

COSY UP YOUR HOME

Change with the seasons

AS THE TEMPERATURES FALL AND THE NIGHTS ARE DRAWING IN EARLIER I FEEL MY HIBERNATION INSTINCTS KICK IN. THIS IS WHEN I START TO MAKE SUBTLE CHANGES AT HOME TO MAKE IT COSIER; FOR ME, IT IS AN ANNUAL RITUAL, AS IS LIGHTENING UP FOR SPRING.

by Justine Knox

During the warm summer months I, like many home owners on the island, use as much of my outdoor space as possible. We cook, eat, relax, swim and sun-worship outside. When we do come inside we want to be cool and fresh away from the hot sunny days and the balmy evenings. However, it is a very different scene come October-November, when our homes here in Mallorca get more indoor mileage. We snuggle up on the sofa in the evenings and dine indoors. Our bedrooms and bathrooms need a little extra heat for cooler mornings, and in general we just crave more warmth, textures and colour than in the summer when bright, cool whites always rule. As in high street fashion, the temperature changes suggest adding warmer layers with great textures and muted colours. If you feel you want to ring the changes and add some warmth to your home here is how you can achieve it. First of all, let's take into account the light changes, as the sun no longer puts in a daily appearance. During the bright, sunny days of summer many of us with large patio windows add soft sheers to diffuse the light and offer some shade from the sun's reflection. At this time of year it is nicer to let in whatever light and sunshine we have but to still dress our windows with heavier drapes which can be closed in the evenings to create our winter cocoon. Don't forget to take into account extra window cleaning at this time of the year, as our windows get grubby more often from the rain and winds; and unclean windows don't help to let in the weaker light. So, if you fancy changing your window dressings, take down your sheers and linens, get them cleaned and store them away for next spring. Now comes the fun part: take a look at the room or rooms in question and decide about colours, pattern and texture, which ones will



work best with your existing furniture and colour scheme. If in doubt take a cushion from your sofa and a photo of your room and ask for professional help.

Winter curtains with linings will help keep out the cold, and the fabrics big in vogue this winter are velvets, heavy rough linens and beautiful brocades.

Next take a look at your cushions, carpets and throws. Again, think about changing the textures and colours for the new season; think wool, fleece, fur and tweed.

New patterns this autumn are checks, tartans and paisleys. Mix them in with plains and stripes to give a lived-in homely feel to your living area.

Lighting is very important as we find more time spent reading, etc., indoors as the evenings close in. Task lighting is normally overlooked when creating home décor but when used correctly it can lead to more use of otherwise poorly lit parts of the house.



Layers

Always imagine your floors, rugs, furniture, walls, window coverings and ceilings as overlapping layers. For a feeling of space keep them all light; to create a mood try going dark; and for interest look for contrast.

Wallpaper is very much back on the scene in vivid patterns and beautiful textures. Try it out on one or two walls but never a whole room.

This year we are seeing a definite trend towards 1950s florals on papers and fabrics in rough, faded linens and mixed mats, with hand-painted glossy florals and graphic, almost architectural designs.

If your bathroom is feeling a little chilly, why not invest in a heated towel rail/radiator to warm up the room and deliver a sumptuous hot towel as you step out from the shower.

Again, I tend to stick to white towels in the summer, with brights making an entrance around the pool or on the beach; but when winter arrives out come the warm tones on trend at this time of year.

Colours

- Winter berries
- Shades of wood
- Jewel brights
- Faded darks
- Earth tones



Clutter is back!

If you are living in a modern minimalist home then the chances are it can easily feel cold at this time of year. Clutter can add colour and warmth in an interesting way. Try collections of anything: books, baskets, ornaments, plants, etc. As long as they are kept in organised groups you will maintain the modern feel but with a bit more interest. We can all buy beautiful furniture but the art of an interesting home is all about the accessories.

Don't forget your terrace or patio!

We still enjoy many a sunny day in the winter, and to make the most of them without feeling the chill why not invest in a fire pit. Lightweight portable units can now be found in iron or stainless steel, both in modern or traditional styles. Look out for robust blankets to keep knees and shoulders warm, then light up the fire and bring out the marshmallows. A great way to spend an autumn afternoon or evening.



Adding dimmers to main lights throughout the house allows us to change the atmosphere easily and creates a little bit more mood, which can then be enhanced by candles and mood lamps.

Candles are a must at this time of year; big, small, tall or short... any shape will do. The more the better but make sure they are sited safely. There is a new breed of candles run by battery if you are worried about fire hazards; they are made from candle wax so appear very real but run from a battery and bulb inside. They can be set to flicker or dim and are very authentic looking. However, the real thing comes in many colours and the scented ones add to the atmosphere beautifully.

Bedrooms can also be warmed up with the correct curtains and cushions, but maybe it's time to put away the fresh white linen and buy some new winter bedding or bed covers.

Take a look at your flooring... most of us have cool tiled floors, excellent during the summer but a little harsh during our cooler season.

Carpets and rugs are an excellent way to add warmth underfoot but can also be a great way of adding texture, colour and pattern to any room in the house.

Why not add an oversized rug to your bedroom, which goes completely under the bed, instead of the usual two or three smaller versions normally used.

When buying rugs and carpets take into consideration your floors and furniture; for example, a dark table will look its best on a light or bright rug rather than a dark one.

Don't wish away time waiting for the summer months to return; instead cosy up your home and enjoy the diversity of our seasons in Mallorca.

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