



Two to One

BOLD STROKES UNIFY A FT. WORTH DUPLEX

by Karen Muncy
photography by Bill Stites

Jane Bordeaux curls cat-like into an armchair and thoughtfully surveys the living room of her Ft. Worth home. "I knew it could be done," she declares with a note of satisfaction. Even though she had been inside the duplex only once before buying it — "I never even looked at it before we started work" — her real-estate instincts (both she and husband Dick are in the business) told her it could be remodeled into the perfect city retreat.

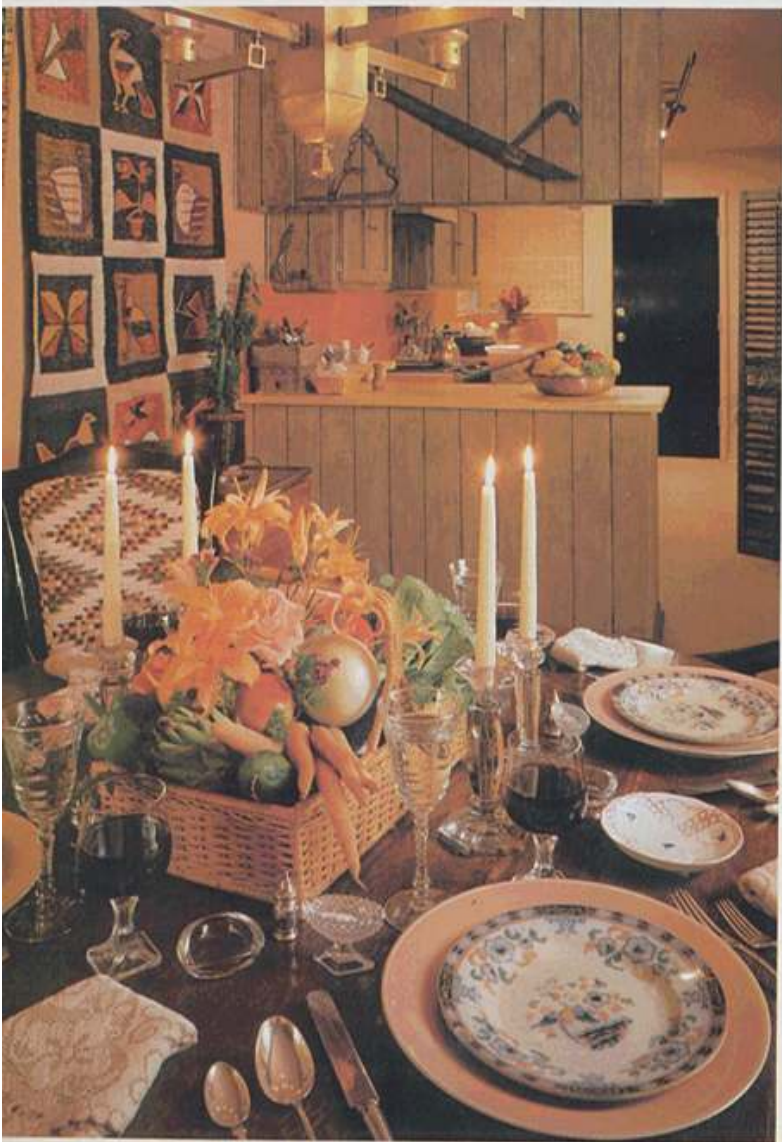
In addition to instinct, the Bordeauxs had another plus in their column: interior designer Joe Minton, ASID, of Ft. Worth's Minton-Corley, is a close friend. "Jane and I have been friends since childhood," he explains, "so she trusted my judgment and taste. I really didn't give her any choices," he adds with a grin. "I just said, 'This will

Left: In the living room, a white modular sofa and glass-and-chrome coffeetable set off the antique kilim rug, wooden carousel horse and pie safe used for storing and displaying collectibles. The oil painting over the sideboard is a \$2 garage sale find.

Below: The white sofa that Jane Bordeaux describes as "indestructible" provides the perfect setting for one-of-a-kind Italian batik pillows, Indian cotton wall-hangings were gathered along thick wooden dowels to drape the windows. A colorful Dali lithograph and touches of flowers and green plants add to the warm, slightly exotic atmosphere.

