



Be creative! Mix up pieces from all decades and centuries. The result will be eclectic and interesting. And, most importantly, fill your home with things that you love so that you are happy in every room of your house.

In my mind, a home is so much more than a place one inhabits. It should be a haven...a place of comfort and beauty which reflects the personality of its owners. I have tried to achieve this for my clients by designing interiors in which one can relax and feel secure. One of the ways in which I accomplish this task is by mixing the old with the new.

There are beautiful pieces on the market these days. Fabulous furniture constructed from many different materials, such as acrylic, metal, glass, mirror and the list goes on. However, to use only new pieces in an interior can leave a room feeling sterile and cold, just as using only old pieces can make a room feel stuffy, serious and boring. Over the years, I have found that using Antiques with Modern elements not only brings in warmth but it also "grounds" the room and creates a more relaxed feel.

If one is lucky enough to inherit beautiful old pieces of furniture, that's wonderful...a designer's dream come true. Not only do these Antiques add sophistication and style, but the sentimental value is unlimited. The memories that come with them are invaluable. But, if that is not the case, then there are shops full of gorgeous pieces from which to choose. Whether the older pieces are painted or in a beautiful, rich wood finish, they always fall in effortlessly with Modern pieces. This is true for artwork, as well. Why not hang an Abstract painting over a Louis XV commode? Or, why not hang an old family portrait over a chrome and glass console? The mix is so pleasing to the eye.

I have also found that the "mix" works well in any style of architecture. Antiques work wonderfully with very modern architecture and modern furniture works wonderfully in Period houses, as well. Don't feel that the style of furniture must match the style of architecture. It's just too expected and dull. And, don't limit yourself to traditional style fabrics on traditional furniture. A modern, crazy print fabric will work very well on an antique chair just as a silk damask will give a regal effect to a chrome finish X-Frame bench.

Throughout history, people have used items passed down through the generations in conjunction with things they have purchased. It was a natural way to live and should be continued today. My clients tell me repeatedly that their children don't want their "old" furniture. I am always sad to hear this as Antiques can be used in such a modern, up to date environment, if done correctly. Antique furniture was well constructed; therefore it has a lasting presence, and it's hard to find that quality of craftsmanship in wooden pieces today.

So, be creative! Mix up pieces from all decades and centuries. The result will be eclectic and interesting. And, most importantly, fill your home with things that you love so that you are happy in every room of your house.

Rena Barclay Interiors is an Interior Design Firm located near Oxford, England focusing on Residential and Commercial Interiors. Rena is a Valdosta native and continues to have design projects in Valdosta and the United States



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