



Natural Beauty

by Jill Vegas
Jill Vegas LLC

"Designers can create normalcy out of chaos; they can clearly communicate ideas through the organizing and manipulating of words and pictures." – Jeffery Veen

"If you think it's expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur." – Red Adair

Jeffery Veen is a leading Internet designer, but what he has to say is as relevant to home staging as what Red Adair, the renowned international oil-well firefighter, had to say about hiring a pro.

Design can turn an ordinary space into a hot sales item, desired by people of many tastes, and hiring a professional can be a good idea in the city's hot real estate market. Art, flowers, and plants are design elements that we use religiously at Jill Vegas LLC to spruce up any space, beautiful or humdrum.

Recently, I worked with Northstar Property Group and broker Gisela Vergara at Douglas Elliman to stage a condo for sale at the NoHo loft building at 344 Bowery. The building is located in a newly burgeoning area. With 344 Bowery's debut, the developers capitalized on the history of their beautiful old manufacturing plant, circa 1892. It's said that Andy Warhol used the building at one point for storage space.

The condo we staged ended up selling for more than asking price, and three of the five units were sold within a week. The spaces were beautiful to begin with--wide, open, modern, clean, elegant. We added to the allure by hanging original artwork by Aaron Anderson. Throughout the property we implemented natural elements such as a tree branch suspended across a wall, hanging above the bed, which added a woodsy, Western effect that we loved. I also placed planters and vases in the bedroom, living room, and kitchen to add a fresh living element to the rooms. You too can stage your apartment when it's for sale by using art, flowers and plants. Here are some tips to help you along the way:

- * Remember that in home design less is more. Clean out the clutter and store it away if necessary while you are trying to sell your home. Then dress up countertops, tabletops and floors with big, bold vases and clean, fresh flowers, or even squiggly sticks bursting out of tall vases.
- * Head over to Brooklyn and check out some galleries to get ideas for artwork. A single painting or sculpture against a wall can add an incredible amount of charm.
- * When hanging artwork, try to center it so that the middle

of the piece of work is at eye-level. You can place pictures along the floor before hanging them to determine the best placement.

- * It's summer, so take advantage of the fresh flowers. There is nothing like scented blooms to cheer up a room. Pick colors that accentuate your furniture. White is always a safe bet.
- * You can use lemons or limes, as we do, at the bottom of large vases to hold down the flowers and add an extra effect.

If you're doing this on your own, remember to trust yourself. Authentic style is important. Go for artwork and flowers that you like. If you are enthusiastic about what you have to offer, that'll catch on to the buyer.



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