



# *Creating an Elegant & Serene Space on a Budget*

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB VOMUND

**Carole loves custom draperies and wanted just the right look for the large window in the bedroom. A sheer white fabric exuding the serene look was selected and installed**

Carole Anselmi retired from her role as an elementary school principal in the Bay Area after 35 years with the school district. She had lived for 28 of those years in a 1,500-square-foot condominium. With her retirement came a new freedom to live anywhere she wanted and she chose the Sierra foothills, bringing her closer to her family.

She invested in a new home totaling close to 3,000 square feet. She loved it, but after so many years living in the small condo, she found some of the adjustments challenging. "Coming from a smaller home, my old stuff looked like doll furniture in the new house because of the high ceilings and increased space," says Carole. "What fit perfectly in my old place now looked too small."

Soon after settling in, Carole knew she wanted to make changes. "I had a Victorian look in my old condo with lots of flowers and heavy 'fall and cascade' curtains," continues Carole. She had moved that look to her new home, but no longer liked it.

"I like to read, watch television and generally hang out in my bedroom in the evenings," explains Carole. She decided to remodel her master bedroom and bathroom, and started with the purchase of brand new cherry furniture. Carole's built-in cabinetry, however, was oak, and the two did not look good together.

Carole decided to bring in professional design help to move the project forward and selected House 2 Home Designs, based in Roseville. Bob Hagmann, owner of House 2 Home, remembers their first meeting. "Carole told me that she wanted to get rid of her old look and, instead, wanted to move to something elegant and serene. The Victorian look was out, and simple elegance was the new goal."

There was, however, a wrinkle in the plan. Carole's initial quote would have her project cost upwards of \$40,000, which was too much. Bob took on the challenge of delivering a new master bedroom and bath for half of what it might otherwise cost. "Creating on a budget is more fun because you don't just



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open a book and say ‘we’ll take one of those, and one of those,’” explains Bob.

The plan was to prioritize each investment in the project. Important features would get funded, while less important features would get upgraded using lower cost options. To save money Bob suggested to Carol that she keep her old chairs, but recover them. Additionally, instead of all new cabinets they would reface the old ones with cherry, to match the new furniture.

It didn’t stop there. “Rather than installing a new shower, we had a grout company come and clean the shower and put in new grout,” Carole explains. She then replaced her existing shower door and glass walls with an upgraded model. “When the work was done it looked like new,” Carole concludes.

Carole and Bob used the cost savings from these and other items to invest in areas that were top priorities. She loves custom draperies and wanted just the right look to frame the large picture window in the bedroom. Even there, however, costs were watched. Fabrics costing upwards of \$60 a yard were rejected. In the end, a sheer white material exuding the serene look Carole was seeking was selected and installed.

Bob helped Carole create three new mirrors for the bathroom. “We went big on the mirrors and had them custom made,” says Carole. “There were some areas where I was unwilling to go cheap, because I really wanted the custom look.”

Carole relied on Bob to guide her through the remodel process. For example, Carole loved animal prints. Bob wanted to make sure she got her prints, but also wanted to keep her on track toward the goal of a finished room that would be elegant and serene. “If I had let her go wild, we would have had a lot of animals in there,” explains Bob. Animal prints were introduced, but in subtle accent pieces like a bathroom rug and towels.

Carole liked monochromatic color schemes, and wanted to use her silk bedding materials as

a starting point for paint color selection. The task of selecting colors proved challenging. Bob explains, "In that particular room the lighting changes dramatically from one wall to the next. A color would look great on one wall, but would look terrible on another." Using patience and persistence, along with dozens of paint samples, a final choice of three shades of taupe were selected.

In the end, the project came in on budget. Most importantly, the frou-frou look was gone and, in its place, was a bedroom and bath that are truly elegant and serene.

Bob concluded, "A project like this is a partnership. It's important to have good communication and to understand each other. And it's important that I listen. I don't live in this house. This is Carol's home and I wanted it to look just how she wants it to look."

Carol added, "It was a fun project, and I'm very happy with the way it turned out—very happy. I feel really good when I'm in my bedroom and I look around and see how good it all looks." AH

*For more information on House 2 Home Designs, contact Bob Hagmann at 916.771.2233 or rhagmann@H2Hdesign.com.*

*Rob Vomund is a freelance photographer and writer. You can view his work online at vomundphotography.com.*



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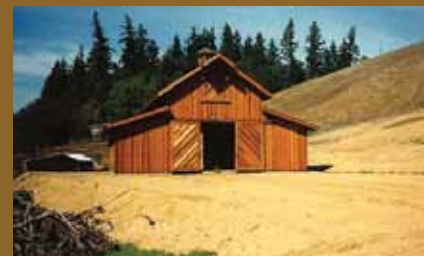
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