

Ferris Zoë Design

Tuscan, Eclectic, Classic - What's in a Name?

How do you define this style? That's a question people frequently ask me upon entering my design showroom. Many people would define it as "Tuscan," because there is an abundance of Tuscan inspired design in home building today. It is the trendy style of new home builders, home stores, tile manufacturers, furniture manufacturers, architects and interior designers..

A more appropriate term is Classic, which is defined as Greek and Roman Antiquity Art and Architecture. The classics in literature, music, art, fashion and design never go out of style. I see it as a desire in our culture for stability and comfort in things that have stood the test of time.

Another term bandied about in the last 20 years or so is "eclectic." The literal meaning of eclectic is selecting and choosing from various sources and not following any one system. Translate that into design terms, and you have a new style that is not any particular style.

The difficult part of eclectic to understand in relationship to interior design is that it is not just a hodgepodge of anything. To create an eclectic design that is harmonious and pleasing to our senses, there must be a theme to meld the many styles together. That theme can be color or motif. The theme will bring disparate elements together to form that blend that sometimes defies description, and is puzzling as to how it all works beautifully together.

Shabby Chic has been a successful new style that has achieved this process by making everything white, off-white, and distressed and/or faded. The aim in Shabby Chic is to create the illusion that the home owners have had this furniture forever, and they refurbish it each generation. It was good enough for grandmother, so it's good enough for us. Why spend money buying something new? However, the interesting fact is that people frequently pay substantial sums of money to make it look like they didn't!

Many years of trial and error and a keen eye are required to select from the myriad of choices to come up with the structure that makes an eclectic hodgepodge work. Whether you call it Classic, Tuscan, Shabby Chic, or the latest designer's moniker, the important thing to remember is - please yourself. After all, it is your home. And if you need help, show your professional architect or interior designer the look you want to achieve. Using a professional who has many years of training will save you, not cost you, money.

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