

On the Couch With Gia Russo

Learn decorating tips and tricks that you can try at home from *REAL SIMPLE. REAL LIFE.*'s design expert Gia Russo.



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5 of 10

< Previous Next >

First Things First

MHI: When you're starting a room from scratch, what's the first thing you choose?

GR: The first thing I suggest is to create the overall color palette of the house. Pull paint chips, fabric swatches, flooring samples, and wood tones before you purchase anything. This will help create an overall design flow within the house.

Another great way to visualize your options is to tear pictures of room designs from magazines or look **online** for rooms you love. If you're redecorating a space, keep in my mind what you don't like about the old design and jot down a list of the changes you want to make.

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6 of 10

< Previous Next >

Shopping Hot Spots

MHI: Where are your favorite places to shop?

GR: I live in Los Angeles, and there are so many great places and neighborhoods in which to shop for home design. Calypso Home has beautiful accessories, textiles, and furniture. **Empiric** has great vintage accessories, furniture, and lighting -- I bought one of my favorite lamps in my house there. **OK** offers amazing modern accessories and fun gift items. And I've purchased classic, simple furniture pieces for my house at **Weego Home**. Plus, I shop online a lot -- particularly at **Arcadia Home** and **Viva Terra**.

> [Wall Decor Ideas](#)

> [Next: Kitchen Particulars](#)

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7 of 10

< Previous Next >

Kitchen Particulars

MHI: What is your current favorite kitchen countertop material? Cabinet finish? Flooring choice?

GR: I love white Carrera marble -- it's clean, timeless, and looks great with any style. I like many cabinet finishes, but I prefer white or painted semigloss cabinets because they're classic and look great with any style. For flooring, I love dark stained walnut wood floors -- they're timeless and make a strong statement.

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