



**a** Upon entering the store, shoppers encounter a vignette “retreat” that brings Soft Surroundings’ entire product line together. Surrounded by draperies, this vignette features bedding, home decor, candles, furniture, bath products and skincare items. **b** At the back of the store, an angled wall displays bath items and towels. A crafted chandelier adds an eclectic feel to the space.



## Women’s Refuge

### Soft Surroundings

The Boulevard, St. Louis

Soft Surroundings mailed its first catalog in 1999, offering women a selection of at-home clothing, sleepwear, bedding and skincare items.

According to Kathi McWilliams, creative director for JGA (Southfield, Mich.), women who seek a shopping experience to fit their casual, self-expressive and eclectic lifestyle feel their options are limited. So Soft Surroundings felt it was time to help fill the market by opening its first store in its hometown of St. Louis.

Designers from JGA decided to showcase how this target consumer finds refuge throughout her home in her bedroom, bath or special furniture pieces. Near the entrance of the store, customers encounter a “retreat” surrounded by draperies. Here, a cozy vignette brings the entire product line together, featuring a bed presentation, home decor, candles and bath products. Downlights in the ceiling and uplights in the floor throw a glow onto the draperies.

Around the perimeter of the store, generous amounts of natural lighting create a home-like atmosphere, while chandeliers in the fitting rooms and at key areas like bath and bedding give an eclectic feeling to the space. Designers also used random displays of track lights to throw focus onto items such as a blanket at the bottom of a bed. And in cosmetics, fluorescent backlights provide an overall departmental glow, while focus lights highlight the product.

Says McWilliams: “The character of the store, from the soft robin’s egg blue palette to the natural lighting and the detail brought out by focused lights, helps ensure the customer is seeing the product through the eyes of her home setting rather than a retailer’s perspective.”

### PROJECT SUPPLIERS

**CLIENT**  
Soft Surroundings, Hazelwood, Mo.  
**DESIGN**  
JGA, Southfield, Mich.  
**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
Icon Contracting Inc., St. Louis

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
Illuminating Concepts, Farmington Hills, Mich.  
**FIXTURES**  
Great Lakes Woodworking, Detroit  
M. Lavine Design Workshop, Saint Cloud, Minn.

**GRAPHICS/SIGNAGE**  
Bliss Collaborative, St. Louis  
**LAMINATES**  
Nevamar, Hampton, S.C.  
Wilsonart, Temple, Texas  
**FURNITURE**  
Andreu World America, Gardner, Mass.  
Soft Surroundings Catalog, Hazelwood, Mo.

**ACRYLIC**  
Cyro Industries, Rockaway, N.J.  
**UPHOLSTERY/DRAPERY**  
Fifield, Hingham, Mass.  
Coral, New York  
Robert Allen, Mansfield, Mass.  
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