

The Well-Dressed Guestroom

FOR THE WALLS, THE INKEEPER CHOSE A DAZZLING CITRINE—
A HUE THAT WORKED WITH THE ROOM'S "DNA"

By Theresa Henkelmann

Our decorating taste, like our taste in clothes, speaks to who we are. It reflects our idiosyncrasies, our individuality—and it changes over time. And, just as bone structure dictates the size and cut of a garment, the “bones” of a room dictate proportion and scale.

The bones of this guestroom, in the Homestead Inn, in Greenwich, were unremarkable and lacking in detail. To supply definition, I used Balinese wood carvings as a cove molding.

The use of color is personal as well. My taste tends toward the use of tertiary colors (colors formed by mixing two secondary colors) grounded by earth tones. I often use white and all its permutations as a contrast with the deeper colors.

For the walls of this room I chose a tertiary color because it reflected nature's colors and because it reflects Northeastern light beautifully. (Location, climate, and light are a property's “DNA.” They are immutable, and shouldn't be ignored: The palette of the Southwest, for example, won't translate well when bathed in New York City light.) I painted the woodwork a soft white for contrast and to highlight the windows and doors. White cotton duck draperies trimmed in deep gray felt delineate the windows.

During the three decades I spent as an interior designer, I found it satisfying and rewarding to weave the decorative tapestry of a space—blending styles and colors, scale and proportion, with a home's DNA. On the floor of this guestroom's bathroom I arranged cement tiles (designed in Morocco and colored and patterned with ground marble) to resemble a rug. The beaded crystal chandeliers flanking the sink add the same warm notes found in the woods of the bed and armoire.

Objects and art are a room's jewelry. My inclination for common pieces as art is reflected in the Balinese shadow puppets (not shown) adorning a wall of the sitting area. Natural fibers, as well as colors found in nature, are offset by the use of brass and gold metals for the room's lighting. Their sparkle and warmth give solidity and refinement to a room that is our guest's residence for a time, and were chosen to make him or her feel not as far from home.

For more information, see www.tme.com/anatomy_of_a_room.



OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:

1. In the Homestead Inn (<http://www.homesteadinn.com>), a mirror, hand-carved and inlaid in India, greets guests in the entrance chamber of this guestroom.

2. The playful Thai carved wooden horse begs our visitors to relax and enjoy our hospitality.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM:

3. The bench at the foot of the sleigh bed is upholstered in a kilim rug, adding another layer to the Asian influences throughout the suite.

4. A carborundum etching by French Artist James Coignard, titled *Life*, hangs over the bed.

THIS PAGE, BELOW:

5. The citrine of the walls envelops the room in a revitalizing play of light.

6 and 7. [6 for the chaise longue, 7 for the rug] The use of light gray for the carpeting and charcoal gray for the chaise longue adds discipline to the space by anchoring the contrasting elements into an ensemble.

8. The exotic reindeer-moss tree shading the chaise longue adds height.

9. The woven hemp pillows on the chaises provide contrast, in both color and texture, to the charcoal mohair upholstery.

10. Dark-brown shells were used by Malaysian artisans to craft the cylindrical lamps on the table between the chaise longue.