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By TIM McKEOUGH

FOR many people, 2009 has been stressful, and the home a natural place of refuge. The furniture and interior designer Clodagh, known for her earthy, soothing aesthetic, has some advice for those looking to create comforting surroundings to see them through 2010, whatever that may bring.

“Your home environment should be your nanny,” said the Irish-born Clodagh, who is based in New York and goes by one name. It should make you feel “welcomed and warm,” she said, as soon as you walk in the door.

“I really try to design irritations out of people’s lives and to bring in elements that will make them feel better,” said Clodagh, who has followed the tenets of [feng shui](#) for 25 years and designed a number of wellness studios and spas, including YogaWorks in SoHo, Sasanqua Spa at the Kiawah Island Club in South Carolina and White Horses Spa at Doonbeg Lodge in Ireland. Her latest book, “Your Home, Your Sanctuary,” written with Heather Ramsdell, focuses on how to make every room in the home tranquil.

An important first step, she said, is “cleansing” a space of clutter and emotionally charged objects, like furniture from a previous relationship.

Then come the furnishings themselves. On a recent shopping trip, she found several to help soothe the soul, starting with a few key high-quality pieces.

“Let’s get basic here,” she said, explaining that a comfortable mattress should be a priority, because it helps ensure a restful sleep. Some of her favorites are the eco-friendly mattresses at [keetsa.com](#), which have memory foam embedded with natural green tea that provides long-lasting odor control, according to the site.

Next on her list was a large dining table, to encourage gatherings of family and friends. At Tucker Robbins in Midtown, she found a 10-foot Japanese table with raw edges, made from kumbuk wood. She suggested equipping it with a pair of long benches, rather than chairs — a “very physical” setup that encourages people to lean in and get close.

At Tama, a TriBeCa gallery of Asian furniture and art, she walked in and then stopped. “Do you hear that?” she asked, listening to the sound of water gurgling in a hollow ceramic fountain. It was the perfect thing to put in an entryway, she said, because it would immediately create a sense of calm.

At Global Table in SoHo, she found a traditional Japanese tea set, explaining her preference for cups without handles. “You just cup it in your hands, and you can inhale your tea” before drinking, she said.

Like most of the pieces she chose, the tea set had a strong sculptural element, but that was only part of its appeal. Objects like these aren’t just about looks, she said, but about the way they make you feel: “It’s about life-support systems.”