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Hostess Ideas for
**Sensational
Showers**

PAGE 67



*Find dramatic
elegance in Susan's
marriage of
personal pieces with
refined design.*

For most, Williamsburg offers a glimpse into the past. For Susan Jamieson, it flashed a possible future. While studying at The College of William and Mary, Susan fell in love with the town's historical furnishings and the idea of making them "new" again. "A piece doesn't have to be so old-fashioned that it's dated," she explains.

Now the owner of Richmond, Virginia's Bridget Beari Designs—named for Susan and her former business partner's dogs—her mantra proves priceless for those who value tradition but desire an update. Though making the paradox work is not always easy, Susan gladly accepts the challenge because of the perks. "I get to 'live' in different houses," she says. "It's fun as a designer to be inspired by other people."

Susan enjoys walking through clients' homes to learn how they live and what they love. After examining their habits, hobbies, and favorite furnishings, she takes time to dream. Susan says, "I wake up in the middle of the night and think, 'That's exactly what this [project] needs.' And that's what I did with my own house."

A Greek Revival-style home originally in desperate need of reviving, Susan's house gave her dream-to-reality method plenty of practice. She brightened the navy blue-drenched interior with crisp neutral shades that allowed accent pieces to pop. The renewed abode became even fresher as a trial ground for burlap draperies and a refinished Empire sofa mixed with modern treasures.

Susan's design vision comes from her ability to keep her eyes open. "Everything's an inspiration," the Bridget Beari owner says, as she admits to pulling out her sketchbook in interesting restaurant bathrooms and other

Inspired Design: Susan Jamieson

From Her Home to Yours

Susan Jamieson offers tips for trying her style in your home.

- It's okay—even encouraged—to mingle current pieces and treasured antiques.
- Coordinate the house so it flows from one room to the next. Susan says, "There's nothing worse than going into 'the leopard room.'"
- Keep the house's architecture in mind—it tells you what you can and cannot do.
- Try painting cabinets an unusual color like blue or green.
- Create visual interest by mixing textures like suede, silk, and quilted fabric.
- Break up furniture sets. One interesting piece makes a stronger statement than a uniform collection.







Decorating Destinations

Worthy Richmond shopping suggestions, straight from the source.

- Shades of Light: Thousands of options from chandeliers to antiques to shades; www.shadesoflight.com.
- Williams and Sherrill Interiors: 25,000 square feet of fantastic fabrics; www.williamsandsherrill.com.
- The Kellogg Collection: English-style furnishings and accessories; www.kelloggcollection.com.

unlikely places. "I remember a James Bond movie that had a great radiator cover," she recalls. "I kept rewinding and rewinding, trying to sketch it."

While one-of-a-kind ideas make Susan a sought-after designer, passion for the fundamentals makes her a natural teacher. Instead of simply presenting different design schemes to homeowners, she explains reasons for choosing among them. Susan says she believes helping clients understand how various colors and furniture styles work together will enable them to make decisions that fit both their tastes and their lifestyles.

"All of my customers end up being my friends," she says. With most projects lasting two or more years, reaching the finish is bittersweet. "It's hard to let go, but you move on, and you obsess about the next one." 🐻

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For information, contact Bridget Beari Designs at 804-321-4747 or visit www.bridgetbearidesigns.com.

