



## Staging Vs. Design

*The crucial difference and why you need to know //*

BY LEIA T. WARD, FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL STAGING DESIGNER OF LTW DESIGN

» I'M OFTEN asked about the difference between home staging and interior design—and there's a big difference between the two. I own a luxury home staging firm, *LTW Design*, and along with my team, I stage homes for sale in the Northeast, ranging in value from \$1 million to \$20 million. We're told by clients that they love our attention to detail and the way we bring natural light and clean lines into each of our projects.

To receive the absolute highest offer on a home, staging is key. I think of myself as a home stager first and foremost, but I have also been asked many times to design homes for clients who loved our staging work. We now offer both



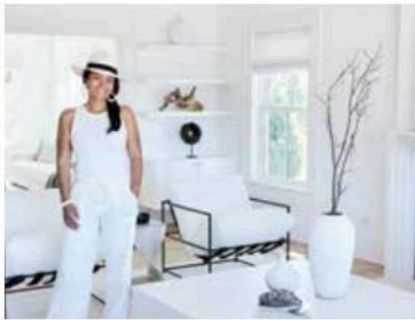
services, but I've found that most people misunderstand home staging and think it's the same as designing a personal space in a home. At my firm, we wear two different hats depending on the project and clients' needs.

### **Staging:**

It's important to know when to stage versus when to design and what makes the difference. When helping homeowners to prepare their homes for sale we put on our staging hats and edit, depersonalize, and create a clean and calming palette. When staging, we are trying to remove any evidence of the sellers that live there.

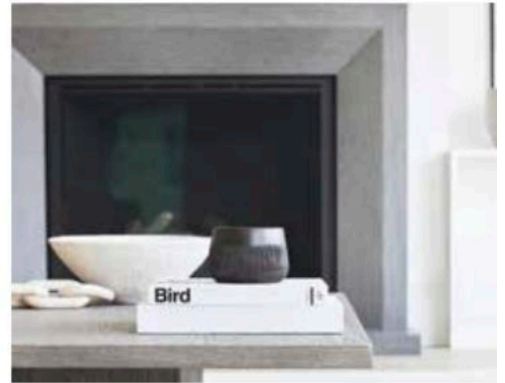
### Here are a few tips:

1. Create a 5-star hotel experience for buyers when they walk through (no matter what the price is listed for).
2. Remove personal photos. Looking at the sellers' photos of their trips and friends on the walls only makes potential buyers feel they are in



- 'someone else's home' vs their future home.
3. Edit everything! This can range from changing light fixtures and painting, to removing all furniture and staging with our inventory.
4. When staging, only invest in what will give you the highest return on your investment.
5. Don't forget, curb appeal matters! Yes, buyers will judge and assess your home the moment they pull into the driveway because this is when the experience begins.

It's truly amazing how powerful staging is and how it can transform a space. It affects the buyers' perception of the home and how they feel when they



walk through, which in turn translates into dollars. This means higher offers, multiple offers, and less time on the market. In a hot market, staging is even more important. Our staged homes are going over the asking price right now and



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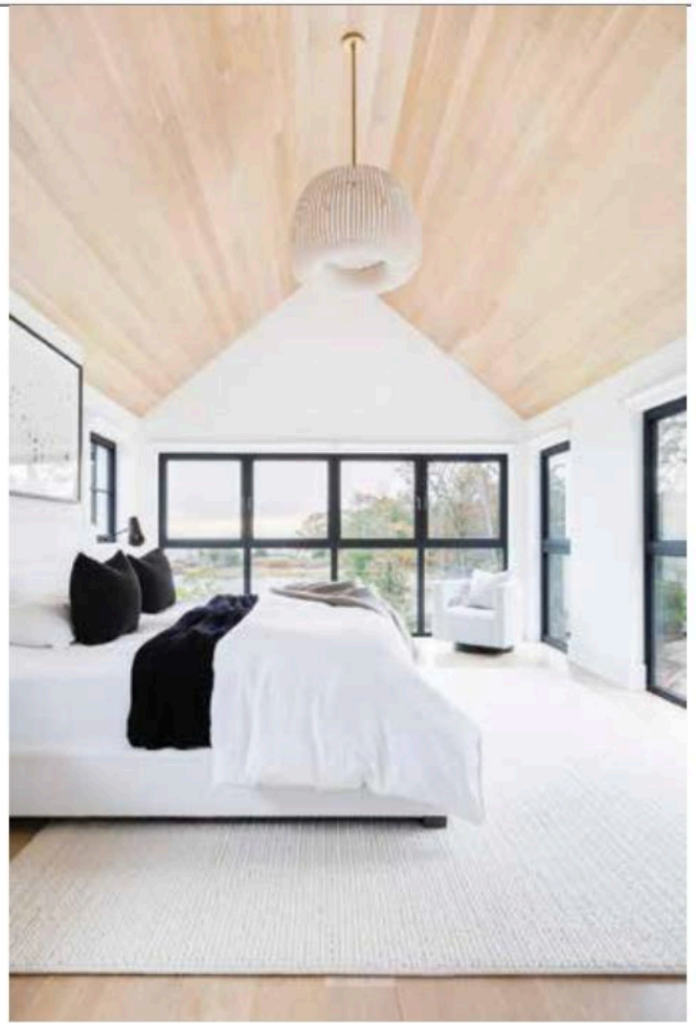
MICRONEEDLING	BOTOX & FILLERS
VAMPIRE FACIALS	CHEMICAL PEELS
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LASER HAIR REMOVAL	CELLULITE REDUCTION
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almost immediately after we install and it hits the market, we receive a call to de-stage because the sellers have accepted an offer.

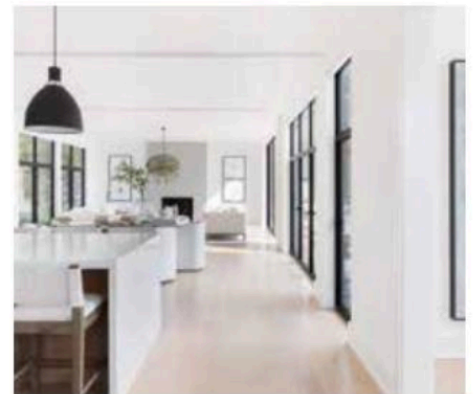
### Design:

Design has an entirely different intention, which is to personalize a client's home and make it reflect who they are, the places they've been, and things that matter most. We love putting on our design hat, so here are a few tips when designing your home:

1. Keep the foundation pieces neutral (sofas, rugs, walls) and if you like color bring it out in artwork, throw pillows, and other accessories.
2. Embrace wallpaper! At some point, wallpaper became scary and dated but it has truly come a long way. We do wallpaper in all of our design projects. I recommend using wallpaper that is

textured vs. heavily patterned. It's less of a commitment and it also has more longevity.

3. Create a photo wall. We love a Soho gallery-style wall with large frames and oversized mattes to keep it feeling minimal and clean while still filling your home with beautiful memories.
4. Bigger is better and less of it. Instead of a bunch of smaller-scale pieces, we suggest having fewer pieces in your home and keeping them larger in scale. For instance, instead of a small 12" round side table, do a 20" square block. It's the little choices like this that create the solid, calming, less is more vibe.
5. Keep to a palette of 3 colors throughout the entire house in order to create a cohesive and connected feel between rooms.



The silver lining of this pandemic has been that people are buying and selling homes like crazy, which has kept my industry insanely busy. We have been inundated with both staging and design projects this past year, and we are so grateful. ■

