AT-HOME WORKSPACES

with Interior Designers HOLLY VOLPE & YELENA GERTS

By Jennifer DeCillis

The BELLA Sophisticated Spaces pages are typically adorned with luxury apartment buildings, lavish homes, and grandiose hotels around the country. However, in the wake of COVID-19, we found it only fitting to recognize the true spaces in which the world has been spending its time–the home.

In some cases, makeshift, and in others, picturesque dwellings, the home office has become the most sought after for design tips and renovation tricks. So, how can you create a Sophisticated Space in the comfort of your own home?

Interior design experts, Yelena Gerts and Holly Volpe, are no strangers to adorning a home office. BELLA spoke with each of the designers to get their unique and very different opinions on what goes into designing a space for both creativity and productivity. Both Yelena and Holly design spaces that are equal parts comfortable and stylish, while exhibiting contrast and distinction between their individual styles, palettes, and techniques.

YELENA GERTS

is the owner and principal designer of House of Style & Design, as well as the recipient of the 2017 Vision Competition Designer of the Year Award. With an extensive background in the luxury retail market, she is known for cutting-edge style and elegant designs. Yelena's talented eye for color and unique details sets her apart with her clients and helps them achieve their dream homes.

As a sought-after interior designer and successful business owner, what got you started in interior design?
After spending 15 years in luxury cosmetic industry, I decided it was time for me to do something I really loved and go after my dreams to be a designer. I always wanted to be one, I just didn't know which kind. I tried fashion design, flower design, event design, products design, and a bit later realized I truly wanted to be a lifestyle interior designer, where I could incorporate all those elements into one to create beautiful, comfortable, stylish, luxurious, and functional spaces for my clients.

With the recent transition to working from home offices, have you seen an uptick in design inquiries on how to create, decorate, or renovate at-home workspaces?
Yes, of course, we have all seen a shift in our lifestyle and especially in the way we live and work. Comfort and function will be a leading factor in every space. Multifunctional rooms will be the key to every design. I have designed many spaces as such and received many messages during the quarantine how much my clients appreciate and enjoy them during this difficult isolation. My recommendation is to try to make each room to have a dual function.

What are a few of your favorite design tricks or furnishings for creating an ideal home workspace?
I like to use a picture frame for a TV on the wall. They look like beautiful artwork, and they can be used as a computer screen and TV at the same time. [I also recommend] built-in units that are multifunctional—from built-in refrigerators to invisible television lifts if you are limited in wall space...[also,] Murphy beds and that whole concept of resource furniture.

Is there a trend you have noticed when styling home offices?
I love warmer tones for home offices, from dark hues to warm beige undertones. I love to incorporate items of personal use, such as favorite books, gifts, photos, art, awards, and blueprints, while also mixing textures and materials, paints with wallpapers, etc.

Could you give any tips or advice on how to easily or cost-effectively transform a home office with just a few modifications?
If you have an extra room in your home and you're not sure what to do with it, make it a "DOFFICE"— den/office/guest room/playroom. Place a pullout sofa and a desk in the guest room. Add multiple small storage ottomans for toys that can be moved easily if you need to work in front of the television. It'll be an office by day, guest room by choice, movie theatre by night, playroom by necessity.

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