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Interior Design

Doubt of a Shadow

by

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Drapes, shades, curtains: coverlet guardians of color and light. And so frequently overlooked and dismissed as afterthoughts of necessity. All too often have I seen a regally stylish room destroyed in an instant by clashing fabric that sweeps and sputters its way from the window.

Ah, the aristocratic foyers that become objects of secret derision with their floral curtains of inappropriate sheen—thick, tawdry, heavy things that say "remnant" with every move. The demitasse-laden pied-à-terre that disproves its sophistication with frilly, wrinkled bits of fluff. And, oh, the dining room dense with clumps of conversation-muffling drapery. It needn't be this way.

**The superior curtain
coaxes and creates
apparitions as it flows.**

Think of window fabrics as orchestrators of shadows. The superior curtain coaxes and creates apparitions as it flows. The point is not to obstruct the view, but to enhance it. Curtains are, in a sense, visual aromas, gently wafting as they soothe and stimulate. What sight can match the timeless simplicity of a bedroom curtain swaying to a late afternoon breeze?

Choose your curtains to match the mood you want in each room. The colors may complement your living room, but if the fabric is too heavy, it will make your guests feel as if they are in a packing crate. Woven fabrics in a kitchen will soak up the cooking smells and will thus compete with each meal. People may be

uncomfortable with thin, transparent lace in the bathroom—it can make them feel as if they have no privacy whatsoever!

Dark colors should be avoided unless you are decorating a very large room. They tend to shrink the size and suggest claustrophobia. Patterned drapery distracts from the furniture and typically clashes with any paintings or photographs.

Curtains have a subtle power similar to that of napkins on a table. Just as the finest mahogany can become plywood with an inappropriate *serviette*, so too can a window lose its exotic appeal with a hastily chosen *rideau*.

Take the time to look through each window of your home. Peer in, stare out. Examine each angle, in sunlight as well as in lamplight.

Whether 'tis the subtlety of a tiny valence or the puddling of flowing fabric that you desire, may the symphony of your drapery entice and inspire delicate dreams!



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