

Cape Cod & Islands

HOME

INCLUDING SOUTH SHORE AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Right at Home with Mother Nature

INTERIOR DESIGN WITH AN ECOLOGICAL TWIST
IS A NATURAL

A home interior designed in concert with Mother Nature makes life more harmonious and—quite likely—a healthier and happier place. Whether the homeowner chooses interior paint with no volatile organic compounds, flooring cut from renewable forests and fastened with nontoxic glue, or chic pillows woven from soft-shaded organic cotton, an interior that is designed around natural principles can be beautifully centering as well as earth friendly.

While natural interiors have reached a new level of chic elegance, some homeowners create a chemical-free interior to address a very basic need: optimum health. Jim and Deb Morgan of Falmouth are renovating the interior of their two-story home to respect environmental principles and create airiness, but also for very important health reasons.

"Deb has a lot of sensitivities (to dust and allergens) that we want to minimize," says Jim Morgan. Jim, a professor at Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay, and Deb, an office manager for a chiropractor, are finishing a major renovation to their 1993 home, located on a quiet street backed by thick green woods and embellished in front with banks of colorful flowers.

When the couple was still in the dreaming stage, they talked with Nicole Goldman, the owner of 'G' Green Design Center in Mashpee, who has completed dozens of earth-friendly interiors. With Goldman as their guide, the Morgans are incorporating features that are low in toxic materials and high on style: kitchen cabinets constructed of solid cherry and plywood with no urea-formaldehyde in the glues or finishes, toxin-free flooring that originated in a managed forest for sustainability, Ultra Touch brand denim insulation. The first-floor walls are coated in non-

toxic Safecoat brand paint; meals are being prepared on an Energy Star stove.

There are many reasons to recommend earth-friendly interiors. "Alleviating harmful chemicals and utilizing environmentally friendly materials can have an amazing effect on everyday comfort," Goldman says. "Natural and chemical-free materials reduce tension and physical discomfort, which contributes to a more serene setting."

The emotional impact of earth-friendly interior design can be heightened with a color palette of organic shades. Goldman advises, "Palettes that relate to nature inherently connect the inside with the outdoors and provide a comfortable, clean, relaxed atmosphere."

It is only natural to pair organic color palettes with earth-friendly home decor. No one knows this better than Molly Finkelstein and Sofya Nadelstein, owners of Nochi in Vineyard Haven, and Justine Copenrath, owner of Adlumia in Orleans. All three women are well aware of the soothing, centering effect of organic shades and natural materials inside the home.

The Martha's Vineyard shop Nochi specializes in cottage antiques and European linens, much of which harks to the prechemical era. Vintage beds and chairs (much of them recycled) form lovely displays that are enhanced by European linens and cotton throws—some vintage, some new. "We like things that are very quiet in color and soft in texture," Finkelstein says. Even the beautiful country antique cupboards have subtle finishes for a soft, pretty look.

Nochi is a vision of creamy shades and textures, set off with ceramics and lush, fragrant flowers in rustic pots. "We love mixing a vintage chenille spread with something more current and cozy, maybe an organic throw, and lots of tex-