



# SUSAN CURRIE

## Pet Friendly Spaces

**M**uch has been written about the emotional value of having a pet or pets. Pets make us laugh, warm our hearts and even lower our blood pressure. Why not then consider our furry friends when designing our homes? Susan Currie of Susan Currie Design, owner of two precious dogs of her own, offers some sage advice on integrating pet-friendly ideas into our surroundings.

For those who are building or renovating, Currie suggests adding a pet-washing station to a laundry room or mudroom. A raised tub and handheld sprayer make the task infinitely easier and can cut down on the tracking of muddy paws through the main house. An outdoor shower such as a pool shower can also double as a place to clean off a dirty pet during



### ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Interior designer Susan Currie, ASID member and certified Aging in Place Specialist, is known for her traditional style combining “a twist of modern, a touch of vintage, and a sprinkle of fun,” as well as her inspirational passion for color. Currie has two rescue pups – Shih Tzus Paisley and Mica, and recently opened a second office in Atlanta.

warm weather.

Creating designated spaces for pet toys, pet care items, and even pets

themselves, helps to keep a house tidy. Currie says custom-built hideaways or cubbies where pets can snuggle up in comfort can be carved out of a variety of areas – under an island, counter, desk or even under a bench at the foot of a bed. Just be sure that the space is aesthetically pleasing and large enough for both the animal’s comfort and for easy cleaning. Because pets may need to be confined at times — when entertaining for instance — Currie suggests custom gates and doors as a more attractive option than baby gates from the pet store. A custom pocket gate can slide into a wall and disappear (just like a pocket door) while a Dutch door can be partially closed.

“Be creative,” said Currie, noting that a good carpenter who knows how to make a pocket door can also make a pocket gate. “Use a lattice pattern or slats or mimic something nearby to blend with the architecture of the house.”

A spare, unused area can even be turned into a pet room with the addition of pet-themed wallpaper and other pet décor. Stain and scratch resistant materials, and washability are all worth considering when choosing fabrics and flooring for your home.

“Read your labels,” said Currie who recommends indoor outdoor rugs made of polypropylene (many are colorfast and can stand up to scrubbing and even pressure washing), ceramic floors with the look of wood (they scratch less than real wood), and performance fabrics like Sunbrella and Crypton.

“I love polyester velvets, especially a poly velvet that has an antique look,” she added. “If they get crushed [by your pets] it’s OK; they’re made to look like they’re supposed to be a little crushed.”

If in doubt about the durability of a fabric, she suggests ordering a sample and testing it before taking the plunge.

Currie says even doggie doors are better looking these days thanks to wooden-framed options that can be painted to match the door for a more seamless look. After all, a pet is part of the family – and it’s their home too.

**1**

Pick out a washable fabric that coordinates with your décor and have a blanket made for when your pet perches on the furniture.

**2**

Invest in a set of attractive containers for pet treats.

**3**

Use a basket or toy box for wrangling your pet’s toys in one place.