



She's a Brick...House

I have a small collection of **art glass**, mostly in dark colors, displayed on the fireplace mantel. Problem is, they don't stand out against the redbrick chimney. Plus, I'm thinking of adding shelves over the fireplace but am not sure which types work best with brick. Any advice? Thanks so much.—*Randy Jabbour, Brooklyn, New York*

A) Since the fireplace is a visual focal point with great texture, it's a natural place to display a collection. But the surface needs some contrast to stand out, says Christine Churchill, author of *The Collector's Eye: Decorating with the Objects You Love* (HarperResource, 2002). Churchill suggests painting your fireplace a warm neutral color like ivory, shown above, to offset the green and blue hues of the art glass. Maximize your space with ledge-style shelves, available in most home stores. In contrast with standard bookshelves, ledge shelves appear to float when painted the same color as the wall. The shelves may require a bracket. Use a *continued on page 42*

where can i find...

the tufted divan featured in "Blue Heaven" (June 2003)?
I absolutely love it! Thanks.—*Vanessa Smith, Denver, Colorado*

A) To add a touch of whimsy to her master bedroom suite, designer Wendy Valliere purchased the stately Henredon Button chaise lounge (with cigar drawer), \$6,380, at Beacon Hill Showrooms, which is part of the Robert Allen Group (800-333-3777, robertallen.design.com). It's upholstered in Scalamandré blue leopard velvet. Robert Allen is a to-the-trade-only showroom, and this means you must visit the showroom with a designer. However, some showrooms have a designer-on-call who might help.



Ask the pros...

Sheila Bridges

is a New York City-based interior designer, host of Fine Living Network's *Designer Living*, author of *Furnishing Forward*, and a regular contributor on NBC's *Today Show*

Q) I have champagne tastes but a beer budget and want to make my living space look chic and upscale, without breaking the bank. I've moved beyond the postcollege years into the semisuccessful 30s and need to upgrade a few items in my home to prove it. Can you help? Thanks.—*Kaia Leetch, Tempe, Arizona*

A) Having a big budget isn't always better than having a small one, if you don't spend your money on practical furnishings. Here are a few inexpensive and quick ways to dramatically change the look and feel of your home: First, use paint to transform your living space into something that's more upscale. Try chocolate brown for the living room (paired with pink, it can look Godiva-rich). For the bedroom, consider going bold with red or purple. Paint molding white for a crisp look. Give old or worn furniture a lift by using simple slipcovers, an inexpensive and easy solution for an instant change. Sisal and sea grass are classy floor coverings that are reasonably priced, and scented candles and large toss pillows make your rooms feel more like home. Don't forget fresh flowers to lift your spirits!



PHOTOGRAPHS: KEITH SCOTT, MORTON (ART GLASS), COURTESY OF FINE LIVING NETWORK (SHEILA BRIDGES), JEFFREY ALLEN (CHAIR)