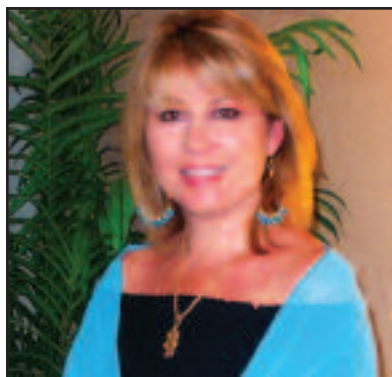


# Christina E. Birtcher

Interior re\*DESIGN



“**T**HE HEART OF the islands, the colors of the sea and sand, the hue and variety of the plant life, the ever-changing color of our sky—all of these are such an inspiration to me,” says interior designer Christina Birtcher. “You just can’t help being energized by this environment.”

This Southern California native has lived and worked in Hawai’i for almost 11 years. She has been creating design for 15 years and places a high value on personal interaction with her clients, having studied in Paris, New York and greater Los Angeles, plus working on projects as varied as restaurants and corporate offices to luxury condominiums and custom estates. “A designer’s role is to enhance the synergy of beauty and function,” she says. “My clients often know what they want, but not necessarily how to bring it all together.”

To truly personalize her design services, Birtcher limits her work schedule to three or four projects at a time. “The design

process is entirely collaborative,” she explains. “I like to be an observer, studying my clients’ lifestyles so that I can reflect the details that are so important in bringing unique personality into their homes.”

Birtcher compares her design approach to that of an actor preparing for a major film role: “It requires all my senses, especially my ears, to immerse myself in my clients’ experiences, tastes and style.”

As a result, clients frequently request that she develop her own original

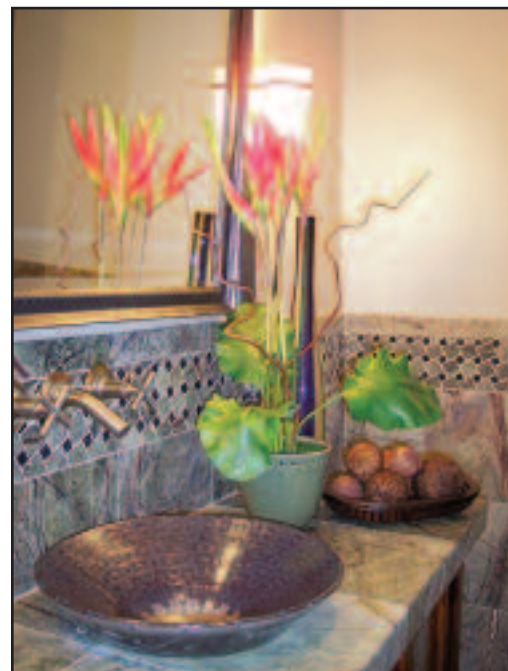
concepts. “It is a great compliment to have a client ask to be ‘surprised’ with a vision,” she smiles. “What a wonderful vote of confidence. That means I get to be a bit bolder in the expression of my clients’ tastes, which has always been a considerable success. I love it.”

Birtcher believes that home design television programs create a challenge for professional designers. “There is almost an over-accessibility of sources,” she says. “While certain home design programs can be enlightening, they may frequently promote false confidence that a potential client will be able to transfer his or her true vision into a complete design plan.”

Some of Birtcher’s preferred vendors include Azadi Fine Rugs, Drexel Heritage, and Brown & Jordan. When selecting fabrics, she appreciates the variety in patterns and colorways of Robert Allen, the rich textures and colors of Cowtan and Tout and Kravet for their versatility and price point.

Among her current projects is a luxury private estate in west Hawai’i. The residence capitalizes on Birtcher’s skill at blending what she refers to as “Island Elegant,” the confluence of Hawaiian and British Colonial design elements that integrate the natural fibers, woven materials and exotic hardwoods inherent to life in the tropics.

“Interior design is an art form,” Birtcher concludes. “Certain elements can be taught, but at its heart, it is a largely intuitive skill that the best designers possess innately. I truly take pleasure in bringing joy to my clients through the exercise of my best intuitive, creative and business skills.”



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