

# ASPIRE DESIGN AND HOME



**INSIDE EXQUISITE NEW JERSEY ESTATES:**  
Historic Presidential Carriage House in Princeton, Custom Contemporary in Short Hills, Luxury Townhomes & Flats in Downtown Princeton, Art Deco Restoration in Jersey City, Modern in Princeton, Luxury Condominium Residences in Downtown Westfield

**ALSO:** Modern Architect Michael Ryan is Our Dinner Guest, Extending Summer with Landscape and Pool Experts, Atlantic City Flexes Their Artistic Muscles, Interior Designer Barbara Horowitz is Listening, A Visit to HiHo Home Market & Antique Center in the Hudson Valley, Chatting with Tamke Tree Experts and Coldwell Banker/Rumson Property Specialist Sarah Pomphrey

SUMMER  
2013  
ASPIREMETRO.COM

REAL DESIGN



## Welcome

Text by Anne Marie Soto

The sheltered, open-air front porch with a rocking chair and some cushy wicker furniture is still a welcoming attribute for almost any home. Realtors often refer to them as “lemonade porches” because they conjure up thoughts of lazy summer afternoons where friends can congregate. They are common in older neighborhoods and in newer areas where fostering a sense of community is key.

But while we still harbor the myth of the front porch as a relaxing spot where we can wave at neighbors, the truth is that many front porches are increasingly becoming private spaces to welcome guests and offer family and friends a place to sit back and relax. And with the advent of fabrics so beautiful they belie the fact that they are impervious to a variety of weather conditions, living-room-worthy indoor/outdoor carpets, and shades that filter the sun’s harmful rays, the front porch can serve as an informal antechamber to the home.

For those who prefer to keep their front porch unenclosed, landscaping, awnings and “windowless”

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window treatments, including shades and curtains, can do the trick. Hanging plants and window boxes also help screen out the world.

But with the mosquito population on the rise, screened-in porches are becoming more popular here in New Jersey. Climate changes may also account for this trend. While summers seem to be hotter and more intense, winters seem to come later and leave earlier, extending possible porch time to three seasons. By adding windows and a heat source, a porch becomes an almost-year-round space. Diane Durocher, ASID did that for a client's charming fieldstone porch. In her words, "we dressed it" by picking up the earth tones inside the house and bringing them to the porch. The concrete floor was painted in a deep taupe and softened with two jute-like area rugs. Even though the space is very protected, she chose Sunbrella fabrics for the chair cushions. "It's important to take every precaution," she says. "These fabrics are not only beautiful but they are durable and mildew-resistant." The porch has windows and a wood burning stove so it is cozy for most of the year.

In our discussion with several interior designers about the world of porches, the conversation quickly veered from front porch to back porch – where lots of today's design action is taking place. Sarah Leedy Dooley, Associate ASID suggests that, while a front porch should relate to the interior of a home, a back porch can introduce you to a another world. But she cautions people to think about both practicality and aesthetics. Her favorite flooring choice is quartzite – a non-porous, scratch-resistant stone material that comes in a variety of colors and patterns. It can be integrated into fire features or repeated around a pond or pool to harmonize the backyard environment. She also recommends caution about what is inside pillows and cushions. "All-weather fabrics are great," she says, "but they won't repel water in a thunderstorm." She makes sure that the insides of her outdoor pillows and cushions are Dacron-wrapped, which helps wick away moisture.

When Robin Schultz, Allied ASID created a porch for her country home, it was originally a screened-in porch

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sited to enjoy the garden views. After a few seasons of enjoyment, she decided she wanted to extend its use-life. Her solution was to add custom glass windows that are easy to install on the inside of the screens. Their frames have a thin molding around the outer edges and cross beams that echo the screens' braces. As a result, they fit unobtrusively over the screens, leaving the look of the porch unchanged. The windows go up in the fall and come down when summer appears. Two powerful ceramic heaters add warmth when the temperature drops. Even though her porch is well sheltered, she chose metal wicker for the furniture. "No matter what you do, when there is a driving rain, moisture gets in around the perimeter and screens only protect so much," she explains.

Diane Boyer, ASID, sees another trend here in New Jersey: second floor porches, particularly off the master bedroom. "It's a private place to have coffee in the morning, a glass of wine at night," she says, "and a place to enjoy the backyard view." These are all true porches, not balconies, with enough square footage to accommodate amenities like hot tubs and a late night reading area. "In many larger homes," she continues, "all the bedrooms come equipped with porches."

So whether you are going for the charm of a front porch, the seclusion of a backyard porch, or the luxury of a second floor porch, the result is the same – a place to extend your outdoor life while keeping the elements at bay. ■

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) sponsors a directory for consumers interested in obtaining the services of a qualified professional interior designer. For residential and commercial listings, visit the ASID New Jersey Chapter's designer directory at [www.asidnj.org/find-a-designer](http://www.asidnj.org/find-a-designer)

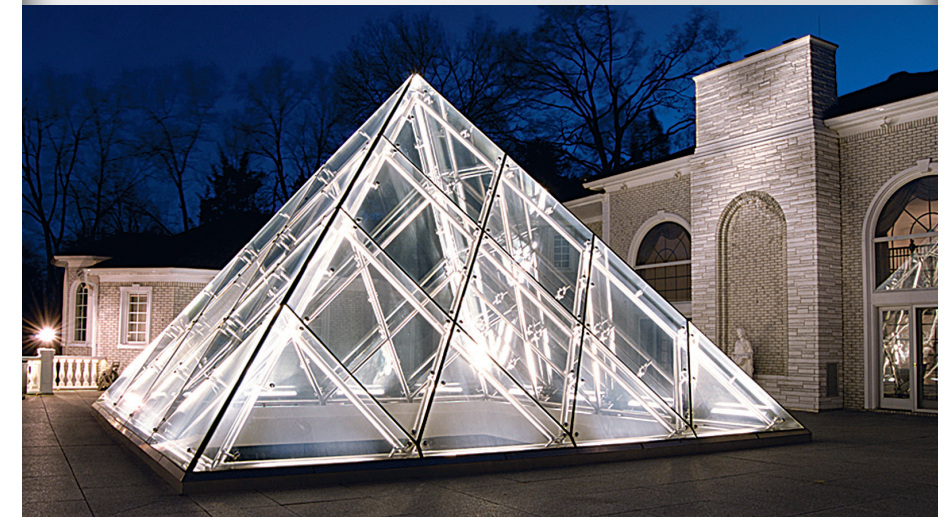
## RESOURCES:

Diane Boyer, ASID, *Diane Boyer Interiors*, Verona, NJ, (973) 857-5900, [www.dianeboyerinteriors.com](http://www.dianeboyerinteriors.com) • Diane Durocher, ASID, *Diane Durocher Interiors, Inc.*, Ramsey, NJ, (201) 825-3832, [www.dianedurocherinteriors.com](http://www.dianedurocherinteriors.com) • Sarah Leedy Dooley, Associate ASID, *Leedy Interiors*, Tinton Falls, NJ, (732) 609-3074, [www.leedyinteriors.com](http://www.leedyinteriors.com) • Robin Schultz, Allied ASID, *Robin Schultz Interiors*, Englewood, NJ, (201) 567-9170, [www.robinschultzinteriordesign.com](http://www.robinschultzinteriordesign.com)

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