

Mpls
St Paul
MAGAZINE

YOUR GUIDE TO LOCAL DESIGN

Home

FALL 2009

MSPMAG.COM

Cozy Up!

LOCAL DESIGN EXPERTS REVEAL
THEIR SECRETS

HUSBAND & WIFE
Architects
SHARE THEIR
SWEDISH-STYLE
FAMILY HOME, p. 16

Architects Christine Albertsson
and Todd Hansen at home in
south Minneapolis with children
Eva and August

\$3.99



NARI
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
THE REMODELING INDUSTRY
MINNESOTA
CHAPTER

WINNING LOOKS FROM THE
2009 SHOWCASE HOME, p. 24

ASID KITCHEN & BATH TOUR:
16 EXQUISITE PROJECTS, p. 39

SMART LOCAL REMODELS:
15 FABULOUS PAGES, p. 59



Warming Trend

Texture, lighting, and continuity all work together to create cozy, relaxing spaces.

BY HOLLY O'DELL

There's a reason the word "home" conjures images of coziness, comfort, and warmth. We want to live in a place that encourages relaxation and inspires happiness, welcoming friends and family with an inviting ambiance.

But how exactly do we arrive at that point? Remodelers regularly take on the role of helping homeowners interpret what warmth means to them, and that process often starts by taking stock of a person's lifestyle. "This easy-living lifestyle we have today is reflected in much of what we see in remodeling," says Kathe Ostrom with Burnsville-

based New Spaces. "People are taking their box of a house and making it into a jewel box, creating space that works for their lifestyle and their family."

To make these personalized spaces warm and inviting, remodelers work with homeowners to identify both tangible and intangible components. "The concept of warmth has to deal a lot with the psychological feel people get from a space," says Laura Orfield-Skrivseth, vice president and owner of Orfield Design & Construction in St. Louis Park. "That means keeping things uncluttered and creating details that draw your eye in."

Whether your idea of warmth is a kitchen rich in detail or a family room simple in design, several principles always apply. "Color is the primary factor because that is in every single material and finish," Orfield-Skrivseth says. "Texture is probably second. Wood floors, for instance, are warmer than concrete ones."

She also encourages congruous designs and a proper lighting scheme. "Being consistent with patterns and colors creates a feeling of calm," Orfield-Skrivseth notes. "Careful placement of lights and dimmers can create ambiance and highlight focal points as well."

Don't dismiss seemingly "cold" materials. "Even though granite is a hard-surface material, it can be very warm when it has oranges, reds, and other warm colors within it," says Amy Brogan, a designer and project manager for Orfield Design & Construction, who also believes that adding niches and nooks within a remodeling project can make a space feel cozier.

Scale also plays an important role. "So often we have made spaces that are too large and uncomfortable for humans," Ostrom says.

The following four projects by Twin Cities remodelers used these concepts—along with unexpected details—to create warm, personalized, and distinct spaces. >>>



OPPOSITE: Removing a wall opened up the space between the remodeled kitchen and sunroom. LEFT AND BELOW: Laminate countertops and a pebble tile backsplash complement the kitchen's rich wood cabinetry.



LOCATION: Minneapolis

TYPE OF PROJECT: Kitchen/sunroom remodel

REMODELING FIRM: Orfield Design & Construction, St. Louis Park

THE OWNER OF THIS 1920S HOME

had just installed new windows in her sunroom when she called upon Orfield Design & Construction to help her join the sunny space with a kitchen that needed a significant remodel. The first order of business was removing the wall between the two rooms and replacing it with a new support beam. Orfield Design gutted the entire space, added insulation to the exterior walls, and installed joist hangers in the ceiling. The firm maintained one significant feature: the original one-and-a-half-inch natural white oak flooring.

Orfield Design worked within the kitchen's small existing footprint, making the room feel warm without overcrowding it with details. They

used crown moldings and soffits to create architectural interest. "We also put a small cabinet under the kitchen window to make it seem like it was always supposed to be there," says Orfield Design's Amy Brogan. "It feels inviting."

Inspired by a dark chocolate brown coffee table in her living room, the homeowner wanted cabinets in the same hue. To create the look of exotic wenge wood, the remodeler chose budget-friendly European-style oak cabinets, stained them dark, and added contemporary hardware. "We didn't want the kitchen to feel foreboding because those dark cabinets are very heavy, but we did want them to be striking in appearance," explains Laura Orfield-Skrivseth of Orfield Design & Construction. "So we picked lighter laminate countertops and a beautiful pebble tile backsplash that is earthy and warm in both texture and color."

For the sunroom, now open to the kitchen and living up to its name, the homeowner wanted the area "to be a place to curl up and read a book,"

Orfield-Skrivseth says. The space also seats friends and family who want to keep the homeowner company while she cooks.

In both spaces, the remodeler took care to match styles and colors that permeated the rest of the house. Soft yellow paint automatically warms up the kitchen and sunroom; it also picks up the color of the countertops and complements the homeowner's turquoise blue dining room and lavender living room. The firm also replaced mismatched oak base and casing throughout the first floor so that it was one style. White paint on the sunroom/kitchen trim offsets the dark cabinetry.

"Although we did the kitchen with a very contemporary feel, we carefully designed it to go with the rest of the home and to be a warm, cozy, inviting space," Orfield-Skrivseth says.