

Designer Susanna Samaniego put a fresh spin on a living room nook. She provided additional character with architectural details, such as archway molding and beefed-up baseboards.

JUDGE A NOOK BY ITS COVER

A SOFA AND PATTERNED WALLPAPER BRING LIFE TO AN UNUSED SPACE

NAIL A FRAMED MIRROR to the wall of your living room nook, center a table topped by a vase of flowers in front of it, add a bit of greenery with a potted floor plant and, voilà, you've decorated your alcove.

Sound boring? You bet, and Encinitas homeowner Colleen Cormier couldn't agree more. That's why she asked designers Susanna Samaniego and Elaina Myers to rid her living room nook of all those typical design elements.

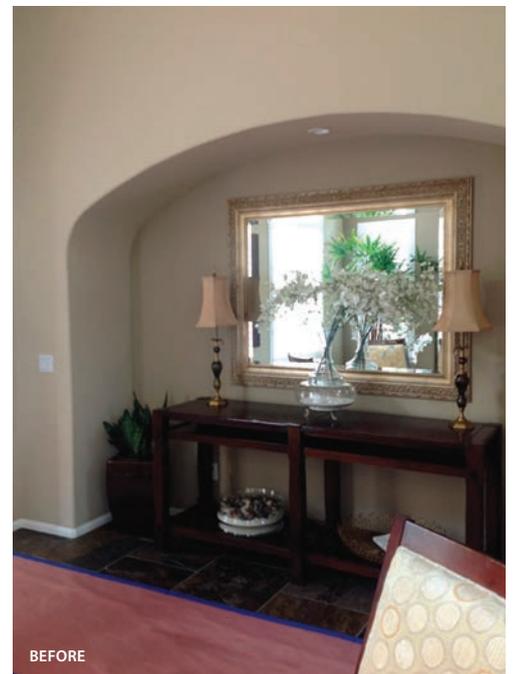
"This is the usual way to fill a niche," Susanna says. "Oftentimes, symmetry is what the untrained eye will resort to. It's safe. However, in this specific space, the console table wasn't being used; and over time it was just a dust collector. We wanted to create a space that could be used and do it in an unanticipated way."

To invigorate the space, Susanna ditched the mirror for a patterned wallpaper of oversized, aqua lotus petals. She balanced the spirited wallcovering by setting in front of it an elegant yet rugged French Victorian-style sofa.

"The sofa is very raw and organic with a deconstructed finish," she says. "We wanted something comfortable and interesting."

Turquoise and blue-and-honey throw pillows pick up the warm tones of the white-washed, engineered-oak flooring, as well as the wall's aqua and gray hues.

"To keep the space interesting and guests pleasantly surprised, we like to use unexpected items or space plan in an unexpected way," Susanna says. "In this space, we flanked the sofa asymmetrically with mixed-matched end tables. We drew the eye up by using a mossed branch accessory on one and a glass lamp on the other." ❖



BEFORE