



"Splurge on items that make an impact. I think a stunning chandelier or piece of art can elevate a room instantly." *Le Petit Pentagone Chandelier* by Jonathan Browning, at David Sutherland, in the Decorative Center

"The color palette is key. I typically start with one item that gives me inspiration for the room — it could be a fabric, or a piece of art." *'Polaris'* by J. Antonio Fartan. Similar works from \$7,500 at [jantoniofartan.com](http://jantoniofartan.com)

"I think about human interaction within the space and start with the seating arrangement first. I prefer to not overcrowd a room, and like to use small accent tables that can be moved where space is needed." *Ovni Cocktail Tables*, all three for \$7,400, at Roche Bobois

"Invest in a good sofa or the main upholstery piece used in the space. For this home's living room I've put two long sofas facing one another with accent chairs on each side. It is meant to be a space for conversation and entertaining." *Profile sofa*, \$7,774, at Roche Bobois

# Space to Create

**DARLA BANKSTON MAY** knows a thing or two about creating the perfect living space — after all, she's been designing high-end residences in Houston for more than 20 years. While her style can run the gamut from traditional to contemporary, one thing remains constant: May, who favors local home décor boutiques such as Joyce Horn, Carl Moore and Mecox,

has an eye for color and layering. As she put the finishing touches on her most recent project in Piney Point Village — a 12,000-square-foot house built by Joy Homes — May, posh in all black with a pop of color in her bold mustard-yellow jacket, explains what elements make up the perfect living space.

—MEREDITH XAVIER, PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUNTER