel. The mirrors of ornately carved mahogany blend with the brushed nickel of the light fixture, travertine, and marble off setting the hard surfaces and curvilinear lines. For a warmer effect add more gold or a greater amount of silver for a cooler end product.

The result was a space that seamlessly blended the two and was not so retro as new, fresh and forward. To accomplish the same in your home you may want to consider hiring a Certified Interior Designer. Merging straight lines into sensuous curves requires the restrained and balanced perspective of a professional. You'll find that a little guidance will save you a lot of time and money in the long run.

Zara Stender is a Certified Interior Designer, CCIDC Board member, Chairholder with the Color Marketing Group, and STIR Magazine Advisory Board member. You can find information on Certified Interior Designers in your area at <http://www.ccidc.org/cidpages> 