

Feng Chic

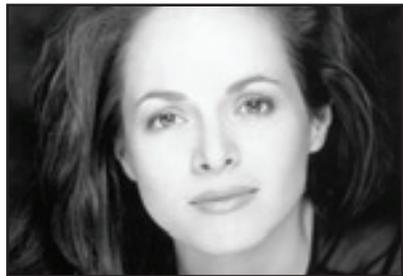
A New York City Interior Designer Melds East With West in the Home

By Ji Uhn Han

People are searching for yet another way to realize their dreams. And Reiko Gomez helps them find that answer — in their homes and offices.

From Hollywood producers to busy investment bankers, people have been turning to 34-year-old Gomez because they desire more than just a pretty space. By incorporating feng shui and interior design, Gomez creates environments that are not only aesthetically pleasing but sensually satisfying.

“[Feng shui] is a way of creating interiors that can be aligned with



Seth Cohen/PR

Serenity Now: Gomez creates oases

way of creating a life that is more supportive,” says Gomez, an interior designer certified in feng shui consulting.

Combining both in such small details as furniture arrangement, lighting and the colors or materials used, Gomez tries to create an oasis in an apartment. “When feng shui is right in a place, it just starts working and attracting,” she says.

Technically, feng shui is about combining the five elements of ancient Asian philosophy — water, fire, earth, metal and wood — and can involve detailed mathematical calculations that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the building, based on the year it was built and the direction it faces.

However, taken as a whole, feng shui is more about the feeling and overall attractiveness a place conveys. It is almost as simple as walking into a room and saying, “Now this feels good.”

Feng shui can even help in the bedroom. Arranging furniture so that only warmth and freedom is displayed welcomes new relationships.

Focusing on the individual and incorporating his or her favorite things while letting go of objects that hinder him or her from finding success and happiness is the most important aspect of the ideology.

Individualized design is something Gomez swears by. In her own home, she designed separate offices for herself and her husband. His office is octagonal-shaped and high-energy, the most balanced shape in feng shui. It couldn’t be more different from her own soothing, Zen-themed office. Yet she says the harmony between the couple is strong, thanks in part to the arrangement.

To get most out of personalizing the feng shui experience, Reiko has a 10-minute consultation with a client about what he or she finds important before doing anything else. And self-evaluation is a process she knows firsthand.

With a master’s degree in political science from Claremont College Gomez seemed destined for life as a Washington, D.C., attorney. But a yearlong public-policy fellowship in upstate New York at the Siddha Yoga ashram changed all that. One year turned into four, and then she headed to India for four years, where she volunteered at children’s hospitals.

It was in India that she learned about vatsu, the practice of sacred architecture, which reveres the land and living within the environment. It wasn’t long before Gomez was studying feng shui as well. She decided to turn her newfound knowledge into a career when she returned to New York.

The timing couldn’t have been better. Ever since Sept. 11, 2001, more New Yorkers seem to be seeking feng shui, she says. “Something happened after 9/11. People wanted tranquility and peace in their homes,” Gomez says. “And so many more people started calling after that. It was as if people were saying, ‘I could make my home feel like my temple.’” ■

Ji Uhn Han is an editorial intern at New York Resident. Please send responses to news editor Michael Y. Park at michaelp@resident.com.