

events

GRACE NOTES

Two welcoming rooms capture top honours with elegance and ease.

BY KATE QUETTON

For the last three years, *House & Home* has been asked to judge submissions to the Canadian Dream Room Contest hosted by Interiors by Decorating Den, a franchised company whose network of decorators spans the country. This year's winning rooms — a dining room and a bedroom — are elegant without being too opulent, show creativity in their use of space and, above all, radiate warmth and comfort.



finedining

First place in this year's contest went to decorator Susan Comfort Barton, who impressed the judges with her colourful transformation of a humdrum dining room. "We wanted to establish a casual feeling for quiet meals with the family," she says, "but make it elegant enough that dinner guests would feel special." A striped rose and bisque fabric on the client's new dining chairs was the starting point for the room's colour scheme. Delicate pink-toned toile-patterned paper was used to cover the walls and visually reduce the room's ample proportions, while panels of ivory silk were gathered and

draped on either side of a bay window that, though pretty, needed softening. Further warmth comes from the mellow tones of an antique brass chandelier and the polished mahogany table and chairs. A large garnet-and-cream-coloured Aubusson rug ties all the elements together. "It can be formal or informal," says Comfort Barton. "Either way, the homeowners enjoy it immensely." *Van Luit wallpaper, Imperial Wallcoverings; drapery panels, Maxwell Fabrics; drapery sewn by Décor Manufacturing; Shadow Magic blinds, Shade-O-Matic; cake, Creative Cutters.*



restdressed

When runners-up Marisa Lupo and Luisa Maringola were called upon to design this bedroom, a barely decorated shell was all they had to work with. "The clients asked us to create a restful haven," says Lupo. "But they didn't want a matched bedroom suite — they wanted a mix of beautiful furnishings." That wish was translated into a collection of Louis XVI-style pieces including a carved headboard and dresser hand-stained to give them an aged patina. The homeowners each chose a different bedside table — a burled-wood bombe chest for him, and a round French boulé table for her. A chaise covered in a washed antique velvet — a rich fabric repeated on the bedskirt and pillow shams — is a good fit in an awkward window alcove. The subtle damask drapery and duvet lend a refined air. Two paint-washed benches at the foot of the bed create a focal point in the centre of the room. "They act as an exclamation mark," says Lupo. "They're a twist on the traditional look." *All fabrics (except tieback), Kravet; tieback fabric, Maxwell Fabrics; drapery and bedding sewn by Décor Manufacturing; lamps, Reliance Lamps; paintings, Art Source; blinds, Hunter Douglas.*

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Photography by Donna Griffith (top)/Stacey Brandford (bottom)