



# interioR Designer

## *...friend or foe?*

By Christina Duperron

**H**ow many times have you been in a house and ... the dining table doesn't fit exactly underneath the chandelier? You notice the family heirloom secretary is a beautiful piece but it does not physically fit the location it's placed in? There seems to be a lot of light in the kitchen from these small high-intensity track lights yet you find it difficult to see clearly while working at the counter because of the heavy shadows? There are not enough outlets in the bathroom for your hair dryer, curling iron, shaver, etc. During entertainment functions it becomes painfully apparent that traffic flow and atmosphere of the house doesn't accommodate people well? Or what about that paint color, maybe it was supposed to match the upholstery fabric in the same room but it's definitely off the mark?

Even more mystifying about these example homes is that it's easily apparent by the materials used that there was plenty of budget to do the project "right." So what went wrong? It does not make sense that people would purposely create shortcomings in one of their largest investments and long term assets. In most cases, it is lack of quality planning before the project begins, and poor commitment to the plan once the project is underway.

A client usually has some kind of vision of what they want, or at least the style and colors to be achieved. But, most struggle with where to begin finding products and how to make decisions in order for it to all work! An interior designer is educated and trained in all the aspects of design and construction to integrate

the steps and pieces throughout the entire process. There are a million choices of products and services available. An interior designer will know what types of products are best for certain applications and what service providers are most reputable to use. Working with an interior designer can save a client a lot of time and frustrations looking for products and contemplating decisions, as well as help them stay within their budget.

Frequently, the client decides many of the interior selections after a contract has been signed with a contractor. This can often lead to change orders, cost overruns and longer lead times. Also, the contractor had to speculate what budget would support the clients' needs and wants. Ultimately it can lead to many advantages by making a simple adjustment in the process and placing the interior designer into the planning phase prior to selecting a contractor. Decisions made during this phase can develop into accurate specifications, which lead to contractors being more willing to competitively bid the project. Because the decisions are made ahead of the contractor needing them, there are no costly change orders and the project stays on a predictable schedule. There also won't be any "surprises" of not knowing what something will be or look like in the end.

So, before you start your next construction project, consider interviewing a couple of interior designers. They can make your project a well-planned, enjoyable experience that completely reflects you in the end!