

Spice up your home this winter

From jewel tones to rich florals, we're having a love affair with all things over the top this season



A home decor expert says wallpaper can change the look of a room in an instant, and a velvet headboard will freshen the feel and add a luxe aspect. PICTURE: SIHAN WIID

BIDDI RORKE

“**T**HINK *MadMen*, 1950s palettes and splashes of colour,” says Nkuli Nhleko of Joburg-based Imbewu Designs. As Cape Town interior designer Sihan Wiid of Mink Design adds, hibernation calls for upliftment and change in your home. “Your space tends to be darker and gloomier during these months, and fresh additions to your living areas can transform the way you deal with winter.”

COLOUR: This is where the fun really happens. Nhleko says interior design borrows from other disciplines and takes its main cue from the fashion world. “Following the ‘camp’ theme at the annual Met Gala, interiors are getting a touch of the absurd, the mismatched and the slightly outrageous,” she says. In other words, steer clear of beige, grey and neutrals and celebrate big prints and deep, rich hues instead.

“These jewel tones (think burnt orange, emerald, teal and royal blue) are reminiscent of the 1950s palette, with unexpected pops of colour,” Nhleko says.

Introduce these colours into your home by updating scatter cushions, recovering an ottoman or adding a throw to your favourite couch.

Wiid says black, soft blues and navy base colours are still top of mind, along with rich floral patterns boasting bursts of pinks, greens, teal and yellows.

“Antique or German gold works well as subtle accents in a space. This comes through in gilding work, wall cladding and furniture. Wallpaper can change the look of a room in an instant,” Wiid says.

LIGHTING: “This is the single most important element of design when it comes to the ambience and warmth of a room,” Wiid says.

“Consider accent lighting in the form of floor lamps, track lighting focusing on your favourite artwork or light pendants on a dimmable switch.”

Nhleko says there is a move towards stained vintage patterned glass that casts a warm amber glow on a room. Use sparingly for maximum impact without darkening your space. If you want to make a dramatic difference to your space, invest

in a free-standing wood-burning cast iron fireplace.

TEXTURES: “Mohair, terry cloth and wool are big this season. It’s a clear move away from smooth leathers and suedes, and the chunkier the statement furniture is, the better. It’s all about adding a bulky, substantial piece to your space,” says Nhleko.

For a total contrast, consider an occasional table in white-veined black marble.

“This masculine material immediately softens everything around it,” Nhleko says.

“And then there’s rattan. India Mahdavi, who won Elle Décor Interior Designer of the Year 2018, has mixed it up and is using this material in weird and wonderful ways. It’s no longer just about outdoor chairs in Parisian cafes. Bring it indoors and enjoy sustainable, lightweight, easy-to-move chairs in your own home.”

When it comes to warming up your bedroom, Wiid suggests layering up with faux fur. Mink-backed throws coupled with a velvet headboard will freshen the look while adding a luxe aspect.

GREENERY: Remind yourself of the great outdoors with hanging

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plants and ferns at various heights in your living space. Nhleko suggests Lisa Fire Design for interesting porcelain vases and greenery slabs, along with opaque glass vases in tones of deep green and amber. Quality scented candles are always a brilliant addition.

FLOORING: “Loose rugs are always a good idea. You can warm up your screeded floors by adding an authentic Persian piece,” says Wiid. “Consider underfloor heating if you are renovating and want extra luxury under tiles in your living area.”

Nhleko says there’s a strong move towards burnished, honeyed tones of walnut when it comes to flooring and furniture, away from the currently ubiquitous white oak. Who says rugs must stay on the floor? “A beautiful, textured Moroccan carpet will add interest and warmth to any wall,” Nhleko says.

DIY IDEA: Refresh a server or side table by painting it in a colourful “antique” finish using chalk paint.

“It will give your room pops of colour,” Wiid says. “Gold-leafing artwork is a fun activity to experiment with this winter.”