



Bon Voyage!

Traveling presents a world of opportunities for you to use fresh scenery and new surroundings as inspirations for your next home-design project

Travel can inspire many things. It can inspire song, writing and yes, even home décor and design. I just got back from our family ski trip to Big White in Canada, and although we normally go to Tahoe for spring skiing with friends, Big White was just as breathtaking for this local girl.

Funnily enough, though, my favorite part of a ski vacation is not the skiing — it's the cozy fireplaces, the slushy feel of snow underfoot and the beautiful scenery. I'm constantly on the lookout for new sources of inspiration, and one afternoon when Darrell, Nicki and I stopped for lunch at the Black Diamond restaurant, I found a stunning new source.

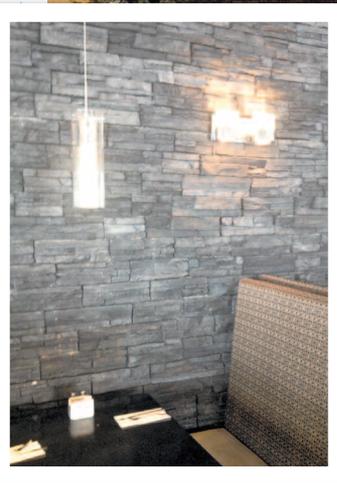
In ski villages you usually see a lot of slate, stacked stone, timber, forged metals and vaulted ceilings — very masculine and traditional. At the Black Diamond, the charcoal-black stacked stone lining the walls of the booths was juxtaposed handsomely with a light fixture of chrome, clear glass tubes and a solid acrylic cylinder with tiny bubbles.

This elegant and very modern fixture completely made the room. Armed with my iPhone, I snapped some photos and tucked the concept away in my brain: One day I'll use these extreme contrasting elements in a future project.

So here are my dos and don'ts for your travel-inspired design projects.

- Do:**
- **Take a walk.** Be inspired by your trip. Notice your surroundings — the nature, architecture and décor. And be sure to have your camera ready.
 - **Look for local, original art.** Generally, you can find great pieces by local artists at affordable prices.

- **Incorporate photo art at home.** Hang some of the great trip photos you took. Blow them up in black and white or zoom



in super close-up for a more artistic view, and have them turned into canvas prints.

Don't:

- **Get too kitschy.** Instead of turning an entire room into a shrine to your favorite destination, incorporate elements of what inspired you, like the bricks or bubbled glass from my ski trip. Or look at your photos and

get a sense of what made you fall in love with the place. Was it the colors? The snow? How can you capture that memory in a design element? Maybe it's a color that you paint on your door or an accent wall.

- **Mix too many decorating styles in one room.** I'm not talking about little mementos, I'm talking about design elements. If you travel to Europe and want an Italian-villa feel in your living room, then go to Japan and fall in love with rice-paper doors, things can get out of hand. Mixing a couple of styles can work at times, but you don't want an over-the-top world-traveler feel.

- **Don't rush.** Maybe you're still on a high from your exotic vacation. Maybe you loved that city because it was your honeymoon. Before you makeover your entire home, take a little bit of time. Look at your photos and your space. Do you really want that Victorian boudoir or that Moroccan red room? This isn't a dress, this is a space. Think before you purchase furniture or drape an entire wall in tapestry.

So if you're feeling like your room needs an update, why not pack a bag? It's a great excuse to take a trip!

Cathy Lee is president and designer of Cathy Lee Style and Cathy's Marketplace, and she recently opened reStyle Hawaii. To find out more, go to www.cathyleestyle.com.