

# Creative Home™

Holiday 2002

berries  
and boughs  
gifts, cookies,  
and ornaments

making  
spirits bright!

white lights  
inviting rooms  
family memory  
books

128  
festive  
Ideas

www.bhg.com  
AOL Keyword: BHG  
Display until January 21, 2003





## showhouse

Meredith Corporation celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



teamwork

To celebrate our 100th anniversary and to benefit the Des Moines Symphony Alliance, editors and designers representing Meredith magazines brought a piece of corporate history back to life by redecorating the former home above of founder E. T. Meredith. The master bedroom featured on page 90 was designed by our *Creative Home* team, which included interior designer Amanda Reynal, far left, *Creative Home* editor Wanda Ventling, left, *Creative Collection* editor-in-chief Beverly Rivers, below left, and *Creative Collection* senior editor Debra Garner, below.

Designer Anna Griffin, below, with *Creative Home* associate art director Becky Lau Ekstrand and editor Wanda Ventling, has built a thriving business creating stationery and scrapbooking products. Learn more about her inviting style on page 40.



on location

Resident interior designer Holly Craiger frequently joins the *Creative Home* design team to lend her expertise. For this issue, we asked her to look at three submissions from our readers and create design plans with watercolor renditions of what the rooms might look like after her suggestions are implemented. See her plans in "Solutions" on page 14.



# behind the scenes

Continued on page 12



showhouse

# mastering a



Imagine a private, pampering space,  
designed to soothe the weary soul.  
Symphony Alliance Designers

PRODUCED BY Wanda Vevting, Beverly Kiser, and Amanda Kynal



# great escape



that is, without apology. "a room  
Our master suite in the Des Moines  
Showhouse is just such a haven.

WRITTEN BY Candace (The Martha) PHOTOGRAPHED BY Craig Anderson

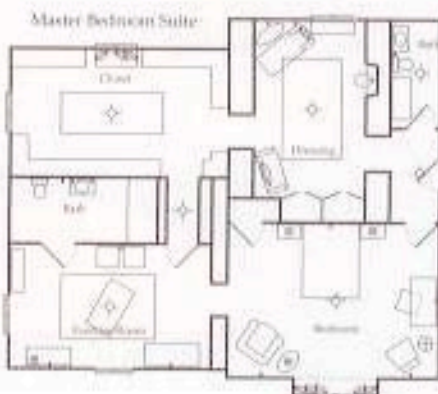


In pondering a design direction for the Des Moines Symphony Alliance Designers' Showhouse six-room master suite, *Creative Home* editors and decorator had no trouble agreeing: All envisioned an at-home getaway so self-contained, so luxuriously layered in comforts, that troubles would dissolve at its door. All envisioned their own fantasy escape.

"We wanted to create a private retreat for the busy couple who actually own the home, and who would be moving back in after the showhouse was over," says senior editor Wanda Ventling. "Our goal was to design an oasis for them that's apart from the rest of the house." Apart, at least in feel, from the couple's three school-age daughters' bedrooms just down the hall.

Because the master quarters are in a circa-1912 Georgian-style home, the design team agreed the redo should reflect the style and age of the architecture. "We wanted to keep it soothingly understated, yet maintain a sense of elegance inherent to the house," says interior designer Amanda Reynal, who assisted Ventling and editor-in-chief Beverly Rivers in the decorating project. Their solution? Traditional antique and reproduction furnishings, rich silks and soft chenilles, and plenty of hand stenciling and special-effects finishes on the ceilings and walls.

As part of a showhouse, the suite inevitably embraced a little drama, especially with its sumptuous embroidered silk duvet, lush decorative pillows, and mix of more than 29 fabrics. But this suite also was grounded in real life. Both owners have demanding jobs, and their 1,300-square-foot master quarters frankly were intended as a retreat where their careers and kids, no matter how loved, momentarily would take a backseat to sweet serenity.



"The design crescendos in the bed window treatments and stenciling.



# mastering a great escape

The top of luxury. Elegant fabrics and treatments, beautiful furniture, fine art and accessories, and a touch of the exotic combine to create the perfect retreat.



room with the suite's most elaborate  
but the palette quiets." —*Amanda Reynolds*





## creating a private retreat

With a few pointers from our design team, you, too, can have an at-home escape that will nurture you.

1. **soften the palette.** Studies prove blues and greens are soothing, calming the mind. Pale neutrals also are contemplative colors, allowing cares to drop away.
2. **indulge in "touch me" softness** with feel-good fabrics such as chenilles, high-thread-count cottons, and smooth silks. Include a generous amount of plump pillows and thickly padded upholstery to comfort backsides at every turn.
3. **splurge on luxury,** even if budget confines your extravagance to a single pillow. That pillow will caple you into a better mood, we guarantee.
4. **create continuity.** Repeat a theme such as stenciling, velvet-fringe trim, or bamboo accents in your bedroom and bath.
5. **dim the lights.** Provide various lighting options for daytime dressing and nighttime relaxing. Here, a Lutron lighting system allows the homeowners to adjust the suite's lighting with high-tech ease.

