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THE BEST OF BERGEN
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THE HEALTH ISSUE

MEDICAL
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FROM LOCAL HOSPITALS

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AGUILA LINN
AND HER ROAD TO REIKI

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MLB'S FIRST FEMALE GM
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DEMAREST'S JENN SHERMAN HAS BEEN A PELOTON INSTRUCTOR SINCE DAY ONE

LEADER OF THE PACK





COURTESY OF BRUCA MORFITT/ANKI STUDIOS
 EXTERIOR COURTESY OF EXCLUSIVE STONWORKS SPRAY COURTESY OF MARINA V. UMALI
 HEADSHOT COURTESY OF TANYANA ALI PHOTOGRAPHY



DEDICATED SPACES

Floor plans that incorporate discreet areas for storing frequently touched and dirty objects go a long way in reducing germs, says Alyson O'Hanlon, the designer who owns Clive Christian New Jersey. "We all need a drop area where we can leave shoes, handbags, keys, shopping bags and other items," she says. "A mudroom located off the kitchen is an ideal situation, but you can also leave the shoes and handbag at the door, and designate a drop counter in the kitchen for unloading groceries." The counter, she says, should be disinfected after each use.

In the reimagined butler's pantry she designed (seen on p. 47), a separate handwashing station designed by O'Hanlon (in a home decorated by Patti Smith of P. Smith Design in Ridgewood) replaces what might traditionally be a wet bar, so homeowners can wash their hands before entering the kitchen.

Marina V. Umali, owner of Marina V. Design Studio in Ridgewood, stresses the importance of opening doors and windows to allow fresh air to flow through rooms. "When I consult, I point out that mold and bacteria can thrive in clutter," she says. She also recommends humidifiers to help fight bacteria in dry rooms, and plants as a means of improving air quality. A practitioner of feng shui — arranging furniture to create balance with nature — Umali recently became a Well Accredited Professional with expertise in designing spaces that promote good health.

The ultimate source of fresh air, of course, is outdoors. In their survey of designers, the NKBA found that COVID-19 had spurred greater demand for enhanced outdoor living areas. The space above in Franklin Lakes, which was designed by RDS Architects and constructed by Exclusive Stoneworks, is an attractive example. At left, Umali's daughter waters the plant-based ceiling designed by her mother in a room (opposite) seen at the Grace's House fundraiser to benefit the Valerie Fund. >



MARIA UMALI