

home

Rabbi Jill Kreitman and her husband, Corey Goldstein, consider their bedroom a modern-day boudoir.

Isn't it romantic?

BEDROOM DECORATING TOUCHES THAT MAKE EVERY DAY WORTHY OF A VALENTINE

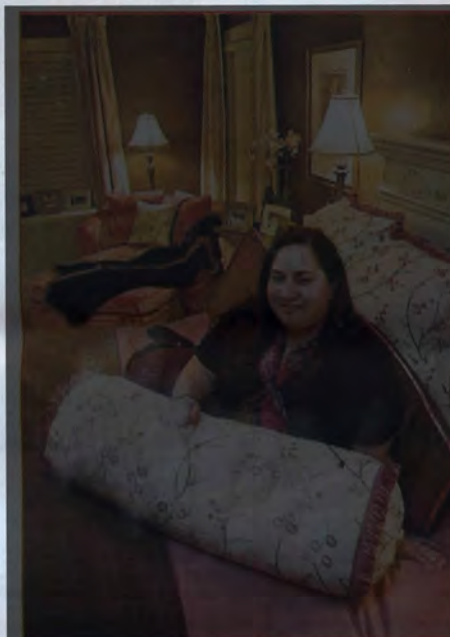


PHOTO BY JOHN GRIFFIN

Dina Becchina of Baldwin in her romantic bedroom, designed by Margreet Cevasco



NEWSDAY PHOTO / BILL DAVIS

In Muttontown, Kim Hendrickson-Radovich and Glen Radovich enjoy their relaxing room.

BY CAROL POLSKY
carol.polsky@newsday.com

Valentine's Day has its cynics, but really, who doesn't appreciate a little romance now and then? A dinner over a flickering candle in a dimly lit restaurant? A taste of molten chocolate, and, maybe, a little gift box? What's not to like?

But then it's home to the bedroom, not just on Valentine's Day but every day, year in and year out. And a romantic bedroom — dreamy, intimate, evocative, pleasing to the senses, embracing, a touch feminine and maybe just a little over-the-top — is a gift that keeps on giving.

What makes a bedroom romantic — animal prints and red velvet? a gauzy canopy bed? a good lock on the door? — is as personal as romance. And as

Port Washington designer Keith Baltimore advises his clients: "No one can put romance in a bedroom except the couple. Redoing the bedroom alone won't save a marriage or make it scintillating."

But designers tend to agree on a few things for a romantic head start: soft lighting, fabrics that invite touch and a hint of indulgence.

"It's important to have a sense of luxury in the master bedroom," says Philip Gorri van, a Manhattan-based designer who espouses soft fabrics lit softly by lamps on dimmers. "If you are going to be self-indulgent, the place to do it is in the master bedroom."

Locust Valley designer Susan Calabria of Noli Design, adds, "It's almost like a stage set . . . anything can be romantic, but it's about setting the mood and ambience."

An intimate boudoir
For Jill Kreitman of Port

Washington, a 44-year-old rabbi and professor at the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University, the bedroom of her dreams was a boudoir, a private and intimate space for her and her husband, Corey Goldstein, 47, an orthodontist. It would be deep red, plush and velvety, with drapery fabrics and a warm glow.

"It has a character that you wouldn't do for your daughter's room, or your guest room, that you would do only for the room that you share with your husband," says Kreitman, whose own daughters are 12 and 8. The room that emerged after working with designer Baltimore is a bit different than she'd imagined. It is, she says, "modern romantic, a modern twist on the boudoir."

Its modern edge comes from the crisp apple green on the walls and bed, setting off the tall cherry-red tufted vinyl headboard flanked by flowing green and red patterned



drapes, she says. The ceiling is also painted in that deep red, and from it hangs a large, round pendant lampshade trimmed with rosettes: "It's like a wedding cake in the middle of the bedroom."

On the wall, just inside the door, is the couple's hand-painted ketubah, or Jewish marriage document, which gives spiritual meaning to the romance of the bedroom: "I find it to be sacred space," says Kreitman.

Baltimore says that romantic can be pretty, curvy beds with canopies and sheer curtains, or

the sophisticated, sexy Manhattan hotel room style, with fine linens and chic comfort. "Comfort always makes it sexy," he says.

Eileen Kathryn Boyd of Huntington is a designer whose own bedroom is a lush, even voluptuous variety of romantic, with its tones of lavender, puffy white bedding with a curvaceous white headboard and vividly colored throw pillows. The full folds of its silky drapes are overlaid with a header of sheer voile.

"It's a very soothing and harmonious color scheme, not



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too dark and not too light," she says, while the curvy headboard suggests "the notation of the curves of the body. It becomes very sensual."

Engaging the senses

Speaking of sensual, how about all the senses? The smell of fresh flowers or candles, the sound of music or waves, the touch of soft fabrics, the sight of inviting comforts in glowing light, the taste of chocolates or Champagne.

"When you are attracted to someone, it's so much about the senses," says Boyd, whose hus-

band is Jim Cahill. "It's all about anticipating the needs of your romantic one. . . . Don't be afraid to let yourself be romantic and throw rose petals on the bed, and see what happens."

Has she thrown rose petals on her bed? "I haven't," she says with a laugh. "I need to sometime. It's good for the soul."

