

Decorating Trends

Super-Sized Homes Present Extra Decorating Challenges And Options

(NAPSA)—More is definitely more when it comes to size preferences for the American home. Even disregarding the megahouses and McMansions of business moguls—where dimensions frequently top the 25,000-square-foot mark—home measurements have increased by 50 percent over the last 30 years.

In the year 2000, the average U.S. home boasted 2,265 square feet of living space, compared to a 1,500-square-foot average in 1970, according to the National Association of Home Builders.

The trend toward larger abodes is expected to continue in the next 10 years, industry leaders predict. They project an emphasis on high-tech amenities and specialty rooms like home theaters and family computer centers, as well as on large-scale design elements such as high ceilings and king-sized rooms.

“Americans have always valued wide open spaces, so it’s no surprise that commodious homes are increasingly popular,” notes Mike Short, design director for Sauder Woodworking. “They provide families with ample room for varied hobbies, generous space for home-based businesses and gracious backdrops for entertaining.”

Today’s super-sized homes present their own decorating challenges, however. What furnishings pack the most punch in a mega-scaled interior? And how can a family create warmth and intimacy in these expansive environments?

The wide variety of well-proportioned, stylish furnishings available today provides a host of solutions to these modern dilemmas. Short and his staff suggest several tips for making the most of spacious surroundings.

- Select furnishings with a sense of heft and weight. Sauder’s Timber Inn collection, for exam-



Sauder’s Cottage Home Collection makes the most of a super-sized room by creating a setting within a setting.

ple, can hold its own in the largest of rooms, thanks to generous proportions and commanding details such as raised panel doors and a robust oak finish with open-end grain. Sturdy bookcases, hard-working entertainment centers and roomy computer desks add substance and solidity without bulkiness.

- Look for generously sized furnishings that won’t be dwarfed by the room’s dimensions. A large-scale home entertainment wall unit in Sauder’s bold, contemporary Sierra collection, for instance, can expand to hold today’s popular 36 to 50½-inch large screen TVs, instantly creating a king-sized home theater.

- Choose accessories that have scale and substance. For example, hand-woven rugs and other bold textiles make ideal wall hangings because their rich textures and complex patterns can make a dra-

matic statement in a large setting.

- Create settings within settings, the designer advises. In one area of a large room, for instance, an easy chair plus bookcases can produce an intimate reading nook. In another section of the same room, a computer desk, hutch and entertainment center from Sauder’s rustic Cottage Home collection can create a handsome high-tech oasis for work and leisure alike.

- Put color and lighting to work. Neutral colors emphasize a room’s open feeling while warmer colors can delineate specialized areas. Track lighting, spotlights and individual lamps can subtly define special domains, from hobby center to at-home business nook.

Today’s grand mega-homes need not be intimidating. With a thoughtful decorating plan, these spacious residences can fulfill their abundant people-pleasing potential.