

Even owner of Short North artsy store says it's hard to describe



At Collier West, owner Suzi West says shoppers will find products that mix the newer with the antique.

There seems to be no end to the fun, funky, artsy little home shops in the Short North, but Collier West truly stands out among them. The store's motto is "home chic home," and it's an apt one.

Among the disparate items creating Collier West's style are chunky reclaimed wood tables, antique Louis XV-style side chairs, crystal and antler chandeliers, handblown European glassware, ceramics with monkey motifs and homespun linen and lace loungewear.

It's largely fare not found elsewhere in Columbus, and difficult to describe further than that.

Even proprietor Suzi West has trouble putting the shop's style into words.

"What I think I found is that if you had a second home in Burgundy, that seems to me where the mix would come from. You might have pulled a crystal chandelier from Paris, or gilded mirrors, then mixed with elements of nature – that's where the sticks, the taxidermy comes in," she says.

West, a former visual director with Limited Brands Inc.'s Express stores, which the Columbus-based company sold recently, says her lifelong desire was to have her own retail business.

She decided by 2004 to transfer that design expertise into her own homewares shop. West brought in former Express cohort Mary Jo Collier Pile as a partner and started her first buying trips in early 2005.

"The underlying principle was about strong design – the only thing that really unifies the shop. My joke is, when I buy something, it has to blow my hair back," she says.

West, originally from western Pennsylvania, decided to remain in Columbus rather than relocate to start her shop. Collier West started in a smaller location along North High Street and moved to its new, larger home at 787 N. High St. in March 2006.

"I thought, actually, the opportunity was delightful. It's a great city full of sophisticated people with great taste. I'm tired of people thinking it's a cow town, because it's not," she says.

Collier West's offerings are a mix of new

Retail spotlight

COLLIER WEST

COLLIER WEST

Where: 787 N. High St., Columbus

Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Contact: 614-294-9378

Web site: collierwest.com

and antique. The furniture, with the exception of the reclaimed wood beam tables made by Virginian Tim Smith, is mainly antique. Homewares such as Juliska tablewares, Matteo bedding, and John Derian decoupage items are new, and new to the Columbus market, too.

Earthy colors dominate, along with ethereal glass and sumptuous textiles.

West also provides a design service of sorts to curious customers. She says she is not an interior designer but can help clients flesh out their own styles.

"If there were a formula, I guess it would be to mix old and new, nature and glamour," she says. "To me, that's the perfect aesthetic. Someday, I hope Collier West is actually an adjective."

CINDY BENT FINDLAY is a freelance writer in Columbus.



Decoupage glass coasters and serving dishes are part of the eclectic offerings at Collier West at 787 N. High St., in Columbus.

Selections

BURNT ORANGE

Burnt orange, umber, rust, autumn – they all go together. According to popular psychic lore, an orange aura is associated with intellectual ambition. Burnt orange was the poor stepchild to burnt sienna in your Crayola pack growing up, but it's oh-so-chic now. It's a perfect hue to evoke '70s retro design but transforms to a design-forward palette when placed alongside blues.

• **MIRROR.** Target mirror (below right) in Rust Fade finish. Twenty-six-inch diameter frame of spun aluminum with tinted finish. Excellent against a textured wall.

Available at: American Furnishings at 2017

Polaris Parkway

Suggested retail: \$319

Phone: 614-885-8585

• **RAKU VASE.** Raku ceramic vase of stunning, iridescent colors, no two are the same. Handmade, with contrasting white crackle glaze, created by ancient Japanese ceramic technique.

Available at: Modern Artisans

Cost: \$89.99

Web site: modernartisans.com

Phone: 877-848-0957



• **RAFEAL AREA RUG.** This ultra-modern area rug (above) goes with clean contemporary lines or retro looks. Carved tone on tone squares, 100 percent wool, available from Home Decorators Collection in nine different sizes including runners and rounds, from \$69.

Web site: homedecorators.com
Phone: 877-537-8539



• **INHABIT PILLOW AND BEDDING:** Foliage pillow, in Sunshine. Front is handprinted recycled Retrosuede, satin on reverse. One among a line of extremely hip, graphically smart linens from Inhabit. Use as accent pillows on a leather sofa or along with any of the Inhabit bedding lines.

Two sizes: 18-inch square or 13-inch by 24-inch costing \$60-\$68

Available at: Direct from Inhabit

Web site: inhabitliving.com

Phone:

