



sustainable
design

Wikipedia definition: The intention of sustainable design is to “eliminate negative environmental impact completely through skillful, sensitive design.” Manifestations of sustainable design require no non-renewable resources, minimally impact the environment and relate people with the natural environment.

Translation: Be mindful of the choices you make in your life and how it impacts the environment in which we all live.

BY SARA SKALLE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG PAGE

Wayzata native Sarah Randolph knew she wanted to be an interior designer since high school. Redirected by loving parents to get a real job, she tried another path for awhile but could not deny her destiny. After meeting her husband and moving to San Francisco, Randolph attained her post-graduate degree from UC Berkeley in Interior Design and Interior Architecture and went to work for Steven Volpe Design, San Francisco's high end residential interior design firm. Returning to Minnesota six years ago, she

joined William Beson Interior Design and later Eminent Interior Design.

In 2008, Randolph struck out on her own, establishing Sara Randolph Interior Design. Her approach is focused on listening to her clients. “As much fun as it would be to have my own signature or stamp on every project, I feel it's my job to connect with the client and help them achieve their dream and vision,” says Randolph.



A recent project in Wayzata involved repurposing previously used elements, “to mold and shape them ... to make them beautiful and create a warm and textural environment within someone's home,” says Randolph. “The elements in this house speak a story. It's almost like a ‘if the walls could talk’ feeling. You just feel like this house has this spirit to it even though it's brand new.”

The terra cotta floor, [above], is made of tiles that have been reclaimed out of farm homes and churches in the south of France and repurposed in this new home adding warmth and character. Sourced through Exquisite Surfaces, based in California, Connecticut and New York, some tiles bear the random imprint of paw prints left hundreds of years ago by wandering dogs, chickens and cats as these tiles baked out in the sun.

Q&A with sarah randolph

BY D. STUDEBAKER



Sarah Randolph

We sat down and talked with local interior designer Sarah Randolph of Sarah Randolph Interior Design to help us sort through all of the bamboo-derived green tape.

What is your definition of green?

I would say it is responsible design and construction that is mindful of energy conservation, protection of natural resources and preservation of the environment.

How can green products be incorporated into traditional interiors?

You might not know if the chair or sofa you're sitting on is made from sustainable products because some manufacturers have done a terrific job of incorporating green materials into very traditional design. Ask the furniture vendor where the manufacturers' materials come from. Sometimes it's nice to incorporate reclaimed materials into the construction of a house, whether it's an old beam from a barn to be used on as a fireplace mantle, reclaimed siding for the exterior, or terra cotta excavated from old churches in the south of France for the floor. Green does not equal contemporary and there are many ways to incorporate responsible, green design into a traditional home.

What are some smaller green pieces one could add their own design?

Pillows with organic cotton and soy-based BiOH polyols foam filling [a Minnesota-based Cargill product] can brighten up any couch or bed. Fabrics that use vegetable dyes or are made from 100 percent cotton,

wool or recycled polyester that are woven or treated with no additional chemicals can be a good choice as upholstery, wall coverings or window treatments. All major fabric lines now carry a line of green fabrics. A company called Libeco Home has beautiful Belgian linens for table, bath and bed.

The "greenest" way to accessorize your home is by finding treasures at a local antique shop or Flea Market. Mixing old with the new, whether it be a vintage picture frame to antique silver or dishes, is a great way to make your home feel warm and personal. There are also furniture and accessory lines that pride themselves on using sustainable materials exclusively. For example, furniture lines sourcing wood from forests that participate in the 3:1 ratio (three new plantings for every tree harvested) and accessory lines that use partially- to fully-recycled materials are all ways to add green accessories to your home.

Do these small changes matter?

Truly sustainable living as a whole is becoming an important component in our everyday lives. We have too much knowledge to continue to play the ignorance card anymore. Obviously not everyone has the capability to overhaul their homes HVAC systems and convert to geo-thermal or to install solar panels and a turbine, but we can start small and take steps in the right direction to be responsible for our impact on the environment we live in.