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## DECORATING + RENOVATION

# Elements of Style's Erin Gates Tells Us What You're Spending Too Much On in Your Home

The designer and author, who just launched an accessories line with Wayfair, is on a mission to make good style affordable

Posted October 13, 2016



Pillows from the Elements by Erin Gates collection.

Photo: Sarah Winchester

On the popular lifestyle blog [Elements of Style](#), designer Erin Gates urges readers to "Live your life beautifully," a mantra that she takes to heart. Her penchant for creating fun, stylish interiors with inspiration that ranges from

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rent fashion trends has earned her a devoted following and



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\$150 in keeping with her mission to make all styles and accents accessible to all. In the spirit of Gates's democratic approach to design, AD caught up with her to discuss seasonal decor, investment pieces, and where you're spending way too much in your home.



Designer and author Erin Gates

Photo: Joyelle West

**Architectural Digest:** Can you tell us a little more about your collection?

**Erin Gates:** I was approached to do this collection a year ago and knew immediately what I wanted to do: make classic but modern accessories at a price point that was accessible. I'd heard time and time again from readers of my blog that they wanted accents like those I show in the custom designs I do for clients, but at a nondesigner price. Something simple, like a velvet pillow with Greek key trim, was actually very hard to find under \$100, even though it's such a simple, timeless classic. And sometimes with lower price points come subpar design details. I made sure my pillows had down fill and cool accents like faux-leather piping and the lamps had great weight and even tassel accents that really make

them special. Spending less should not necessarily have to yield less; you can get a lot of bang for your buck with this collection.

**AD:** Why did you decide to work with Wayfair and AllModern?

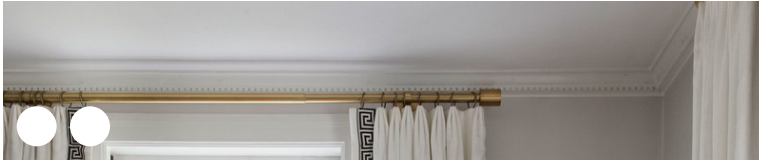
**EG:** They have a huge presence on the Web, which is how most people do their shopping these days, including myself. And they have a client base that shops in the price point that my products are in, so it seemed like a natural fit. It doesn't hurt that they are also based in my hometown of Boston!

**AD:** What void in the home marketplace are you trying to fill?

**EG:** I think too much product out there caters to super-trendy styles, which to me signifies disposable goods. I would prefer to put out items that really have staying power and a bit more of a traditional (but not stuffy) sensibility to them. Classic but modern and beautiful.

**AD:** What's one item people spend way too much on?

**EG:** Probably bedding. Super-high-thread-count sheets and duvets that cost a fortune aren't the best use of money if you don't have an unlimited budget. You can get great bedding at modest prices and find a local embroiderer to add a custom monogram to them for a reasonable price to create a high-end look. I know with dogs and a baby, I have to buy bedding so often that I never buy fancy stuff.



The line includes pillows, throws, and home fragrances.

Photo: Sarah Winchester

**AD:** What's one item worth investing in?

**EG:** If you're in a home you plan to stay in for a while, custom window treatments make a huge difference to the finish level of the home; they also function so much better. Otherwise, I always push clients to spend well on the big-ticket items that should last a very long time: sofas, beds, and dining tables.

**AD:** How do you recommend selecting furniture that will last?

**EG:** When it comes to upholstery, pay attention to the construction, fill, and fabric content of the pieces. Where are they made? Will the fabric stretch, pucker, or pill easily? If you can touch and feel the item in person before purchasing, make every effort to do so, since upholstered goods should also be comfortable, not just pretty. For other items, just do your research on materials and construction as well. Natural materials, [handmade goods](#), and solid wood construction are all signifiers of a well-made product.

**AD:** What are some good ways to change up your home's look seasonally without spending too much?

**EG:** Pillows and throws are easy to swap out and add texture and seasonal color to the home. I love adding in faux-fur accents once the weather gets colder and bolder colors during summer. You also can swap out your rug seasonally for a big change in the look of your room: a warm wool in the winter and jute in the summer.

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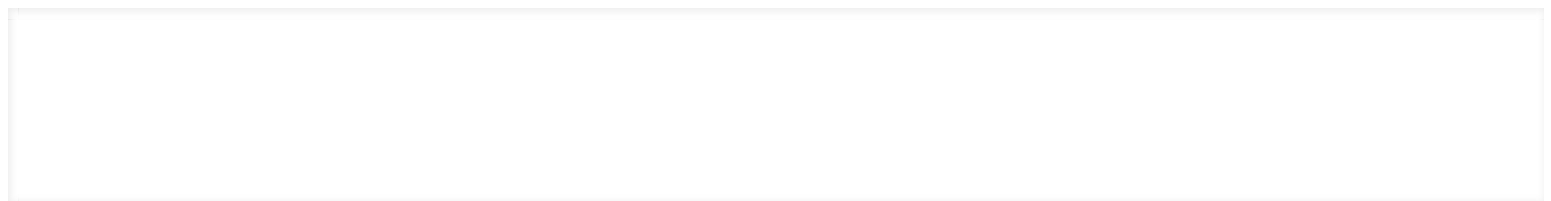
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