

Palladian Window Treatments

*Interior Design Complements
Classic Architecture*

by Gail Romiti Littleton

Window treatments should be the first and last step of the interior design process, initially providing privacy and energy efficiency. At the last stage of design, drapery detail can express your personal taste and complement your decor.

It is a fact that even the most transparent polyester sheer fabrics will provide some protection to your furnishings from the abuse of the sun. The Illinois Institute of Technology revealed in a 1975 study that a window protected by a shading device during the summer repelled 50% of the sun's heat.

The adjective, Palladian, describes a classic style of architecture. Andrea Palladio, one of the most illustrious architects of the Italian Renaissance, discovered the architectural proportions for an arched window in the ruins of Ancient Rome. Palladio modified the motifs to his own distinctive style and renamed it after himself. Thus the *P* in Palladian is capitalized when referring to this specific architectural style.

Throughout history the Palladian arch style window, if decorated at all, was limited to drapery hanging from the ceiling and above the arch. It may have been painted with decorative motifs in the French Neoclassic era, and Victorian swags would have been draped above and around the exterior of the window shape, but not actually fitted to the window. Today, the possibilities are endless with custom products available through the Interior Designer.

CUSTOM HARD WINDOW TREATMENTS

Nanik, JoAnna and A.J. Boyd manufacture wooden louvers that fit the Palladian arch to create a fan-like sunburst and are best accompanied by a wooden shutter or blind. Wooden shutters are effective in controlling light and heat. Another product that can be custom ordered through an interior designer is the Hunter Douglas "Duette" or Graber "Crystal Pleat" arch, which opens and closes on the slant of the arch like a lady's fan. Hunter Douglas and Sun Flex fabricate horizontal blinds in aluminum, PV and wood materials. These blinds are continuous and maintain the architectural shape of the Palladian window. The cathedral arch, a vertical blind designed to fit Palladian windows, is available from Louver Drape. It can be functional and handsome.

CUSTOM DRAPERY HARDWARE

Graber's "Crystal Clear" flexible rodding has multiple functions and can be used with lightweight fabrics to create a sunburst style Palladian. Aluminum hardware for rod pocket drapery is manufactured as "Flex Illusion" by Kirsch, and designed for medium to heavyweight drapery fabric. Kirsch also manufactures "Kirflex" aluminum eyelet hardware. This hardware can be used to hang your pleated panels that are custom cut to fit the arch. Practically any window treatment for a

rectangular window can be interpreted to the Palladian by use of custom hardware. Whimsy valances and billowing panels are included in the endless list of possibilities.

ACHIEVING THE BEST RESULT

The Palladian window is not for the novice seamstress. It requires a lot of skill to cut and fit fabric to this window with virtue. Considering the expense of fabric and materials, one should always consult an expert. The client who hires a professional interior designer to act as specifier or consultant, project manager and purchaser, as the middle person between the custom workroom and himself, will usually be satisfied with the final results.

There is a common language shared between interior designers and industry. Designers function at the wholesale level and can help you budget lucrative advantages. The custom workroom should always measure, fabricate, and install the treatment for the best result.

Gail Romiti Littleton, IFDA, is a pattern fabrication designer, with seventeen years of sewing experience. Serving Washington Metro Area and abroad, Designer Drapery Plus, her custom drapery workroom is located in Sterling, VA. Gail, an active fundraiser, is Host Committee Chair for IFDA "Resources 93," on the ASID Public Relations Committee, working on "Designers for Humanity," a new fund raiser for "Habitat for Humanity."



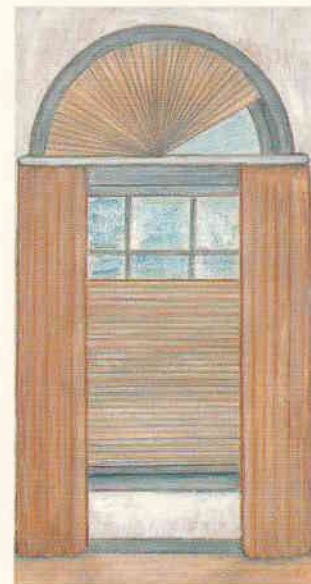
Wooden shutters and arch covering Palladian French doors.



Traditional embellishment with today's hardware...This Palladian window has curved pleated panels, detailed by rope & knots, tassels, fringe and tiebacks, hung over sheers that grace the arch and floor.



Historical swags, cascades and panels with Austrian sheer beneath, covering Palladian window.



Casually elegant Palladian with fan arch and bottom up Duette shade, accented by decorative rod with ripplefold draperies hung just off the floor, giving column effect.