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Best Room

See how chic functional design combines with a classic aesthetic to create a dreamy guest room haven.

BY MARIA BARUXIS • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DUSTIN PECK PHOTOGRAPHY



THE PAST TRANSFORMS. You don't have to start from scratch to get a new look. Though this room seems so freshly transformed, Traci suggests working with the treasures already in our collections. "Be conscious of what you already have and what you already love. The mirrors and headboard are some big elements that I'd picked up over the years. Because I love them and am invested in them, I couldn't just get rid of everything and start again. I incorporated what I had into my design," she says.

Existing somewhat apart from a home's daily activities, the guest bedroom is a room sometimes forgotten and often yearning for a little love. Easily consigned to a storage room, it can become the exclusive repository of boxes and baubles that don't quite fit into our busy realities. If this rings true for you and you find your guest bedroom chock-full of this and that, with only a futon to wink at its original purpose, perhaps it's time to reinvent this space as a sweet, stunning retreat.

LEGACY IDEA

When designer Traci Zeller of Charlotte, North Carolina, was charged with redecorating her nice, but mostly neglected guest room, Traci created a dreamy, functional getaway within the walls of her own Southern home. This project was a blissful collaboration between Traci and the iconic heritage brand Laura Ashley's romantic, rural aesthetic and Traci's "crisp, classic and chic" sensibilities resulted in a room altogether bright, fresh and modern.

MOOD ORIENTED

For the ravishingly revamped look, Traci began with a distinct vision of how she wanted the room to feel. With a husband and twin sons, Traci finds that "boy world" vibes pervade her home. This guest room redo offered a chance to express an atmosphere of drama and updated femininity otherwise omitted from her interiors.

The drama of this room hinges on the show-stopping, garden-themed wallpaper. "This room would not be the same room without that wallpaper," she says, "And though it's a bold pattern, its soft colors make it appealing rather than overwhelming." For the rest of the room, she decided to avoid the "greens and pinks that can make a room look like a little girl's," instead choosing to ground it in neutrals and cheery yellows, with extra oomph supplied by the pair of upholstered, chamomile-colored armchairs.

KEEP IT CLEAR. An empty chest of drawers is essential for all guest rooms as it allows your visitors to fully unpack and really feel at home.




FLORAL MORAL. Because concepts of traditional feminine style have evolved, design need not be overtly sweet and saturated in pinks to celebrate what's nurturing, detailed and divine. Choosing wallpaper that emphasizes the botanical (foliage and wildlife over blossoms) strikes a note of earthiness and bounty, while remaining polished and put-together.



SINGULAR STATEMENT

With the wallpaper functioning as the grand statement, Traci treats the rest of the room with a more modern, edited approach. For her, "function follows beauty," and every item is chosen with strict intentionality, deployed to work on several levels. The sleek desk and metallic lamp playfully challenge the classical elements of the wallpaper, while providing the accoutrements of a fully outfitted workspace. The vintage bedside tables and Alexis Walter paintings lend depth and richness to a room that could look too "new" and cosmetic without them. The blushing quartz chandelier infuses an earthy, sweet quality while delivering key lighting. With these features as just as some examples, Traci certainly achieves her aim of providing "simple solutions that bring joy and spirit to the everyday."

In trying a guest room transformation of your own, Traci recommends daring: "Don't be afraid to embrace big and bold patterns! Take a leap; it could pay off!" So take a plunge and give the guest bedroom a big dose of the dynamic and dreamy. Your visitors may never want to leave! 

A CHAIR AFFAIR. Multifunctional chairs are important for a small space that may have to accommodate a whole host of tasks. In addition to providing comfort for both work and play, Traci's chairs keep the atmosphere sunny and cozy. The British flag pillows pay homage to Laura Ashley's roots across the pond and throw a jolt of contrasting color into the mix.



follow Traci's FUNDAMENTALS FOR GUEST ROOM SUCCESS.

LET THERE BE LIGHT.

A layered lighting plan is a real must-have. It allows guests a full spectrum of control for illuminating whatever task is at hand, whether it's reading a book in bed or catching up on some work at the desk. Traci chose three lamps, plus a chandelier for her own moderately sized guest bedroom.

SITTING PRETTY.

Because a guest room has to be equipped for everything from lounging to working, providing a lot of comfortable seating is paramount. Along with the plush bed, the pair of armchairs and brass bench fulfill all of Traci's guests' needs. Keep the chairs to a medium scale to maximize space and utility.

LUGGAGE LOCUS.

A place to put a suitcase is probably the first thing your visitors will be looking for upon arrival. Establish a specific place to set down their bags. Traci uses a bench at the foot of the bed, which in addition to providing more seating, also lets luggage be stored out of the way. She also suggests purchasing an extra luggage rack.

GENEROUS JARS. The apothecary jars function as toiletry vessels and establish a chic, nostalgic feel, while also giving visitors clear access to all their sundry needs without having to hunt through drawers or cabinets. Also, using the space on the tank for these goodies frees up the vanity for any unpacking.

| OPPOSITE | PETIT PRIVY. A small bathroom can still paint the picture of grandeur. Here lots of natural light and soft colors work to create an open feel. Keeping clutter at bay will also heighten a sense of spaciousness.