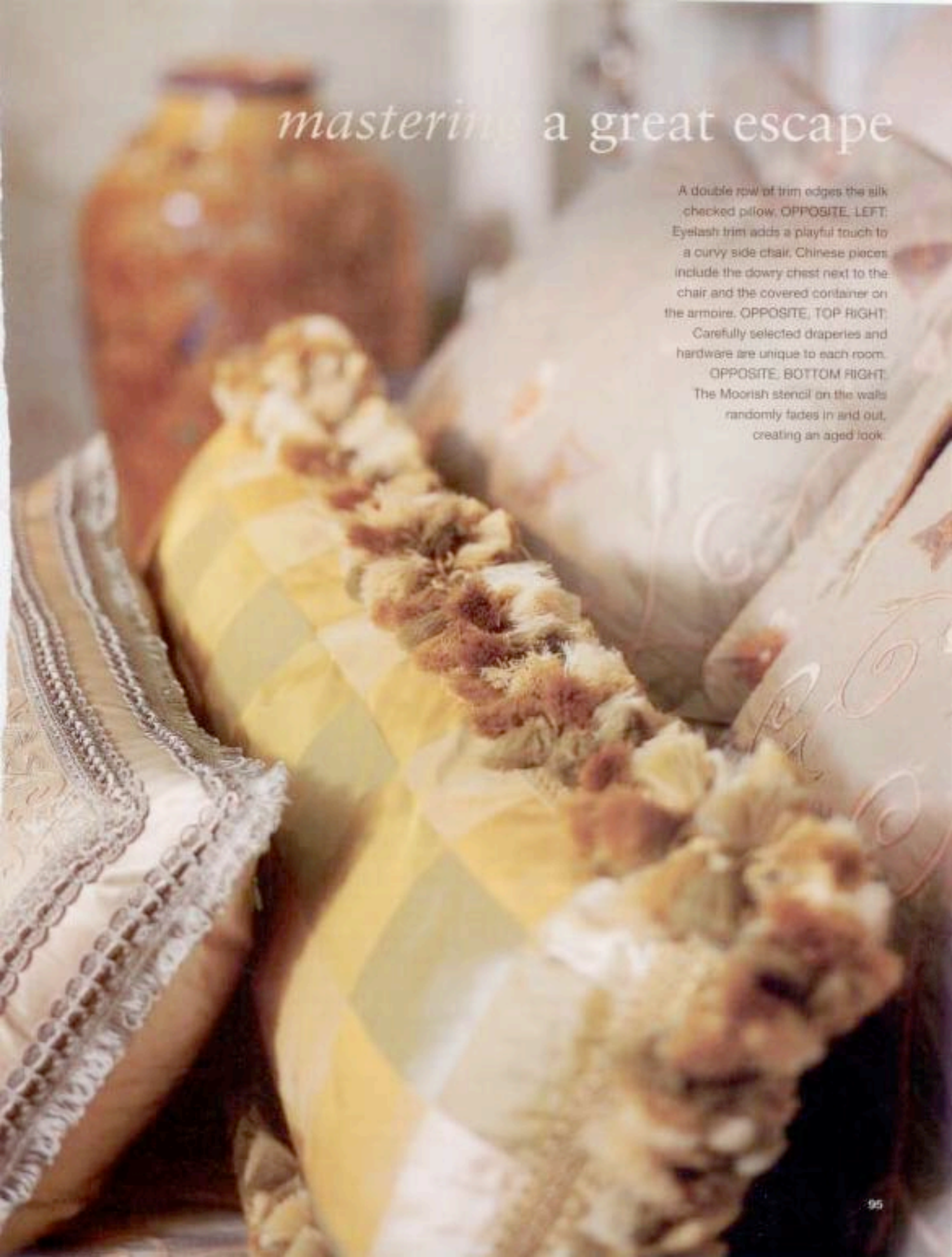
"With this goal in mind, we selected a palette of soothing, watery colors, starting with a pale blue-green [detailed with gold stenciled trellises] for the bedroom walls," Reynal says. "These colors, with the pale blues and greens, are ideal for lowering the blood pressure," Ventling explains.

"But such a quiet palette can easily become boring, especially with so many rooms," Ventling warns. No problem, thanks to a sprinkling of oxblood reds and burnished coppers "that restore the rooms to life, after the muted palette drains it away," Reynal says.

