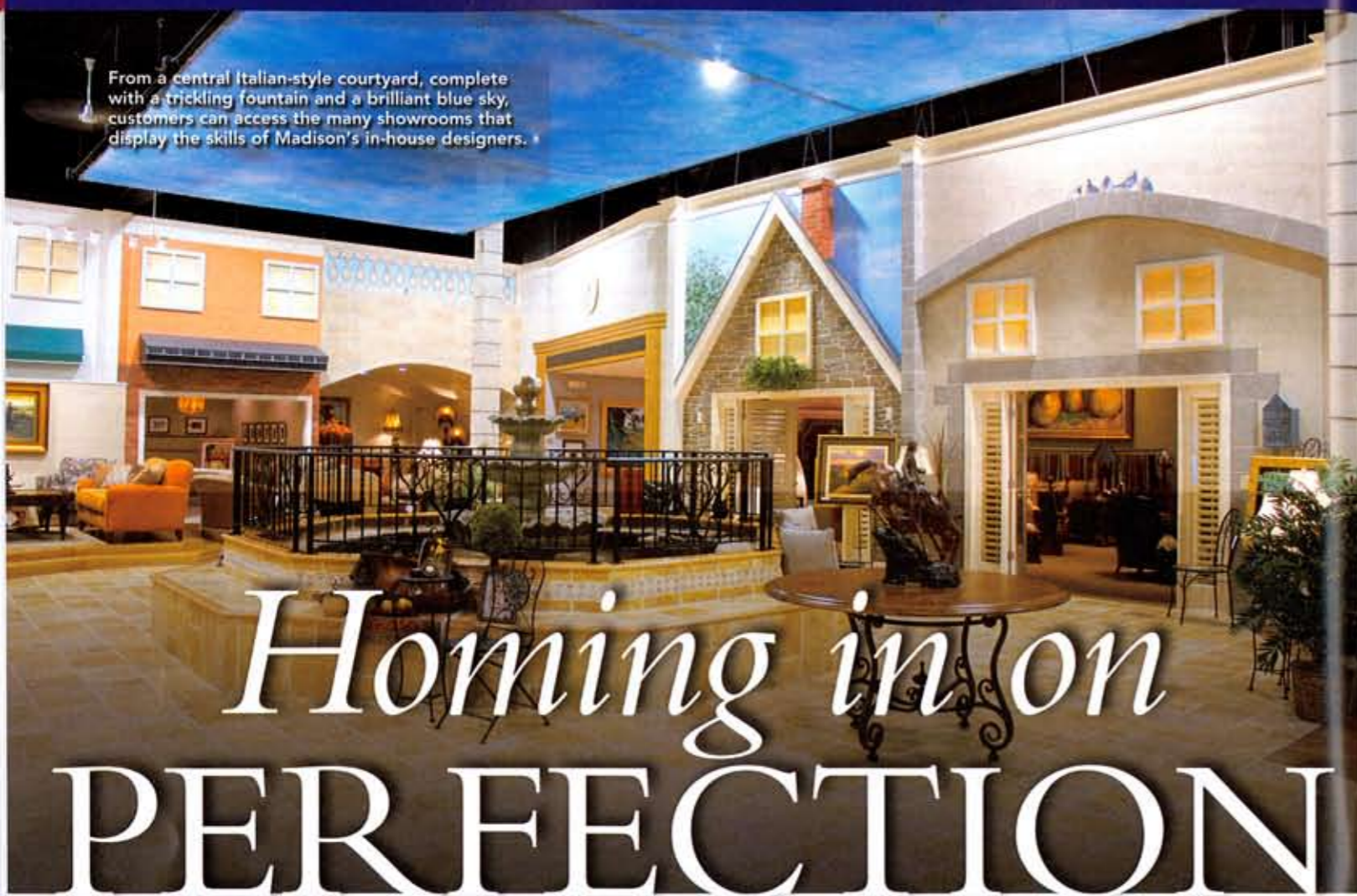


From a central Italian-style courtyard, complete with a trickling fountain and a brilliant blue sky, customers can access the many showrooms that display the skills of Madison's in-house designers.



