



IN THE KNOW

# Orderly Conduct

SMART WAYS TO STORE YOUR STUFF

WRITTEN BY MARIROSE KRALL | PHOTOS BY DAVID MACALUSO

It seems we could all do with a lot less baggage. That's according to Claudia Giselle Tejada, CID, NCIDQ, of Brooklyn, New York-based Claudia Giselle Design LLC. Tejada should know. Her profession requires that she spend countless hours inside people's homes (and closets). "Most of us are guilty of owning more than we need and, often, more than we even want."

Tejada believes that "organization is a big part of the design process. Before I begin working with clients, I ask them to purge. I also recommend

that they work with a professional organizer, as the process of purging is both time-consuming and stressful."

One such professional is Katie Tracy, owner of Parlin-based Simple Spaces and current president of the Northern New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers. Tracy explains the causes behind our inability to let go of possessions. "Very often, people aren't taught what being organized means. They're not encouraged to get rid of things." The enormity of the task can also be disheartening.

"When you look at an organizing project, it can seem so overwhelming," Tracy says. "That can be a real stumbling block. But it doesn't matter where you start, it's that you start. Oftentimes, just taking that first step makes a huge difference."

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To encourage them to take that first step, Tracy helps her clients go through possessions one by one. "As we touch each item, I ask, 'Do you use it? Do you need it? Do you love it?'" The items that elicit a positive re-



1 | The master suite features a neutral palette designed to create a soothing sanctuary. The light tones of the built-in cabinetry match the mood.

2 | Keep surfaces tidy with attractive containers like those at right. A platter wrangles perfume containers, which are decorative elements in and of themselves.

sponse "are the kinds of things we should have in our homes. All the other stuff tends to become clutter."

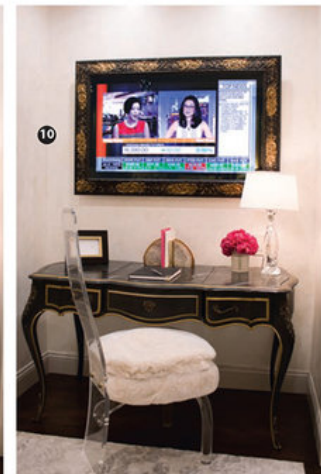
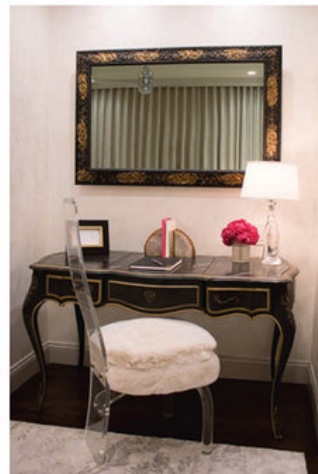
Even much-loved and often-used items can become "clutter" when there's no place to put them, Tracy notes. "Everything needs a home." Tejada agrees: "Having designated locations for belongings reduces general disorganization, which is stressful and a waste of time. In our residential interiors, we strive to create space for everything."

The designer recently worked with homeowner Teresia Bost to create a stress-free, uncluttered master suite in her Hunterdon County home. Tejada describes Bost's lifestyle. "She's an accomplished lawyer and leader in her community, but most importantly she's a mother to a young daughter, two dogs and a cat. She envisioned a space she could escape to on her own. She desired a wardrobe storage system that would streamline her day-to-day routine."



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**3** | Watches and rings stay snug in spaces specifically designed to keep them organized and visible. **4** | Handbags are handy and uncrowded in cubbies created especially for them. **5** | Shoe drawers in varying sizes provide specific spaces for both heels and flats. **6** | Tall drawers are ideal for boots. **7** | A window seat in the dressing room provides a perfect spot for putting on shoes and socks. **8** | A drawer beneath the window seat keeps laundry out of sight. **9** | What better place to keep ironing supplies than in the closet? This ironing board disappears into the drawer when not in use. **10** | A sneaky way to save space: hide the television in the mirror. This piece can alternate from television to mirror and back again — so there are no bulky electronics in the room.

Before that goal could be met, Bost enlisted the help of Stacy Matticoli, owner of Put It There, a professional organizing firm in Skillman. “I had quite a few things I needed to make decisions on,” Bost says. “Stacey really helped me make the decision to keep or let go. It was not a quick process.”

Once that arduous task was completed, Tejada got to work. “She asked me a series of questions to get an understanding of my routine