Draped in Tradition, Steeped in Style

By Jennifer Molk





WE LIVE IN FLORIDA FOR THE SUN, SEA AND spectacular views. To frame those gorgeous gifts from Mother Nature with the beauty they're due, there is Artistic Windows.

Scott Sowder, owner of Artistic Windows in Tampa, doesn't just breeze in, install drapes and blinds, shake your hand and breeze back out. He takes time to build a relationship of trust and respect with his clients, 70% of whom remember his name for when they're ready for repeat business. The connection yields a product and service that the customer will admire for years to come.

Scott has been in the design business literally since he was a child, toddling around with his mother, who is also a designer. "When I was a kid, I was installing window treatments for her," he laughs.

To be in a thriving business that long, Scott knows all there is to know about design styles. He's seen and hung them all: from conservative to contemporary; traditional to transitional.

"Everybody's different," he says. "A lot of designers will come in and it's their way or the highway. They come in and tell you how you're going to do it—and that really doesn't represent people and their homes. We try and guide them toward things that will make them proud and happy, yet work."

Scott continually researches the market to keep up on what's current, but sometimes his innovativeness surprises even himself!

"It's really funny—I can take a new window treatment or style or new colors, and a year later it's in the magazines, so I feel a lot of times I'm ahead of the game with some of it."

While a big slice of Scott's clientele trends toward traditional, he is seeing a surge in the contemporary style, including in the hardware and in motorization options, which are über popular for their convenience.

Along with convenience and aesthetics, Scott and his crew at Artistic Windows also specialize in functionality in the way of solar shades, extremely popular in the high rises.

"Wall to wall, ceiling to floor, they block the UV rays so the sun doesn't come in and deteriorate, but you still have a view," Scott recommends.

In addition to window treatments, Scott has begun entertaining the possibility of offering the full scope of design services since he's already, in many cases, further been entrusted to counsel his clients through choosing coordinating paint colors for the walls, select appropriate period furniture and complementary artwork, and even search out the right chotchkes, he calls them, such as candles and vases. He's currently networking through the wholesale design trade, most recently in Atlanta, to be able to offer his clients the best deal going forward.

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From blinds to draperies, shades to shutters, indoor and out, visit the showroom at Artistic Windows, or visit their website for a stunning portfolio of endless design choices at www.artisticwindowsinc.com. Scott Sowder can be reached at (813) 835-8805. ❑