

RENOVATIONS

HOME IMPROVEMENT & DESIGN

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REGINA'S EXTREME HOME MAKEOVER

**fresh &
functional
AT HOME**

WRAPPING UP IN
**BUENA
VISTA**



GETTING FIRED UP ABOUT FIREPLACES

BY TARA LEFEBVRE, IDT

AS THE HOLIDAY SEASON APPROACHES, I BEGIN TO REFLECT ON WHAT I LOOK FORWARD TO THIS SEASON. I picture family and friends gathered together around the crackling fireplace, chatting and drinking hot chocolate, while warming their fingers and toes after being outside in the cold.

The fireplace has been a symbolic figure in the holiday season for many years and a central part of the lives of our ancestors. Our ancestors used a fireplace as a heat and cooking source. With the ingenuity of many great minds, furnaces and ranges have replaced the functionality of the fireplace. Though this is not to say that the need, or dare I say desire for a fireplace has diminished. The role of a fireplace has changed from a needed fixture into an aesthetic detail that showcases our personal style.

Today homeowners are steering away from the traditional wood-burning fireplace. They want a fireplace that is custom, different and personal to them with low maintenance. The shape, positioning, and mounting of the fireplace are also changing. The traditional rectangular shape has been transformed into long, narrow, circular or freestanding options. Mantels are slowly starting to disappear for a clean and minimalist look. As an accent to the wall surrounding the fireplace, we are seeing stunning stone, tile, quartz, granite, wood paneling, concrete or something as simple as painted drywall. In addition to the log sets for the gas and electric fireplace, there are now stone or crystal options available for a more contemporary feel.

In addition to the physical changes of the fireplace, fireplaces are also being placed into unconventional areas of the home rather than just in the living or formal sitting rooms. As fireplaces are now available in much smaller sizes it is easier to place them in master bedrooms and bathrooms, all to set a relaxing and romantic mood.

One trend that continues to be popular is hanging the television directly above the fireplace. Though this can be a convenient option, there are a number of things that need to be considered, such as the heat distribution from the fireplace itself. It is

recommended that a mantel be placed between the television and fireplace to redirect the heat towards the room instead of upwards toward the television.

Due to the fireplace installation restrictions, the television may need to be hung at a height that is actually too high for comfortable viewing. If this is the case I'd recommend finding a new location for the television. For example consider placing the television in a side cabinet. However you decide to design your fireplace, ensure you are following the fireplace manufacturer's regulations. Always make sure that either the television or the fireplace is played down to steer away from creating two focal points in one area. Ensure your television and fireplace are proportionately sized to one another. Whether you manipulate the type of fireplace, its style or positioning, or the materials placed on the mantel or surround, a designer will be able to come up with a creative option for you.

So as the holiday season approaches, remember when looking for a new fireplace, find one that best suits your personality and lifestyle; thus creating the ideal feel for the season and adding to the warmth and love already being spread though the home over the holiday season. With all the amazing choices now available you should be able to find the perfect fireplace for your stocking to be hung year after year. ☐



Tara Lefebvre, IDT, is a Designer with Studio 2.0 Interior Design Consultants, bringing an enthusiasm for design and creative thinking. She holds her Interior Design Technology Diploma and is a member of the IDAS and IDC. Crafting custom design plans specifically to meet each of her clients needs.

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