Homing in on PERFECTION

Madison Interiors Offers One-Stop Decorating, From Design to Finishing Touch

By Traci Mitchell Griggs, Photos by Steve Buchanan

Annapolis, Baltimore and Metro D.C. homeowners can breathe a sigh of collective relief. Madison Interiors, a new home fashion and décor business that opened in August, is a one-stop-shopping experience offering customers everything from furniture and accessories to sources for eco-friendly home design and remodeling products. With hundreds of suppliers and manufacturers available, consumers no longer need to schlep from store to store in search of that perfect leather sofa, table lamp, bamboo flooring or wall color. And whether you are just refreshing the paint color in your great room or furnishing a brand new dream home, the team at Madison has



Walls are not overlooked at Madison; exquisite, hard-to-find artwork available for purchase graces the showroom.

pledged to offer customers great products, value, service and most importantly—convenience. “Our store is easily accessed from routes 95, 97 and 295 and there’s plenty of parking. But the major convenience to customers is that we’re literally a full service shop for any home purchase, all under one roof,” says Hamed Alaghebandian, the store’s owner. “We offer a total home solution. One of my primary objectives in opening Madison Interiors was to offer customer convenience combined with a hand-picked selection of some of the finest products in home furnishings and design. In today’s busy world, people don’t have time to browse and shop. Although our store is

large [15,000 square feet], we’ve set it up as series of fully decorated and interactive rooms where customers can preview our products.”

From Frames to Furniture

Featuring elegantly appointed and fully-functional vignettes that display artwork, lighting, floor coverings and furniture, window treatments and accessories, each display is designed to inspire the imagination, and the in-house design team is available to assist customers with purchase decisions either in the showroom or during in-home consultations. “If a room is appealing to the customer, he or she can buy everything on display. Or if they see an item they like and want a different fabric or color, we offer complete customization services.” The showroom’s focal point is an Italian courtyard created through the artistry of faux painting. Deborah Watson and Darren Salta of Walls of Wonder incorporated intricate artistic presentations to offer a backdrop to each of the vignettes.

The store also welcomes professionals in the design-build trades. “We carry manufacturers’ lines that designers may not have access to except at retail price points, and we’ll offer them at trade pricing,” says Alaghebandian.

Furniture and accessory lines found at Madison are available in a range of prices but are concentrated on average to higher price points. Best selling furniture lines include Vanguard, Rowe, and Fairfield (all U.S.-made) and GUS Modern from Canada. “Our accessory lines—picture frames, candle holders, bowls and vases—have proved to be big sellers. In this economic climate, we try to focus our customers on the value and the services we provide,” says Alaghebandian.

Claire Louder, Executive Director of the West Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce says, “Madison Interiors offers a range of products and services which are not found



Madison takes care of outdoor rooms as well with its selection of outdoor furniture.

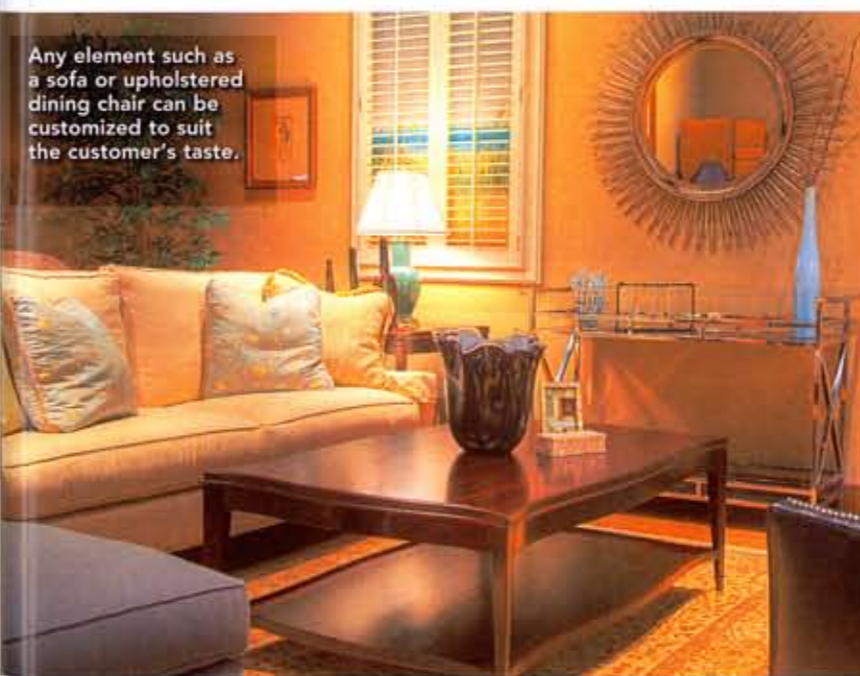
in big box retailers. They offer the convenience of one-stop shopping, and provide excellent customer service.”

