

## YOUR HOME

# B. MOORE

## A name becomes a mantra for this accessible Brooklyn designer

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In New York, it's rare for an interior designer to care more about a client's needs than her own style. It's rarer still to overemphasize designing a comfortable home instead of being published in a famous magazine. And it's downright unbelievable when a designer develops low-priced programs to make services accessible to anyone who needs them.

All the above describe Brooklyn interior designer Barbara Moore.

Her easy, elegant ways are as much about her as the spaces she designs. For \$500, she and her staff will come to your Brooklyn house (it's \$750 in Manhattan or Queens) for two hours to answer questions, walk through the space, suggest room layouts, assess furnishings and accessories, and define specific design needs.

"It's really whatever the person wants," says Moore. "It can be about color, antiques, about not knowing what to keep or get rid of, or scale of objects. That's a big reason people need interior help. Scale, or the size of objects, can make or break a room."

If customers like what they hear, Moore can design their home one room at a time, working within most budgets.

"The two programs can work hand in hand," says Moore. "The 'room by room' program allows people to get used to the design process, and the consult allows us to forge a client-designer relationship, which to me is the most important part of the process."

Moore is all about relationships, and she can design in just about any style. She's designed a classic apartment on the upper

East Side, a sleek loft in Tribeca, a youthful studio in Brooklyn Heights, eclectic model apartments in Clinton Hill and a powerfully minimalist townhouse in Brooklyn Heights. Her finest moments occur when clients stand in a room she designed for them, beaming, and introduce her to friends. One introduces her as the "love of my life." Another calls her "Sunshine."

"I want to be recognized as a design firm that can meet the needs of people who want to live in positive-energy, well-designed, comfortable homes," says Moore. "The space should be what the client wants. Doing someone's home is a very intimate experience. It always works

better when there is a good relationship between us. I'm in the project for them, not myself."

Sitting in B. Moore, her store, showroom and office space at 385 Atlantic Ave. in Boerum Hill, Moore seems at home, and she should. She lives upstairs and owns the building.

She bought the 1901 structure, between Hoyt and Bond Sts., four years ago. It had been a stationery factory in earlier years, but after a gut renovation to the five-story site, Moore put her office and shop on the retail floor and built her home on the top two floors.

From her rooftop terrace, she sees most of southern Brooklyn, with a front-row seat on Atlantic Ave. and the design stores, restaurants and cafes that give the area its stylish character. Acting as a landlord, Moore rents out the second- and third-floor two-bedrooms. She opened the store to give her design business a street presence.

"I was looking for a condo in Brooklyn and an office in Manhattan, and those costs were adding up," says Moore, who paid \$1.3 million for the building and put \$1.3 million into the renovation. "I

**'The space should be what the client wants'**



STEVEN SUNSHINE

Interior designer Barbara Moore in her furnishings store, B. Moore, on Atlantic Ave. in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn. She owns the building and lives upstairs

didn't want to be in some dingy office, so I thought of combining the two. I love being an entrepreneur. This allows me to control my own destiny. Plus, renovating this helped me understand what clients go through, constructing their homes."

Brooklyn, with its laid-back character, becomes Moore, who rarely raises her voice. She has never lived in Manhattan. After arriving from Pittsburgh 10 years ago to continue designing health-care facilities like psychiatric wards and hospitals for Perkins Eastman Architects, she settled in the borough because she could afford more space. She's lived in four Brooklyn apartments in all, with this her first in Boerum Hill and likely her last. Being a shop owner isn't what she planned, but it makes her feel part of her surroundings.

"This area has a history of design shops, and it's great to be a part of the next wave of businesses to come here," says Moore, pointing to Jonathan Adler, Greenhouse, Steven Alan, Butter and Rico, fashion and furniture shops that call the street home.

"But I never thought I would be in retail."

The shop, which opened last fall, has proved useful. Many a customer has found Moore through the inviting floor-to-ceiling windows filled with products. One young client liked a headboard in Moore's window by Singapore-based artisan Christopher Guy, whose work has appeared in the film "The Devil Wears Prada" and more than 50 five-star hotels around the world. The customer walked in, inquired about the headboard and ended up having Moore design her entire space.

Moore is the only person to carry Guy in the New York area. His hand-carved wooden mirrors and silk-draped geometric headboards complement the other items in her store. She carries one line of glassware, iittala from Finland, and she has standing candelabra next to coffee tables that become dining tables. Select couches, which can be covered in any fabric, can cost as low as \$1,800. Using Ann Gish bedding, Moore and her team also

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Barbara Moore's own bedroom has non-woven paper wall covering by Arte, a Murano-glass chandelier and a headboard by a Singapore-based artisan

STEVEN SUNSHINE



## YOUR HOME



ANDREW CHESTER ONG



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**Moore, who puts the client's needs and demands first, can design for just about any taste: At left, a classic upper East Side apartment; right, a modern Tribeca loft**

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will put together the exact sheets and comforter combination for any store customer. Like the rooms she designs, nothing in the space is overwhelming.

Pam Harnett was walking down the street last year when she came across Moore's window. An investment banker and Cobble Hill resident since the mid-1990s, Harnett was ready to do some work on her house. First she wanted to update her son's bedroom, then maybe do a television room upstairs. She hadn't done any work since she, her husband and two kids moved in. None of them understood much

about interior design, nor cared to.

"Selecting paint color, fabrics or furniture size seemed beyond what I could do or had time to do," says Harnett. "I liked what I saw in the store. Nothing was ultramodern or too traditional. It all seemed comfortable, and we're comfortable people."

Their townhouse has family heirlooms like a model Colonial-era four-mast ship Pam's father put together and cartoon drawings from her husband Mark Healy's past. Having never hired an interior designer, it was crucial that Mark, Pam and their children feel comfortable with the

designer. Healy admits to being skeptical.

"As a husband, I had a natural resistance to anything that had to do with interior design," says Mark, a hockey and baseball fan who owns a merger-and-acquisition consultancy. "But Barbara came in and she just wasn't pushy. She listened to us. She had no agenda. She opened my eyes to the possibilities of what could be done."

Soon the store walk-in turned into designing four rooms in the townhouse. Things went so well that Moore recently completed a renovation of the family's second home in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Moore bonded with the family's daughter,

spending nights in the home during construction. Healy enjoyed the process so much he now reads design magazines. For Moore, nothing makes her work harder.

"I always joke with my family that my name is a lot to live up to," says Moore, who uses the B. Moore phrase as a personal motivator. "I always want to grow and give my clients more than they expect. Their homes are their lives. I consider that a major responsibility."

*For additional info on Moore, go to [bmooredesign.com](http://bmooredesign.com) or 385 Atlantic Ave., or call 718-369-9494.*