



Texas Home & Living: Describe your design aesthetic.

Komal Sheth: In three words – less is more. Keep the space relatively simple, but elegant and eye catching. ... To elaborate, every element and detail is consciously selected to serve multiple visual and functional purposes.

Most designers tend to throw in lots of individually beautiful pieces that don't come together as a whole and only serve to make the space look cluttered, overwhelming, and worst of all, dysfunctional. As I think about aesthetics in my designs, I envision a completed space that is functional, comfortable, inviting, and beautiful. All of the above, without exception.

TH&L: You have worked for prominent design firms in India, Southern California, Northern California, Dallas and Austin, Texas. How does the Austin client's taste differ from clients in other regions?

KS: Austin design is relaxed, more eclectic, and more environmentally conscious. ... As for differences in tastes, I find that it varies not just by geographical region but from client to client. The differences are what makes my work extremely interesting and exciting – imagine the rush of a new challenge every day!

Let me start with what's common. The one thing all clients are anxious about when working with a designer is whether their own vision/ideas will be smothered by the designer's opinions. When I meet new clients, I start by easing any such fears. I see a designer's role, first and foremost, as understanding the homeowner's vision for their home and then

KOMAL SHETH

AN INTERVIEW WITH
AUSTIN DESIGNER **KOMAL SHETH**,
FOUNDER OF
SPACES DESIGNED

Photography by Allison Cartwright



framing the details around this overarching goal.

TH&L: Has designing in a number of different locations been advantageous to your career?

KS: Yes ... I've had the opportunity to focus on different aspects of design in each location. In India, where carpenters are much more common and affordable, I honed my skills in custom-designed furniture.

In California, I gained priceless experience remodeling kitchens and bathrooms (which, by the way, are also my forte) with a keen focus on usability and functionality, given the smaller spaces.

In Austin, I've been influenced by the sustainability movement and now intuitively incorporate elements of green design whenever feasible/possible.

TH&L: In addition to your interior design credentials, you also have your real estate license. Is both finding and creating the home of your client's dreams overwhelming?

KS: On the contrary. Being involved with the client from the discovery phase allows me to guide them to identify the house with the right skeleton, that I can then design/remodel into the home of their dreams. I've had many an experience where the structural elements of the original house placed limitations on the future design – I would highly recommend anyone who is looking to buy and remodel to contact us first thing. In addition, the insights I get into their tastes and aspirations during the home-finding process are invaluable as I get into the designing phase.



Sheth says, "Our Signature is an assertive mix of classical and contemporary designs, perfectly blended for modern living."



Photo by Andrew Pogue

“A splash of green, even if only from an accessory, plant, or flower arrangement, brightens up any space.”

TH&L: Do you have a go-to color?

KS: Green. A splash of green, even if only from an accessory, plant, or flower arrangement, brightens up any space.

TH&L: These days, many of us are sticking to a strict budget. How would you suggest we spruce up our interiors without spending a great deal?

KS: One way is to change the space planning of a room or two, which brings a fresh atmosphere to a space. Another way is to take accessories from one part of a home and place them in a new location. Lastly, purchasing simple but elegant accessories – pillows, artwork, light fixtures – to be accent pieces in rooms can update a room effortlessly ... And never forget, just changing the paint colors of the rooms will make a huge difference in the ambiance.

TH&L: What design elements will always be in style?

KS: The use of contrasting cabinet finishes and contrasting counter tops on back wall cabinets and islands; the use of unconventional shapes, patterns, and finishes in porcelain and glass tile; mismatching dining chairs at a table; and the use of rugs as statements rather than understated accents. TH&L





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