

A word from the experts

OUR TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ANSWER SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME AND DÉCOR...

We have spent a lot of time so far showcasing tasteful interiors, ground-breaking design and the talented designers that spearhead these initiatives. However, there are still those among us who, although unrivalled in their passion for interior design, may unfortunately lack the necessary 'know-how' to fulfil these aspirations. These aren't just the folk who take a pair of scissors to wallpaper, but those of us who know the basics, and want to take on a big project but do not know where to start.

With this in mind, we have created our "Word from the Experts" section. Each issue, we are giving our readers the opportunity to ask our esteemed panel of experts any design questions that currently have them stumped. So, if you have any design queries, uncertainties or problems that need some professional attention, contact us at:

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Justine Knox

A certified professional property presenter and home styling consultant; Justine specialises in bathroom and kitchen design as well as home furnishing.

Knox Design & Developments

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Peer Lüllmann

Self employed architect for 20 years, specialized in wood construction. Predominantly specialised in industrial architecture, although the last 10 years in Mallorca have been mainly individual houses.

Designhaus

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Franz and Ingrid Sailer

Experts in appraising antique textiles since 1976. Galleries in Vienna, Salzburg and Santanyi. Offering a timeless collection of artwork, antique kilims, modern paintings, sculptures and glass objects.

Galería Sailer

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Margarita and Rosario Mira

Sisters Margarita and Rosario Mira are quite young considering their know-how and professionalism. Their family business has been operating for 39 years: Studio Mirna was founded by Miguel Mira Nadal in 1971.

Studio Mirna

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We are planning to renovate our home and will be hiring a professional interior decorator. In order for us to be fully prepared for the first appointment, what are the main questions an interior director will ask to determine exactly what their client is looking for and hoping to achieve?

JUSTINE KNOX ANSWERS:

As Mallorca is a popular holiday island I would ask...
 Is this renovation for personal or development purposes?
 Is this going to be a primary residence?
 If it is a second home, how often will it be used?
 And will it be rented out at any point or only for personal use?
 Who will use this home?
 Do you have children and what ages are they?
 Do you have pets?
 Are you happy with the room distributions?
 How old is the property?
 Has the plumbing and wiring been checked?
 Are there any structural or damp issues?
 What mood would you like to achieve?
 Are you looking for a family home or a show house?
 What are your likes and dislikes relating to colours and textures?
 Do you like to entertain?
 Do you have any special requirements?
 And finally...
 What is your time frame?
 What is your budget?



What are the advantages of having a “green” roof?



PEER LÜLLMANN (DESIGNHAUS) ANSWERS:

A golf course on the roof of the world would be the ultimate, of course, but a green zone on your own roof can also offer you creative and attractive possibilities for relaxation. Roof and façade greenery in Mallorca's climate offers many advantages.

For example, during the hot summer months a pleasant air-conditioned ambience can be enjoyed by all occupants – with a cost reduction of up to 25 per cent for the cooling of the house. Also, by natural cooling and vaporisation the green roof construction offers perfect subsoil for solar stream modules, which generate more stream with lower operating temperatures. In addition, as a result of the actual heat insulation during the winter months, heating costs and warmth losses decrease. Positive side effect: living becomes quieter – up to 40 decibels.

During the rainy period the water through the storm drain decreases and caught rainwater is filtered from pollution in a natural ecological way. A green roof has twice as long a lifespan as a conventional one but, apart from the economic aspects, it is all about new aesthetics and creativity.



What are the main differences between “mass” and “class” in carpet manufacture?



FRANZ AND INGRID SAILER (GALERÍA SAILER) ANSWER:

The development of “mass” or “class” oriental carpets or kilims is, objectively speaking, the same – both are hand-knotted or woven, mainly in wool – but the price difference, of course, is enormous.

“Mass” products are produced in factories by men, women and even children, with thousands of textiles being knotted or woven, repeating the same pattern and colours. The wool is industrially spun and dyed with synthetic dyes, reducing the natural gum and therefore the durability of the material.

“Class” products are made by women at home or, if they are nomads, in tents; and are exclusively for personal use. The wool is from their own sheep, and is hand-spun and dyed with natural dyes from plants, minerals or insects. The pattern is passed on over several generations. Carpets and kilims differ in the skill or artistic intuition of the individual weaver; new patterns and symbols are created through marriage. Each item is therefore unique.

In Anatolia kilims were donated as an offering to mosques and have subsequently survived over centuries. The oldest kilim we have ever had in our collection was from 1500; this date was established through radiocarbon dating method C14, undertaken by the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH). Today it is privately owned by a collector in Italy. Quality is significant for one particular reason: it makes us happy and content and is in tune with what and who we are. This means appreciation – the best quality standard that exists!



MARGARITA AND ROSARIO MIRA (STUDIO MIRNA) GIVE US THE LOWDOWN ON KITCHENS:



What do you think is the most common mistake people make when installing a new kitchen?

A kitchen has to be beautiful and well designed as, now more than ever, it is an essential part of a house and sometimes is also an open space onto a dining room or living room. However, it has to be practical and useful; there is no need any more to bend down to look for things, etc.

How can that be avoided?

There are so many devices to make life easier now. Two hints: install drawers instead of doors on the cabinets; have the oven installed at a certain height.

When is the best moment to build a new kitchen and what time frame is needed?

Any moment is good to plan for a new kitchen. If someone is refurbishing the space we like to work together with the builders, to make sure we get all the water and electricity mains in place.

We all want to buy a quality kitchen – but what is a quality kitchen really?

We never, ever discuss quality with clients, as we would never sell anything that we don't believe in. Prices vary because there are different finishings: lacquer, wood, melamine, etc.

So does it make a difference whether we buy a Scandinavian, German or Mallorquin kitchen?

All manufacturers stock up on the same raw materials; if something new comes out we all have quick access to it. We differentiate from each other through the design, but that is according to the client's own needs and taste.

Is there still some truth to the myth of the “fire” (i.e. kitchen) the family gathers around – or is there a more up to date kitchen metaphor?

People come to our showroom saying, “I want a kitchen that does not look like a kitchen.” That is such a challenge! Why? Because, as I said before, the kitchen nowadays is open plan. People still gather around the kitchen; high worktops and stools are in fashion and it's nice to have a chat and have a glass of wine while talking with the person who's cooking.

