

# Seeing the same old house in a new light

Story by Karen Lane

Photos by Tracy Adams



**H**ome is our haven, an escape from the outside world. It is where we bare our souls, invite our friends and unwind when the day is done. And it is surely the place where we should feel most relaxed.

More than ever, we want our abodes to be that safe haven from the recent storm of economic decline. In truth, staying home is more of an economic necessity than a choice these days, but spending more time at home can also draw our attention to the need for updating and redecorating. How to do that when money is tight? Consider a redesign project.

Katelyn Rikansrud, owner of Room Remedies, a St. Simons Island-based redesign company, says it isn't necessary to spend thousands of dollars remodeling a home when it can be

“reinvented” using existing furniture and accessories.

“It's high-end design using the client's accessories. There's so much you can do with small accessories,” she says, “like using souvenirs from the places you've traveled. I also love to work with natural things – sea shells, twigs, rocks, plants and anything that's real, living.”

Rikansrud's interest in redesign developed as a result of working alongside an interior decorator in Minneapolis. She saw clients paying huge sums of money to completely redecorate spaces that could have easily been rearranged for function and flow without costing a penny in new purchases. Often, too, the redo was more reflective of the decorator's tastes than of the homeowner's.

For that reason, Rikansrud makes it her first priority to get to know the client and how they use the space she's working in before beginning any redesign project.

“I have clients ask me, ‘What do you think?’ about a room,” she says. “I tell them that it's not about me. I don't come home to this every day. You have to be excited about going home. The elements have to be a reflection of who you are.”

Once she is familiar with the client's tastes, Rikansrud begins using her skills to rearrange furniture and accessories to create focal points and a comfortable flow to the space. Together, she works with the client to discuss small, inexpensive improvements that make a huge impact on the room's appearance, such as adding lighting and color with paint, pillows or area rugs.