The romantic bedroom isn't only for couples, if one thinks of romance as an escape from the more mundane, or harsher, realities of daily life.

Certainly, Dina Becchina, 42, a technology consultant who lives in a center-hall Colonial

in north Baldwin, thinks of it that way. After intense competitive workdays, she wants to get away from it all at home.

"I like feminine, girly things, but in business I'm an animal," she says. "So when I come home, I want my home to be serene and calm."

Designer Margreet Cevasco of Sea Cliff helped her achieve the feminine, even romantic bedroom that has become her refuge. "I have a pink velvet chair to die for," Becchina says. "I have friends and boyfriends who like me for my chair."

The room feels very intimate to her, and the handsewn lace trim on the pillows and the silk curtains make her feel "girly."

"The rest of the world is closed out and you can be

anyone you want to be," she says. "Who doesn't want to be somewhere else at the end of the day?"

In fact, designers advise that the really romantic oasis be stripped of televisions, telephones, computers, work desks and other reminders of the world outside.

The bedroom, says Muttontown designer Kim Hendrickson-Radovich, should be all about "rest, relaxation, romance and rejuvenation."

Celerie Kemble, a designer who has done Hamptons show houses, advocates the most flattering of dim, soft lighting (and sumptuous bedding and soft rugs under the naked foot).

"Maybe romance is about being properly diffused and

then enveloped in soft, sensuous textures," she says. "And a nice lock on the door, and the absence of your television and phone and BlackBerry. There's nothing less romantic than hearing your BlackBerry buzz on the night table next to you."

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WHAT MAKES A ROMANTIC BEDROOM?

The key elements are the lighting and opulence of fabrics, creating softness and plushness using different textures without it necessarily being frilly.

— Margreet Cevasco Design, Sea Cliff

I think the most romantic thing in any bedroom is good lighting. Nothing is more romantic than something that is dim and flickering. The whole package is sexier when you have nice foggy lighting . . . lights on dimmers, beautiful [fabric-lined and off-white] lampshades that measure out the light in a very even and hopefully flattering tone, sheer curtains . . . the next step to romance is sensuous textures, soft, high-quality sheets, pillows and comforters, and soft rugs underfoot.

— Celerie Kemble, Manhattan

If you want to exude sexuality and animal instincts, then go for the lipstick reds and the animal skins and the mirrors, but romance to me is very soft, the feeling of candlelit lighting.

— Susan Calabria, Noli Design, Locust Valley

There's nothing like crawling beneath fine linen, the 800-thread count Italian linens. I have mine laundered and hand-pressed. It's a splurge, but it's OK to splurge in the bedroom.

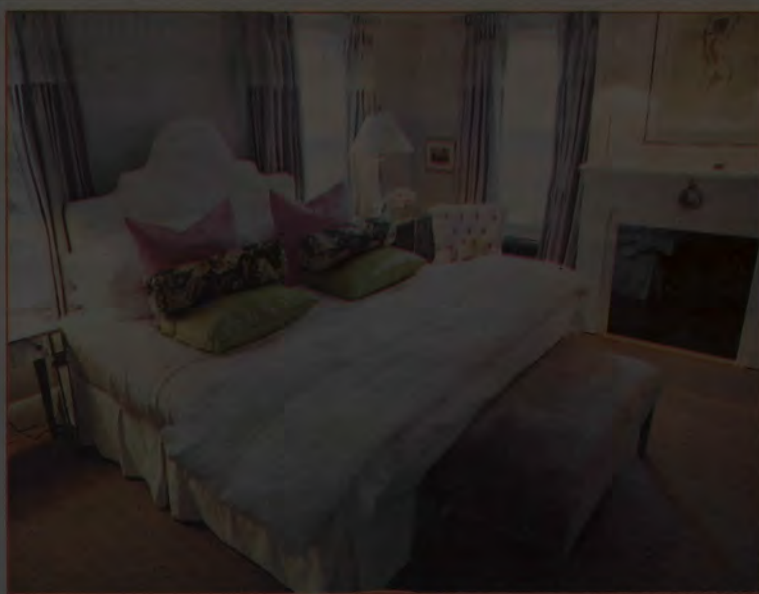
— Kim Hendrickson-Radovich, E. Courtney Interiors and Design, Muttontown

A canopy bed with soft sheer flowing curtains, a fireplace with a soft rug in front, very soft dim lighting. . . . I personally am thinking of lush velvet, beautifully upholstered velvets or satins. The deeper reds are more appropriate, some beautiful candles, fresh cut flowers. I'm picturing a honeymoon suite and what would I want in there.

— Diane Guariglia, of Dyfari Interiors, Cold Spring Harbor

It'd be nice to have soft music playing, a beautiful room fragrance, your foot on something soft, and your eye [coming to] rest on something that looks very comfortable. . . . For me, a sexy color is a magenta or hot pink accenting a neutral palette . . . a punch of color can really add excitement to a space.

— Eileen Kathryn Boyd, Eileen Kathryn Boyd Interiors, Huntington



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The bedroom of Jim Cahill and Eileen Kathryn Boyd has tones of lavender, puffy white bedding and throw pillows in vivid colors.