



DESIGN · ART · REAL ESTATE + EVERYTHING REGAL

# KINGWEST



# PROBLEM SOLVED

## »»» ASK THE DESIGNERS

# HOW CAN CONDO DWELLERS BRING THE OUTDOORS IN?



**John Tong**  
3rd UNCLE Design Inc.

"The Holodeck, for those who watched *Star Trek*, was laser holographic technology that simulated real and seamless environments of one's fantasy (whole villages, mountains, waterfalls, oceans)—a science fiction idea not yet available to us. Fortunately, our minds are incredible instruments—a particular sound, image, aroma or quality of light can evoke powerful memories and transport us to other places. Focus on ephemeral qualities: A well-placed plant like a bonsai in a beautiful container or an expressive branch on a wall can evoke nature and, more importantly, a serene and spiritual place. There is a lot of hybrid furniture, with very sophisticated modern materials, that is used outside that can be brought indoors to put us in the outdoor-lifestyle mode. Also, quality of air goes a long way. Good ventilation, an air purifier or maybe even an ionizer might do the trick."



**Kate Thornley-Hall**  
Kate Thornley-Hall Inc.

"Start with a gorgeous rug, perhaps one with a foliage design. Bring in new scatter cushions with bold, bright colours—this instantly changes the feel of a room. My current faves are the lovely John Robshaw designs or Virginia Johnson's new crewel-work pillows with leaves and flowers. Don't resist vivid colour—shocking blues, fuchsia and greens can make a room feel instantly sunny. Place vases of spring flowers on different unexpected surfaces—in the hallway entrance, bathroom, kitchen. Use lots of tulips in spring colours. Even though they don't last long, nothing says summer is coming like overstuffed vases of lilacs—the scent fills the room with thoughts of *temps perdu*. And treat yourself to artwork that brings the outdoors in. A photograph of the sky on a wall can create the illusion of a window with a perfect view."



**Paul Filek**  
Burdifilek

"Rather than take things too literally, I think the best way to bring the outdoors in is to play up the character of light, based on your sun exposure. The majority of condos boast one vast wall of glass (or two, if you're lucky!). Taking a considered approach to highlighting this feature, filtering and controlling the light coming through that lens and understanding the quality of light can create different moods throughout the day. Framing the view and making that the focus will ultimately bring the best of what's outside in. Finding a balance between creating a window to the outdoors and feeling overexposed is key. Layering of materials and screens can create a dramatic effect. Also, adding reflectivity through the use of glass or metal elements will help carry the sparkle of light throughout the space."



**Shirley Meisels**  
Mhouse Inc.

"Nothing warms up a modern space more than organic textures, shapes and objects, and I almost always integrate elements that remind me of the sea into my interiors. Capiz shell chandeliers add a retro/glam/natural vibe to any room. Teak root tables look great with a piece of glass thrown on top; their beautiful sculptural shapes remind me of large pieces of coral. And linen is so fresh! Cool and comfy to wear by the beach, but how about papering your bedroom with linen wallpaper? The texture on the walls adds warmth while still feeling light and breezy. Oh, and I always keep a bowl of *fleur de sel* on the counter in my kitchen, yum!"



**Anna Simone**  
Cecconi Simone Inc.

"Condo dwellers who are fortunate to have balconies can learn how to maximize this benefit. Balconies often act as the transition to our view, but too often they're a forgotten space that's being used for storage. Our outdoor space can significantly contribute to how we live and entertain if we take steps to increase the fluidity from the indoor space outdoors. One way to do this is to integrate lighting. Similarly, use continuous flooring material from indoor-to-out to enhance the illusion of a larger space. Choose furniture that is manufactured for outdoor use but looks as though it was intended for indoors. Don't be afraid to accessorize outside as you would inside, using throws, cushions, candles and flowers. And, most importantly, make sure that your design aesthetic is consistent from your interior to your outdoor space."