

# Products & People You'll Want to Know

## Atmospheric Lighting

BY LAURA JEAN WHITCOMB

It seems like a simple task: Find a new lampshade. But national chains only offer limited sizes and two colors (white and beige) so, more often than not, you're wondering if it might be easier to buy a whole new lamp.

Sarah Hils — a Canaan, N.H., resident who has worked in the lighting industry since 2005 — has seen it all before. “Lampshades were consistently the one thing that people needed,” she says. “People would tell me that they had been looking for a shade for years.”

She used her education in interior design and her knowledge of the lighting industry to fill a market niche; Hils opened her retail store, Suitable Shades & Such, in Lebanon, N.H., in early 2010. The store has a dazzling display of shades, lamps and lighting accessories. You can purchase a new lamp; an iron twist lamp with a leather shade or a bronze lamp with a bamboo shade will be a statement piece in any room. Or you can buy a new shade, selecting from several popular styles and shapes that she keeps in house. Or you can really have some fun and order a custom lampshade. Suitable Shades offers thousands of fabric choices, and Hils can order any size, shape, frame or diameter. “People are welcome to bring in their lamp for me to measure,” she says. “The proportion and the shape of the shades are important; if the shade is oversized or undersized it will throw off the look of the lamp and the effect of the light.”

Customers can select from paper, parchment or fabric shades, and



Laura Osborn

Shade Skinz slipcover

then make a number of different selections in that category. How about a two-toned paper shade? A one-inch trim at the top and bottom of a shade provides a contemporary look. Paper shades are typically hardback, a styrene-backed style that is easy to maintain.

Or perhaps a fabric shade fits the style of the room? Softback shades, primarily silk fabrics, are more formal, and clients could try a saturated solid color or printed pattern. Hils also has unique “shade skin” slipcovers in funky prints and patterns. “Shade skins provide something different than just a plain lampshade all the time,” Hils says. “They protect the shade and you can take them off and wash them. It really makes a difference when you replace a shade that is worn or dirty. That’s where your light comes from. New shades make a room look crisp and clean.”



Laura Osborn

No matter what you're in the market for, Hills will help you select the right shade. She offers free consultations to residential and commercial clients, and is willing to provide lighting advice for new construction or renovation projects.

"Sarah offered to visit my home to help me think about renovations to our bathroom," says Deborah Becker of West Lebanon, N.H. "She gave me excellent suggestions regarding colors, style and functionality for lighting and other fixtures. The personal attention and time that she gave was outstanding. I recommend Suitable Shades & Such to anyone who is interested in high quality service at a reasonable price."

Suitable Shades & Such is located at 2 Hanover Street, Suite 2, in Lebanon, N.H. Learn more online at [www.suitableshades.com](http://www.suitableshades.com) ■

## Post Plantings Made Easy

BY LAURA JEAN WHITCOMB

Abbie Gregson watched a landscaper use posts and string to stretch a honeysuckle vine across 12 inches of concrete rubble. The landscaper, a close friend, quickly ran out of hands to hold the wooden post while trying to stretch the string and the vine. Gregson, a gardener herself, realized that there must be a solution to this common landscape problem. She gave it some thought and created a new product: Garden Rounds.

Garden Rounds is a semicircular flower pot — it is a green plastic "C" that measures 10 inches wide and 10 inches deep. It is designed as an in-ground container "to fit close to a post," says the Brownsville, Vt., resident. "You can sink it right down into the ground at the time of construction." The inner curve of the "C", a 5-inch indentation, fits snugly against any column, post or pole.

But the first person she showed it to said, "I want to leave it on top of the ground." And why not? Garden Rounds pots are a deep green color — with a shiny exterior and a black recycled in-

terior — that keeps the emphasis on the flowers. The rims, which are patented, add a bit of detail to the planting, but also save the fingernails when stacking and unstacking. The bottom has drainage holes, like any flower pot you would sit on a porch or deck.

"People see it and think about how they are going to use it — above ground, below ground, or a little of both," Gregson says. "A caterer wants to use it for weddings to deco-

rate the poles in the middle of tents. You don't have to use dirt; you can place three pots of flowers in Garden Rounds. People use two to form a complete circle around the base of a flagpole or a mailbox." And they are great for right angles, such as the corner of a farmer's porch. You can't plant close enough because of the porch overhang, but you can set Garden Rounds on top of the gravel so morning glories, for example, can grow up the porch posts.

Gardeners are already using their imagination with Garden Rounds, planting perennials like clematis or mounding flowers like petunias. "It's utilitarian, but makes the flowers look terrific," she says.

The cost for one Garden Rounds pot is \$34.95. It is available at Dandelion Acres Garden Center in Bethel, Vt.; J&M Landscaping in Bradford, Vt.; E.C. Browns' Nursery in Thetford Center, Vt.; and Cider Hill Gardens in Windsor, Vt., to name a few. Learn more online at [www.gardenrounds.com](http://www.gardenrounds.com) ■



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