

Michelle Lee Designs
 Michelle Parenteau, owner
 115 Concord Ave.
 Cranston, R.I.

michelleleedesigns.com

401-954-2065

Total overall grade: "A"

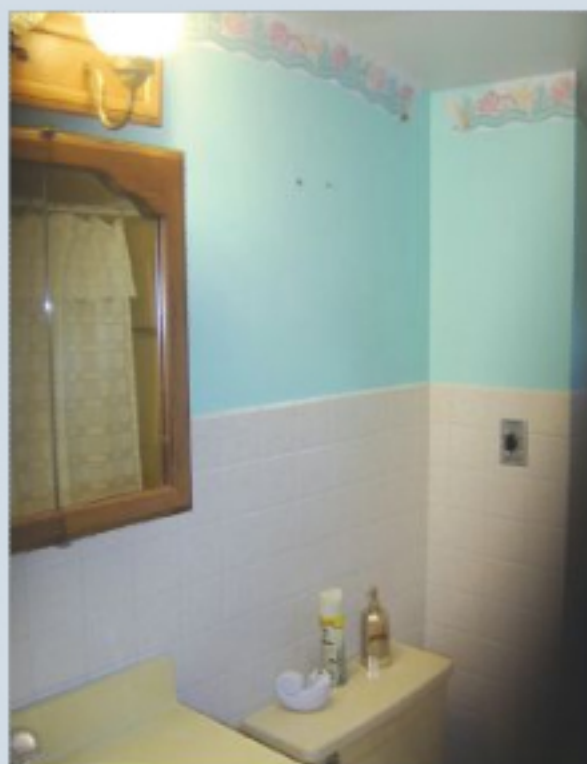


Q: How do you determine what colors and designs are right for a space?

A: "I try to work with my clients on their tastes. I look at lighting and find out whether they want to make the room cozier or more open. I always try to choose colors that will be warm when you walk into the room. Warm colors are usually yellows with orange undertones, reds and chocolate browns. Even neutral colors can warm up a room if they have the right undertones. Orange undertones bring warmth, while green undertones have a cool tint. Right now, I'm doing a lot of reddish browns, sage greens, ocean blues and buttery yellows. Accent walls are big right now, too. People aren't just painting a room one color."

Q: What are some of the most common requests or complaints you hear about "before" rooms?

A: "The use of space. A lot of people need help redesigning because there's too much clutter. We basically take everything out and rework the space. People also sometimes want things that aren't realistic, like putting granite in a kitchen where it doesn't belong or getting all new cabinets — until they see how expensive they are."



COURTESY OF MICHELLE PARENTEAU *Before Michelle Lee Designs revamped this bathroom, it was dated and in need of rehab. Parenteau gave this bathroom a complete overhaul with items such as new fixtures.*

Q. What certifications or qualifications should an interior designer or decorator have?

A. "There's no actual certification required. It just depends on the job. A lot of jobs don't require certification from the American Society of Interior Designers. I'm not a member, but I am a member of the Cranston Chamber of Commerce. When you're in the design business in Rhode Island, you don't have to be licensed or bonded.

"When hiring an interior designer, I'd look at their portfolio and ask for references. I also suggest that customers come up with a budget. People need to be realistic with prices and think about how much it costs to refurnish a house. It also helps to have ideas for your own because that helps an interior decorator know what your style is." ❧