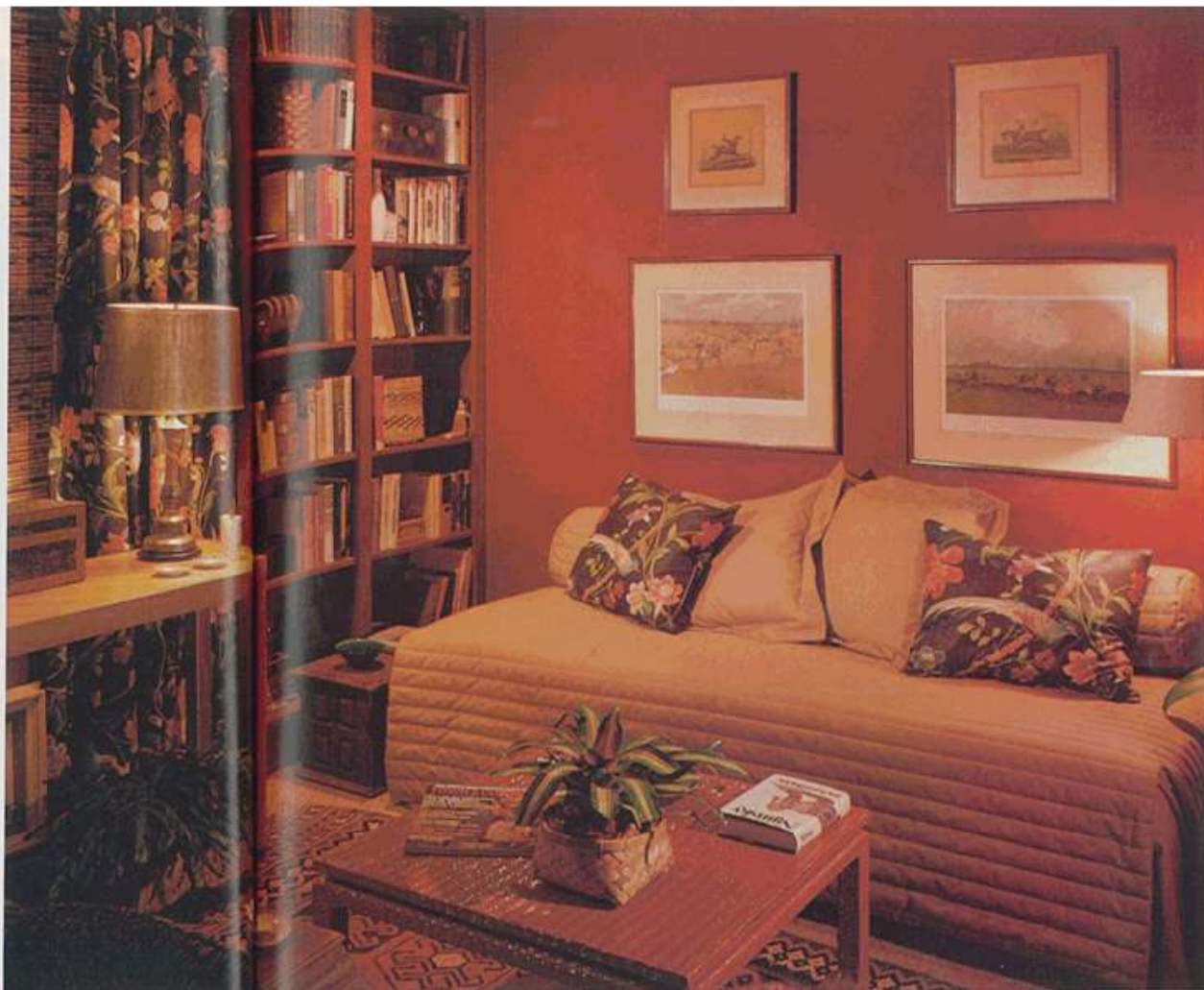


Even though she had been inside the duplex only once before buying it, Jane Bordeaux's real-estate instincts told her it could be remodeled into the perfect city retreat.



Above, right: Cinnabar red creates a warm, cozy atmosphere in the library/guest room, which features floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and relaxed, low-level lighting.

