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MAY 2011 | BY TATE GUNNERSON | COMMENTS (0)

A Multi-Faceted Home

TAGS: [Rebekah Zaveloff](#), [interior design](#), [North Shore Chicago real estate](#), [KitchenLab](#), [Design in a Bag](#), [June 2011 magazine](#)

In 2006, a Highland Park family hired Rebekah Zaveloff, an interior designer and co-founder of KitchenLab and Design In a Bag, to design a plan to expand and modernize the small, dark and badly dated kitchen tucked into the back of their nineteenth century Victorian-style Foursquare.

But Zaveloff's eclectic elegance and penchant for incorporating one-of-a-kind vintage pieces so impressed the family that soon enough, they hired her to decorate the entire house. Zaveloff's challenge was to design a space that would reflect the family's whimsical spirit while still honoring the home's gracious floor plan, thick oak moldings and original brass



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MIB: How did your client want the home to look and feel?

RZ: When we discussed the rest of the house, she said that she didn't want it to look like it had been done by a decorator. Sometimes decorated homes can look a little cold, a little too perfect.

MIB: How do you avoid that?

RZ: The two most important things are layering and texture. If it's layered, it has more depth and interest, so you're not bored with it. Creating a dialogue between two objects is what it's all about. Also, resist the temptation to make everything symmetrical. The human brain wants to create pattern. If you want your house to look a little more eclectic, you have to resist perfect symmetry.

MIB: One of my favorite things about the space are the 1970s patterns, especially the rugs in the dining and living rooms.

RZ: The pattern on the rug and on the sofa from Cisco Brothers is so delicate and interesting. It modernizes the Art Nouveau/Victorian pattern. Even ornate patterns interpreted with contemporary colors take on a fresh, modern feel.

MIB: There are so many interesting vintage pieces—drums used as coffee tables, a set of glove molds, classic Bertoia chairs. Where did you find everything?

RZ: I didn't even know that her husband was a drummer, but she made a beeline for that table. If you love something and you respond emotionally to it, buy it. You'll find a home for it as long as you're thoughtful and consistent about the stuff you're buying. It kills creativity to constantly worry about where things are going to go. Layering, layering, layering. It should unfold and envelop.

MIB: Did the two of you ever disagree about a particular piece?

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Our focus is on our client...
the rest just follows.

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MIB: Did the two of you ever disagree about a particular piece?

RZ: She went through a chain phase. She wanted to tie back her drapes with chains because she saw it on some blog, and as much as I appreciated her quirky, whimsical desires, the house has a sophisticated elegance that we had to respect.

MIB: When did you begin decorating with vintage objects?

RZ: When I was young and poor, I wanted a great looking place, so I started shopping at thrift stores. I don't mind mixing really fancy designer pieces with cheap vintage pieces and Ikea barstools. I learned a little rebellion.

MIB: Any final words?

RZ: Our spaces should make us happy first and foremost. It makes us happiest when we're comfortable there, our friends and family feels comfortable there and it reflects us. It's about communicating honestly through our homes.

Rebekah Zaveloff

KitchenLab and Design In a Bag

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