

We had been living in our home for a year and a half, but my husband and I work full time and we have two little boys at home, so my time for decorating was nil. Velvet helped me design our bedroom, entry way and other areas of the house. I saw photos of a project that she did that was similar in taste to mine, so I met with her and liked her. I met other designers as well on the phone, but Velvet had the kind of sensibility and the taste I was looking for. I feel very good about the work she did. My house is Mediterranean in style and a little formal for my taste. The layout of the house was great already, but I wanted to contemporize it and tone it down. We have an enormous bedroom, and Velvet helped make it warm and inviting and romantic, but not cheesy. For me, it was a lot of about being minimalist, but also adding some color and giving it a serene feel. Velvet has great contacts in the area. We used a furniture builder she knows to make some furniture. He was able to make chairs, ottomans and our bed, and we got to choose fabrics from nicer fabrics stores. The furniture was reasonably priced and really great! Velvet is very easy to get a hold of. I am a big email person and we did a lot through email. As far as pricing, she isn't cheap, but as I said, I had no time for decorating and she was able to save me money in certain areas. She was great at staying on budget and keeping me up to date on the service budget, the furniture budget etc. She has been extremely fair, but it's an expensive endeavor. If you are going to hire someone to do this you should be clear what you want to spend and what you are getting. For me, it was very helpful to be guided by Velvet. She was great at working with my time constraints. She would do a ton of stuff, and we'd meet for an hour and go over everything. Communication is the biggest thing and she was good at learning what I wanted to spend more on and what I wanted to save money on. She had an associate in her office, Rachel, who is also great.

- Wendy Mantell