Left: The elegance of lace, crystal and fine china is muted by the warm, country-look accents of the dining area and kitchen. The woven wall-hanging is from South America, the farm tools hanging on the cabinets from Versailles. Since Jane Bordeaux "didn't want to be off by myself" while cooking, the kitchen remains open with a pine-topped serving counter providing visual separation. A folding shutter screen camouflages the refrigerator.



Two (continued)

be this, that will be that, etc."

Their friendship made the whole project "painless," Jane says. "If I disagreed, I could tell him, but I knew he would do it right. He's over here a lot anyway, so he saw things as they were being done" and was able to make on-the-spot corrections and changes. "I can't imagine working with anyone else; I wouldn't have known how to tell them what I was trying to do."

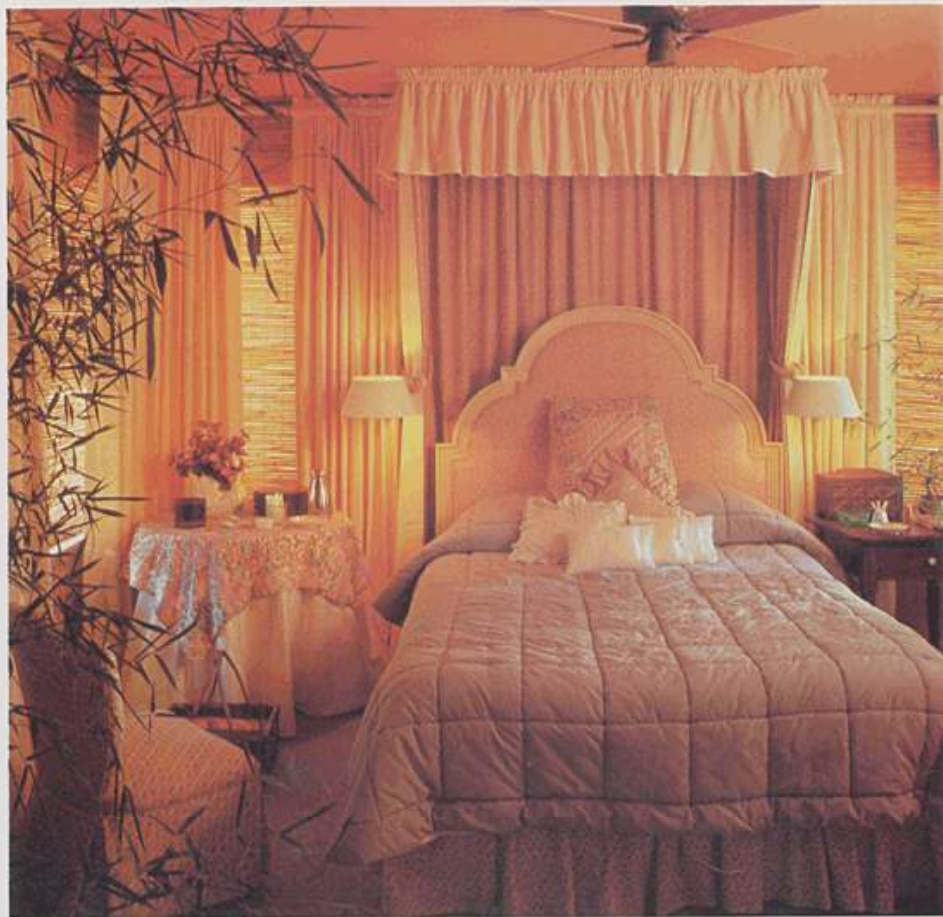
"One advantage," Joe points out, "was that I knew their lifestyle — how they live and entertain." Since Jane prefers very casual get-togethers with food served buffet-style, she wanted "a warm, country look" that would enhance those occasions.

Structural alterations, obviously, were top priority. The duplex's two small living rooms were back-to-back, and removing the support wall that separated them was a

problem. "All of the contractors we talked to wanted to hang a beam across the ceiling where the wall was. It was a friend of ours, a structural engineer, who told the carpenter how to brace it from the attic," Jane explains.

