

IN SEARCH OF INTIMACY

At the Red Cross Designers' Show House, the decorators came up with cozy and striking solutions to make the best of the home's quirky spaces.

By **CHRISTINE DAVIS**
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Narrow but soaring. Irregularly shaped. Filled with nooks and crannies. Snug. When it comes to rooms, this is the stuff that can get the creative juices flowing for any designer worth his or her decorative salt.

If you need proof, peek inside this year's American Red Cross Designers' Show House, which is open to the public daily for tours through Feb. 19 at 3000 N. Flagler Drive in West Palm Beach.

Design puzzles abounded in the Spanish Mediterranean-style, two-story house built in 2004. Many of the challenges stemmed from the fact that the four-bedroom house isn't very deep from the front door to the rear, a design that provides for an expansive pool-and-patio area facing the Intra-coastal Waterway out back but means smaller rooms inside.

And that's not all: The narrow living room has a two-story ceiling. A first-

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How to capitalize on limited space

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floor guest room, like the upstairs master suite, has odd-shaped extensions.

On the other hand, the formal dining room was built with little differentiation from the family and breakfast rooms. Then there's the second-floor landing. Overlooking the living room, it turns out to be one of the largest spaces in the house.

So this year, because rooms came in all shapes, sizes and heights, we wondered: How did this year's crew of interior designers and decorators make the spaces warm and inviting? And given that smaller rooms often pose the biggest design problems, how did they capitalize on the limited space to create a welcoming sense of intimacy, such an important and sought-after element



Photo by Daniel Newcomb/Architectural Photography

Katherine Shenaman of Katherine Shenaman Interiors took on the first-floor guest suite. 'The room had been very dark, heavy and cavernous, although it's a small room. I tried to create closeness by using the high headboard with a soft inviting upholstery — a mysterious slate-blue velour — and let that be the focal point.'

in our homes?

Their arsenal included tips that focused the eye in the larger rooms by creating focal points and using

deep colors in the smaller rooms to highlight objects and make the walls appear to recede.

The results speak for

themselves in these photos, which are accompanied by insights from the professionals who created the decorative magic.

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