

FEATURE

PHOTO: FBI

For a home in Kohala Ranch, Shirley commissioned this headboard and nightstand made of sustainably harvested monkeypod crafted by Ryan Kekaneokamoku Donnelly of Modern Habitats Hawai'i.

# HEALTHY HOME

*Waimea designer focuses on sustainable, non-toxic furnishings*

**A**ward-winning interior designer Shirley Wagner believes in creating nurturing interiors for homeowners in Hawai'i. Her portfolio ranges from cozy beach cottages in Puako to palatial estate homes on the Kohala Coast. Now she's expanded upon her soul-soothing philosophy of interior design by introducing a new line of sustainable and healthy furnishings she calls, *Design Alive*.

Principal of Fine Design Interiors Inc., of Waimea, Shirley first discovered the topic of healthy

furnishings when talking with her professional upholsterer of many years. Come to find out that nearly all foam cushions are petroleum-based. Then when local woodworker Ryan Donnelly told her he'd stopped working with toxic glues and finishes and switched to non-toxic materials, she realized it was important to always question where your furniture is manufactured and what it is made of.

"I've been researching this intensely for five years," she said. "I've wanted to do a collection like this for a long time that brings style into the

healthy choice. It's definitely a niche offering for clients who want custom furnishings to be healthy and not full of off-gassing chemicals."

A member of the global Sustainable Furnishings Council, Shirley can offer package collections or individual pieces. Although 100-percent organic mattresses can be pricey for example, Shirley says sustainably-made furnishings and textiles aren't any more expensive than other high-end interiors, relatively speaking.

"Nobody in Hawaii really offers these types of

STORY BY KAREN ANDERSON

PHOTO: KRISTINA ANDERSON



**Shirley sifts through fabric swatches at her Waimea office.**

PHOTO: FDI



**Shirley Wagner, ASID, of Fine Design Interiors.**

products as a collection," she said. "It's a custom service that involves special ordering."

For those who want to go all in, hand-tufted silk carpets can be made with no adhesives, for example. There are also companies that craft eco-friendly, sustainable outdoor furniture made of green materials. You can also opt for sustainable, locally sourced hardwood furniture made with non-toxic finishes.

In lieu of new furnishings, there's the option of reupholstering existing furniture with organic latex derived from the rubber wood tree. If you're not ready or able to hire a designer, Shirley says you can start by ordering an organic mattress locally through SlumberWorld in Kona, or find organic sheets at Target.

"No matter what small steps you take, I feel it's important to make your surroundings as healthy as possible, for ourselves and for the planet." ■

# at home

LIVING WITH STYLE ON HAWAII ISLAND

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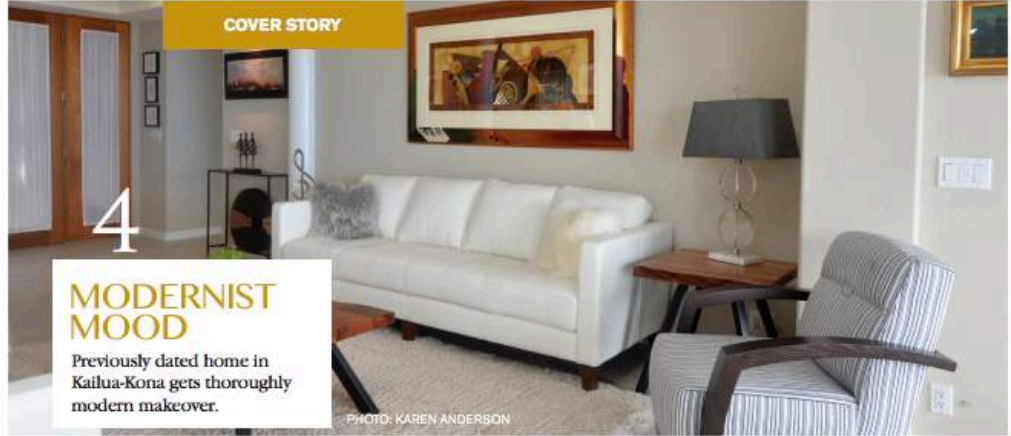
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**On the Cover:** The transformative remodel of this Kailua-Kona home was achieved by Interior Designer Carol Ann Von Hake, a certified kitchen and bath design specialist based in Kona who is also a realtor with Venture Sotheby's International Realty. Local vendors on the project include Ferguson Appliances, Stone Solutions, and Davis Tile & Marble.

PHOTO: KAREN ANDERSON



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### MODERNIST MOOD

Previously dated home in Kailua-Kona gets thoroughly modern makeover.

PHOTO: KAREN ANDERSON



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### DESIGN ALIVE

Interior designer Shirley Wagner introduces new line of healthy furnishings.

PHOTO: KRISTINA ANDERSON



## IN THE KITCHEN

PHOTO: JENNA ROUSSY

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### HILO KITCHEN

Then-and-wow: Chef's kitchen remodel yields stunning results.