If customers do not see exactly what they are looking for on the showroom floor, the store’s extensive design resource center includes a library of fabric, wallpaper and furniture sample books. Alaghebandian points out that the Ralph Lauren Gallery is an exclusive in the region. Other top fabric lines represented here include Kravet, Thibault, Duralee, Highland Court and Barclay Butera.

Building Green

Whether customers are building a new home or remodeling their current residence, the process represents an opportunity to utilize green building products. “One of our missions at Madison is to educate customers about the importance of going green. We carry many green certified, sustainable and eco-friendly products,” says Alaghebandian. That list includes eco-friendly, LEED® certified roofing and siding products and live roof technology. For the kitchen, customers can choose from a large selection of energy efficient appliances from Miele, a top European manufacturer, and Breathe Easy® Cabinetry, custom cabinetry made in the U.S. from solid woods that are harvested responsibly and certified formaldehyde-free. This and other lines included in Madison’s selection of brands meets the requirements for the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED® credits and LEED® certification. “Later this year,

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Any element such as a sofa or upholstered dining chair can be customized to suit the customer’s taste.

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we'll be incorporating the certification check list, where customers can access the ranking of select products in the store to determine their impact on the environment as determined by the U.S. Green Building Council," says Alaghebandian.

Finding the Perfect Paint

One of the most cost effective ways to change the look of a room is a fresh coat of paint. And in a move that is in line with Alaghebandian's business objective of delivering both convenience and service, Madison Interiors features a Benjamin Moore Paint "Signature Store."

"This is the best retail paint store environment that I have seen in my 35 years in the business," says Andy Small, Madison's paint manager. Introduced six years ago, the Signature Store concept helps its retailers to create a professional and dedicated spot inside a complementary retail environment to preview Benjamin Moore product lines. In addition to offering a comfortable lounge area complete with work tables where customers can pull large 18" x 18" sample squares from the company's *Preview*, *Classic* and *Affinity* paint collections, trained staff can assist in color and design choices and answer questions about the different lines. "Until recently, the only option a customer had for buying paint was standing in front of a paint chip wall under fluorescent lighting at the local hardware store—clearly not the best way to select paints for your home," says Small. "We offer 2-ounce samples of paint that customers can purchase to take home and try out on their walls. In addition to color consulting, we also offer paint analysis. This is a great service for customers who may be moving into older homes and have questions about the best methods to address painting existing surfaces," says Small.

Color Trends

What's up in color for 2009? According to Small and Alaghebandian, current paint trends are reflected in a series of color palettes proposed by Benjamin Moore that are showcased in *Colors for Your Home*, a free, helpful booklet available to Madison customers. While 18 colors are fore-



The Benjamin Moore Signature Store inside Madison Interiors offers a unique and highly useful setting for choosing paint finishes and colors.



Madison carries a large selection of flooring—from bamboo that comes in over 30 colors to tile in all shapes and textures.

casted, Benjamin Moore has its eye on three predicted to be exceedingly popular. Among them is Blue Nose, a chic blue with a small measure of gray; Sea Haze, a gray tone with a tinge of brown; and Vellum, a subdued yellow, bordering on the color of wheat. "Colors for Your Home is filled with timely ideas and inspiration plus suggestions for decorative painting techniques," says Small. He also adds that customers should look for upcoming seminars on paint trends to be held at the store.

The company's new Web site, going live this month, will offer a schedule of in-store events. These will include live food demos by area chefs such as Cesare Lanfranco, of Washington D.C.'s Spezie restaurant. Local cookbook authors will also be featured, in addition to faux painting programs by Walls of Wonder. Decorating seminars highlighting the latest in home design tips are also planned. ~

Madison Interiors is located just off Route 32 at 8251 Telegraph Rd. in Odenton. For more information about services, products, and events, visit www.madint.com or call 410.672.1111. The showroom is open Monday through Saturday from 10-6.

"I recently purchased a dining set for my home at Madison Interiors. The customer service was the best and there was a large selection within my price range."

— C. Burch, Hanover, MD.