



DESIGNING WOMEN

Two successful decorators get in tune with their clients

Marisa Lupo (left) and Luisa Maringola have a lot to celebrate. As well as being Decorating Den Interiors' top revenue earners for 1999, last year the two were each named Canadian Decorator of the Year in the company's fifth annual competition judged by STYLE AT HOME editors.



Last November marked the 10th anniversary for Lupo and Maringola, who are based in Richmond Hill, Ont. and have been friends since high school. Just what makes these two energetic women so successful? It all comes down to getting in tune with sometimes nervous first-time clients, they say. "People often admit they're a bit intimidated — they're afraid a decorator will make them

throw out everything and will dictate what should go in. Our job is to make sure they're pleasantly surprised," says Lupo.

The team begins each of their projects with a thorough interview to find out a client's tastes and preferences. They then present

At 30 by 40 feet with 20-foot ceilings, this **family room** was architecturally stunning but rather uninviting. The solution: return a sense of scale by adding warmth and texture, and by creating defined seating areas with the room. A club chair, ottoman, chenille sectional and an Oriental rug make it comfortable to curl up by the fireplace and TV, while scroll-arm upholstered rattan chairs and a wrought-iron table lend an old-fashioned casual feeling to an airy breakfast area by the window.

Photography by John Triguanti