

**DESIGNER PROFILE** *By Jordan Guinn*



Glass vases, bowls and dishes provide the juxtaposition to wood finishes and decorations in this Crocker Highlands home.

# A collaborative vision

## Designer Wendy Daniel integrates comfort, livability in clients' projects

When Zoa Town and her husband wanted to redecorate their Crocker Highlands home, they didn't know where to start. The couple had done small projects on their own before, but the living room, dining room and basement was a broader challenge to them.

"We had decorated with stuff from Pottery Barn and Crate and Barrel, but nothing of any scale," Zoa Town said.

Comfort and livability were the couple's main concerns with the project. And with a possible move in their future, they wanted a space that could fit into another home. Not knowing where to begin, they — like many others in the digital age — looked online. They saw a website that enticed them and set up an interview with Wendy Daniel, who is currently in her 10th year in the design industry.

"We knew right away she was the one," Town said. "She's real and it's refreshing."

*Daniel continues on page 6*



Left, the project, named "Rosemount" took eight months. The focus is on decorative items such as bowls, sculptures and vases, rather than remodeling. Right, since the couple plan to move, designer Wendy Daniel focused on designs — like pillows — that could travel with the family.



Photography by Kevin Wright Photography

### STAFF

**Designer**  
Marc Lutz

**Writer**  
Jordan Guinn

#### Advertising

**Real Estate**  
Steve Schneiderman  
(415) 777-6226

**Retail**  
Dave Leal  
(415) 777-7281

#### Contact Us

**SFIS Homes**  
901 Mission St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 777-7666  
Fax: (415) 495-2067  
E-mail: sfis@sfchronicle.com



#### On the Cover

San Francisco condominium offers high-rise living with hotel amenities.  
**Story, page 9**

**Photography:**  
Jacob Elliott Photography

## DESIGNER PROFILE



Wood-framed furniture and a custom table decorate the dining room of the home in Crocker Highlands.

### Daniel From Page 4

After eight months and untold hours of consultations, Daniel and the Towns created a space incorporating their styles and shared ideas.

With wood-framed furniture, intricate glass decorations and ornate lighting fixtures, the property named "Rosemount" is a place the Towns are pleased to call their home.

With a budget of \$75,000, Daniel set out to create a space with a woody elegance.

"We wanted something rustic, but at the same time we didn't want it to scream 'Tahoe,'" she said.

A dining table constructed from solid hardwood provides character, while glass vases with blue hues soften the interior of the home redecorated in 2011.

For her clients, having designs that could transfer to another home if they decided to move was crucial.

Rather than spend the bulk of the budget on flooring and build-ins, Daniel opted to invest in

furnishings and designs that could stay with the family if and when they choose to move.

"Things like pillows you can change out with the seasons to keep the appearance fresh," Daniel said.

Fully understanding a client's needs and position is what makes a space functional and beautiful, Daniel said.

"It's more important to me to produce something that suits the clients' taste and matches the architecture," she said.

While interior design is a form of art and can feature ego-driven personalities, Daniel's approach is about the clients.

"It's not about making a room that says 'Wendy' did this," she said. "I may have some small signatures like animal prints, but it's about them."

Attention to detail is crucial for a designer, both when it comes to decorating a home and running a business. She stresses the importance of returning calls and emails in a timely fashion and staying on or

under budget.

Daniel, who studied graphic design at California State University, Chico, previously worked in sales of health food. She and a friend began a design business roughly a decade ago and Daniel set out on her own during the last three years.

She has roughly 60 clients, many of whom are repeat customers.

"Having a background in the business world before starting interior design I think has been a big help," she said.

To help her understand her clients' tastes, Daniel goes through home and garden magazines with them.

"Sometimes people are unable to verbalize the styles they like, so having them circle things they like or say what they don't like about others gives you a sense of their style," she said.

This part of the process not only inspired confidence in Daniel, Towns said, it also helped them discover she and her husband's mutual design styles. However, the process was arduous.

"We went through I don't know how many magazines," she said. "This was in the days before Pinterest."

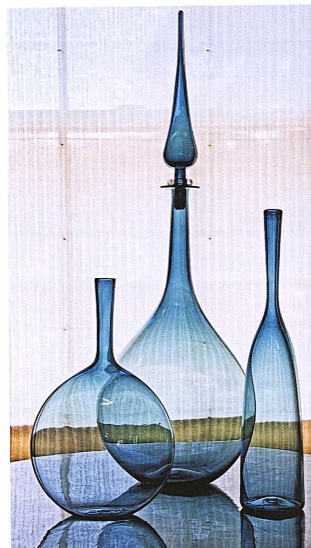
By scouring showrooms in San Francisco, Daniel and the Towns discovered ornamental finishes to suit their tastes.

"The most interesting rooms have items that have been accumulated over time," Daniel said, adding that secondhand items can sometimes be quite the find for her clients.

By the end of the process, Towns said she completely trusted Daniel to choose items then show them to the couple. "At first I really wanted to be involved and it quickly became apparent I didn't need to and I could let her roll with it," she said.

The Towns could potentially move in the future and Zoa Town said she knows who one of her firsts calls will be to at that point.

"I want to buy more homes just to have her design them," she said. "She was wonderful to work with."



The project took eight months to complete and includes wood-framed furniture and glass decorations.



### Details

Wendy Daniel Interior Design Studio

Address: 481 25th St., Oakland

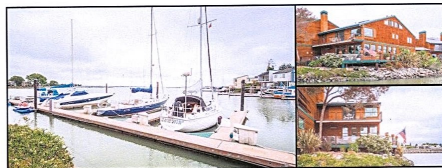
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Website: danielinteriors.com

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Linda Maguire  
Realtor® | DRE #01153485  
510.557.4052 c | 510.899.6396  
linda.maguire@sothebysrealty.com  
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