Something else prevented the soothing hues from creating overkill: "The design progresses as you travel from one space into the next, intensifying both in color and in decoration," Ventling says.

The suite is entered from a small vestibule off the landing. Her bathroom is off to the right, and, straight ahead, the vestibule opens into a series of rooms that circle around to the master bedroom. The dressing room (shown on page 96) just off the vestibule is the quietest, most feminine area. Furnished in French antiques, it has the palest palette and "just a simple scarf dresses the window," Reynal notes. In the next space—a room-size closet (page 97, top right) complete with its own window seat—"there's a little more elaborate window treatment,





## *mastering* a great escape

A double row of trim edges the silk checked pillow. **OPPOSITE, LEFT:** Eyelash trim adds a playful touch to a curvy side chair. Chinese pieces include the dowry chest next to the chair and the covered container on the armoire. **OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT:** Carefully selected draperies and hardware are unique to each room. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT:** The Moorish stencil on the walls randomly fades in and out, creating an aged look.



## mastering a great escape



and the palette intensifies with a midtone at the ceiling," she explains.

From there, the suite flows into an exercise room via a tuxedo closet (page 99). "The crescendo peaks here," Reynal says. "We let the red play a more important role in this room to help stimulate the desire to exercise," Ventling says. They also stepped up a masculine feel by selecting an impressive gentleman's chest topped with trophies and a tortoise-finish box. Still, the elegance of the other rooms continues. "We used silk curtains to make it feel like a room, not a gym," Reynal says.

From the visually pumped exercise room, the suite flows back to ultimate calm in the bedroom. Except here, the suite's hardwood floors are cushioned with a neutral carpet that visually lightens and physically softens the space.

The walls look as though they have been gracefully aging for years. Painted by another Meredith editor,

ABOVE: "The dressing room exudes a soft, aged French look that suggests it's been that way since the house was built," Ventling says. Artist Hetschor Schueller painted the four-piece using stencils also created to fit the door and drawer fronts, then added hand-painted details. The chaise, chair, and marble-top console all are French antiques. The chaise was re-covered using a cocoa-color velvet and topped with a two-tone striped silk mattress edged with bulky shirred paper trim. The framed art is an old piece of embroidered silk. OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: Crystal-knob hardware embellishes the newly painted dressing table and cabinetry. OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT: The closet features frothy sheers and a richer paint shade on the ceiling and corner island. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT: A bamboo chair trimmed with eyelash fringe cozies up to the closet's window overlooking the garden. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT: Her bath walls had been scuffed with hand-painted visages by the homeowners' daughter in a previous makeover. In order to keep the vestimental motifs intact, Schueller added French words and glazing to connect the room to the suite's palette.





“Creating a calming environment that encouraged intimacy was our primary goal.” —Wanda Vendling



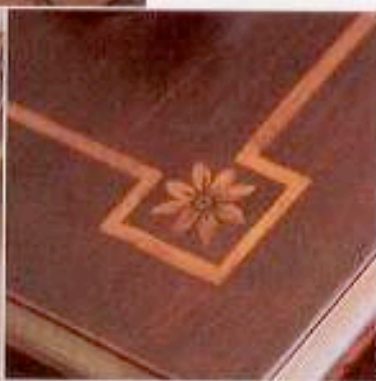




Creative Collection senior editor/designer Debbie Garner, who headed up a small crew of specialty painters, the treatment started with a glaze over a base coat. Stenciling was added later using a Moorish trellis design that fades in and out (see "how-to-do-it," page 100 for more information).

The space gets an added punch from the apple-green silk plaid draperies. Ventling says, "The informal check provides a nice juxtaposition to the formal embroidered silk used for the duvet and pillows." A reproduction French cane bed continues the Gallic theme of the dressing room, and bamboo-trimmed furniture and Chinese antiques lend a hint of the exotic to keep the space compelling—just what's needed for a fantasy getaway with all the comforts of home. \*

LEFT: A pair of bamboo stools is covered in a paisley fabric. BELOW LEFT: His bath features an English wallpaper, crystal-encrusted scones, and elegant silk shower curtains created by trimming lined, ready-made draperies purchased at a home center. BELOW RIGHT: The hand-painted secondhand chest looks like Chippendale, in keeping with the Oriental influence that permeates the suite, but the subject matter is strictly Midwestern. BELOW MIDDLE: The design, echoed on the chest top, declares the home's roots and complements the chest's original hardware, which depicts a Native American hunting.



The exercise room exudes elegance with fine furnishings and fabrics.



*mastering a great escape*



A tuxedo closet leads to the exercise room, where a massive gentleman's chest conveys reserved masculinity. The painted closet's center-panel doors were glazed for a mottled effect.