The dining rooms in the duplex also were back-to-back, with the kitchens at either end. Once again, a wall was knocked out to create a larger single dining area. One kitchen was converted into a bar and utility nook; the other was renovated so that only a pine serving counter separates the cooking and eating areas ("I didn't want to be off by myself," Jane explains).

In addition, the entire house had to be re-sheetrocked and all the bathrooms redone. "We subcontracted it all," Jane says. "We had individual plumbers and electricians, and the carpenter kind-of moved in for about six weeks." Amazingly, they managed to complete the remodeling work in a mere two months. How? "I prom-



The terra-cotta color of walls and ceiling takes on a different look when combined with paler shades of cream, lavender, hyacinth and periwinkle in the master bedroom. Floor-to-ceiling drapes and a partial canopy create the illusion of a higher ceiling, and wall-mounted reading lamps unclutter floor and table-tops. A verdant spray of bamboo complements the open, airy setting.

Two (continued)

ised the moon to everybody who came here," she says.

Two major design decisions affected the entire house: floor covering and wall color. Minton opted for sisal matting throughout because "it's very easy to keep — it shows nothing. And I like it because you can put rugs on top of it." For walls and ceiling, he chose paint in a soft terra-cotta hue, "the color of a clay pot."

"Everyone who saw it partially done hated it," Jane remembers. "The painter stopped in the middle of the job and told me, 'Lady, this is the worst color I've ever seen.'" Minton stuck to his expert guns, however, and response to the finished product has been unanimous approval. "It's the ideal neutral — everything goes with it," the designer says. Jane points out the color changes all day, from a soft tan touched with pink in the morning to a rich, rosy shade at night under recessed ceiling

lights. "After all those people who didn't like it, now everyone who sees it wants to use it in their homes," she says.

Minton points out the ceilings, which are somewhat low, were painted the same color as the walls, a trick that "makes a low ceiling 'disappear.' They would've looked awful in white," he adds.

Also contributing to the illusion of height are floor-to-ceiling drapes in the living and dining areas and the master bedroom. Bamboo blinds were chosen for all windows to let in sunlight while blocking the view — or lack of it ("These houses are on 50-foot lots, so there is no view," Jane says).

Rich, deep colors dominate the home. In the living room, a white, L-shaped sofa and glass-and-chrome coffee table set off the bold shades of the antique kilim rug, Italian batik throw pillows and a pair of armchairs

upholstered in bittersweet. Dick Bordeaux made the striking table behind the sofa, covering a standard Parsons table with linen and then lacquering it for a light-catching textured finish. Intriguing accessories include a lamp whose base is an old French wine bottle in a wicker cask; a wooden carousel horse from Mexico; and an antique pie safe whose upper doors are backed with "plain old" chicken wire, affording a glimpse of books and collectibles within. Echoing the overall eclectic mood, a Dali lithograph shares wall space with a \$2 oil painting Jane unearthed in a garage sale.


A South American weaving highlights the dining area, where a brass chandelier illuminates the pedestal table and lacquered chairs upholstered in a quilt-look fabric. Minton found the 18th century French farmhouse tools that decorate the cabinets defining kitchen and bar. In the former, Jane has utilized a folding screen to camouflage her white refrigerator (the only light element in a mostly brown-and-burnt-orange room), and a packing crate from India makes a sturdy and practical trash receptacle.

Use of color is even more profound in the library/guest room. Minton selected cinnabar red for the walls, and another Kilim rug picks up the shade in its pattern. The daybed in channel-quilted khaki is dotted with pillows covered in an English cotton print — flowers on a black ground — that also drapes the window. The coffee table is another product of Dick's creativity. Floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and a wall-mounted reading lamp, set low to concentrate the light, complete the room's cozy character.

The master bedroom has the same terra-cotta walls and ceiling as the living and dining areas, but the paler colors in linens and upholstery give it a lighter look. A soothing retreat in shades of lavender, hyacinth and periwinkle, the room features a towering partial canopy over the upholstered headboard — yet another instance of making a room look taller by going floor-to-ceiling.

After a moment's consideration, Jane admits she doesn't have a favorite room. "I love them all. I originally thought I'd sell it when we finished," she admits, "but it worked out so much better than any of us thought it would. It's been so comfortable." ←

March 1980



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