

# Inside the Designer's Studio



Once sparsely furnished and lacking proper storage, this designer created a stylish home office infused with personal touches and clever storage solutions.

By Tanya Zager Chisholm

*Photographs by Jacob Hawkins*



Sentimental artwork tops a storage solution that offers the designer organization at a glance.

## FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Hoping to elevate her home office, a self-described, lackluster room filled with non-descript furniture and inefficient storage, Beverly Hills-based Interior Designer Anna Versaci's number one priority was function. "As a designer, I have a lot of stuff," she says. "And I really wanted a way to organize it better so that when I'm sitting at my desk, I can see everything in a snapshot—rather than hidden out of view."

Conducting business out of your house can be a double-edged sword, Versaci admits. "Number one, I want my home office to be an extension of where I live. So, I want it to feel like me and my family, which is cozy, and warm, and filled with things that make us happy." On the other hand, the designer explains that "when clients come into your personal space, it's easy for them to look around and think: *Is this what she does? Is this her signature style?*" To mitigate any preconceived notions, she makes it her priority to get to know her client's lifestyle to ensure that her clients always get what they love. "I really like to get into the minds of my clients and try to determine what their personal style is," she says. "What turns them on? What lights them up? What do they respond to? It's so important."



**Pro Tip:** While planning the space, Versaci took advantage of an electrical outlet to power the above sconce, rather than hiring an electrician to run the cord through the wall.



## PERSONAL SPACE

An arrangement of meaningful artwork that the designer has collected over the years adorns the wall, including a Mother's Day picture her son painted for her, and a portrait Versaci's grandmother rendered of her as a child. Hidden among the artwork on the gallery wall (notice the horse picture) is a television. "I wanted it to look like art," she says. "The frame does a good job of giving the impression that it's artwork and if you turn the brightness of the tv way down, it fools the eye. It's also useful to view presentation decks with clients."

When it came to laying out the gallery wall, Versaci took a "loose and organic" approach. "It's hard to plan an exact gallery wall," she says. "I think it works well when you place the largest piece in the middle and create an organic shape around it. Perfection isn't the goal. So, I don't like to keep the spacing between pieces the same. This particular arrangement has an overall oval shape."



Glass-top storage allows a view of the designer's current projects.

## AT A GLANCE

To maximize space, Versaci enlisted the help of Maegan Donovan with California Closets to install various storage solutions, including a sample library with a set of glass-topped, partially open drawers that house the designer's current projects on top, and additional samples below. "I love working with California Closets," she says. "Maegan pulled the CAD design up on a big screen and was able to manipulate the design to my specific needs."





Rows of fabric samples are readily available, along with file cabinets and design reference books.

## **BUILT-IN EFFICIENCY**

It was important to Versaci to have easy access to samples and materials that she uses frequently. One solution is a repository of her favorite fabric and drapery samples tucked neatly in a bookcase, while the opposite side houses a collection of inspiring design reference books, as well as art pieces that she loves. Rounding out the storage are a series of file drawers to keep everything in order, middle cabinets hold small accessories, and a mini fridge offers refreshments.



Instead of a conventional desk, a small dining table affords the designer more space to plan.

## NO RULES

To give the room added depth and interest, the designer covered her ceiling, or “fifth wall,” in grass cloth. “My office is small,” she explains. “I have old, paneled walls, and I could have ripped them out and drywalled them, but I decided to take the path of least resistance and kept the walls white. I think the ceiling is a really important element in a room.” Versaci advises if someone wanted to employ the same design technique in their home, it’s best to have crown molding to better distinguish the walls from the ceiling. “Another option is to create a full paneled look on the ceiling, which is more affordable than millwork,” she says.

When it came to settling on a desk, the designer opted for an unconventional choice: a dining table. “I’ve noticed—including myself—that my clients really like to spread out when they’re working,” she observes. “So, I like to use small dining tables as desks.” And where is the all-important printer you may be wondering? Versaci has another trick, a floating acrylic stand, keeping everything within arm’s reach.





*Anna Versaci, Anna Versaci Design*

Versaci now has a charming personal space with ample storage and workspace to flex her creativity. “In the end, your office is a space that shows who you are,” the designer says. “It’s what makes you human.”

**AVAILABLE AT MDC:**

**California Closets** home organization solutions, **Rozmallin** ceiling wallcovering, **Schumacher** drapery fabric, **Resource Center** Benjamin Moore wall paint and Royal Crest blinds.