





Turning a House into a Home

FOR HALF A CENTURY,
GILBERTE INTERIORS
HAS HELPED CLIENTS
CREATE FRESH
AND COMFORTABLE
LIVING SPACES

BY NANCY FONTAINE
PHOTOS BY CHARLES PARKER/IMAGES PLUS



If you walk or drive down Allen Street in Hanover, you can hardly miss the three-story Gilberte Interiors storefront. In business for 50 years, it has become a landmark. Gilberte and Andy Boghosian started the company, and although they have turned the reins over, they are still involved. Their children, Aharon and Cheryl Boghosian, now run the business along with Neil Roth.

Customers who walk into the retail showroom and design center are always welcomed, but Cheryl says, “Our focus is on clients coming to us for our interior

design service. We do both commercial and residential design—designs, fabrication, and installation.”

Understanding Trends While Staying Current Accordingly, Cheryl and Aharon have to always be aware of the design environment. “We keep up with the latest materials, design trends, and what’s new on the market and available with materials and technology. We’re constantly meeting with design reps, attending design shows, and reading about the latest innovations,” says Cheryl.



Left: Soft natural materials and shapes create an inviting living space overlooking the treetops and hills of the Upper Valley.

Right: A custom square-shaped dining table surrounded by soft upholstered chairs invites long evenings of relaxing with friends and family.

Inset: A beautifully set table adds to the ambience.



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Cheryl Boghosian

The things that customers ask for change over time. Currently, the focus includes “using ‘green’ products with attention to health and wellness,” Cheryl says. That involves using natural fibers and materials that are environmentally friendly. “Natural fibers feel good,” she adds with a smile.

Another trend is integrating technology into interior design, including motorized blinds and shading. “People want to control things from their smartphones,” Cheryl says. “We are able to provide those options.”

Recent color trends have included “natural tones, neutrals, grays, and mushroom tones,” Cheryl says, but “a punch of color is back in, and large patterns are back. The bones of a project—like tile—may stay neutral though, which is easy to live with.”

Cheryl and Aharon give a lot of thought to the materials they use. “We love using new materials. We love seeing what’s new on the

market for faucets and tiles as well as technical products like grout. Where we can use something that’s made in the United States, we use it or recommend it,” says Cheryl.

Careful Choices Drive Good Design

“We update our libraries [of samples] daily,” Aharon adds. “As engineering has improved and globalization has given us access to a greater market, we’ve added more products. As much as we thought we had planned enough space for products, we always have more than we can display.” He continues, “Our influences are not just indigenous to the Upper Valley. We offer an urban selection even though we’re very rural here. People are amazed at the diversity of products we offer.”

When Cheryl approaches a new project, the first thing she finds out is how the customers are going to use the space. She thinks of all the details. Where are you going to charge your



phone? Where are you going to read? Where does the lighting need to be? And uses change at different times of the day and in different seasons too. “We want to make choices that make sense for our clients; this is what drives good design.”

Sound expensive? It might not cost as much as making bad choices. “Occasionally clients come in and say, ‘We did this, and it didn’t work. Can you help?’” says Cheryl. “This is why we feel an interior design firm is very important. After listening carefully to our clients, we can recommend what we feel is best or provide clients with their best options. In the end, that saves them from making mistakes that cost time and money. We help them do it right the first time.”

A Wide Clientele

People from all over the country agree. The experts at Gilberte Interiors do most of their

work from New York to Maine, but they also have projects on the West Coast and in Florida, Virginia, and the Caribbean. Sometimes the work comes from people who have moved away from the Hanover area but still want to use this well-established and highly reputed company, and sometimes people with second homes want their help. In addition, Gilberte has many customers who are recommended to them by their existing customers or that they’ve met in their travels. “How you connect with people is really important,” says Cheryl. “We can show them how we can make their lives and the design process easier for them.”

Aharon says, “Clients can be at a loss because they might do a big renovation only a couple of times in their lives.” Other interior designers help with “broad brush stroke” plans. “We help them with their selections, and it’s all right here in our building. We put it all on one table.” Perhaps most importantly, “We can

Opposite: The bedroom’s soft tones capture the light of the ocean setting.

Above: Bath designs by Aharon Boghosian use a combination of porcelain, glass, and stone tiles highlighted with clean-lined metal fittings. Lighting design and functional details transformed these baths from their existing roots.

Inset: Sleek hardware like this faucet completes the clean, modern look of the bathroom.

keep a client focused on a budget. We can tailor the elements that they are interested in to fit that budget—a key ingredient that separates us from everybody else.”

Professionals appreciate Gilberte Interiors’ work as well. “We have builders and architects who contact us to work alongside them on a project,” Cheryl says. “From space planning to product selections, we can make the process easier for all involved. We will create drawings and layouts for clients, and we will use them in the design and implementation process as needed.”

Details and a Personal Touch

As the company’s designer, Cheryl likes to create spaces that are calming and easy to spend time in. “People’s lives are busy. They bring that busyness into a space. We do what we can to bring a sense of calm to their lives. That doesn’t mean it has to be bland, boring, or uninteresting though. I like to figure out how to make a space exciting without being overwhelming. I

can tweak lighting and throw in artwork or accessories to jazz it up.”

In considering how to get the most from any space, Cheryl says, “The space has character to it. We’re not going to fight that.” She offers the example of a recent project in Rhode Island. “The client bought a small property and worked with us to tweak the layouts and the plans. Our design included the furniture layouts and finish selections and followed with lighting design and cabinetry details. This allowed the builder to keep the project on track, and he was able to contact us with any detail questions. We were able to specify all the lighting, furnishings, shading, and accessories, and then fabricate and install as the project became ready.”

The home’s square footage wasn’t huge, so it had to be planned efficiently. “We designed furniture and flooring that are going to work well in a beach house. You want people to feel they can walk in with sand on their feet,” says Cheryl. “The owner is an art collector, so we put a priority on

lighting and spaces that would allow each piece of artwork to shine.”

Details and a personal touch are hallmarks of the Gilberte business. Why go the extra mile? “We enjoy spending time with clients on their projects,” says Aharon. “Every one of us loves being around people, hearing their life stories, seeing their living spaces. You have to develop a pretty intimate relationship to help them get what they most desire in the end.” Cheryl adds, “Our clients are really important to us—these relationships continue long after the project ends.”

That feeling of relationship and family extends to employees as well. “Our employees have been with us for a long time,” says Aharon. Is it any wonder Gilberte Interiors has been on Allen Street for 50 years? *TW*

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