



by Louanne Litke

Personal Spaces

Design Tips to Inspire the Creation of a Beautiful Bedroom

When the kitchen or bathroom needs a new look, the revamp usually begins with a visit to a showroom and a discussion with a designer. But when it comes to the bedroom, few people are inclined to call on a designer for advice. Perhaps it's because the bedroom is such a personal space that many people question whether someone else can actually help them achieve the look and ambience they want.

The truth is that designers are as adept at putting together a bedroom that reflects your tastes as they are at finding canny ways to maximize cupboard space in kitchens. Here are some tips to help you make your bedroom a place of beauty and tranquility. Identify your inspiration To find your colour palette, begin by identifying one inspirational fabric or accessory – like a cushion or rug – that you love. The entire bedroom can be designed around the colours, tones and ambience of this item. If you're



having trouble identifying an item to get those design juices flowing, then try going at the process the opposite way, mentally eliminating items you don't find inspiring.

You'll likely be left with a few things you truly love and the final choice will be easier.

Rearranging the room

A well-designed bedroom is comprised

of many elements, including draperies, bedding, floors, walls and upholstery. Your inspirational item will hint at a primary colour choice around which you can build the look of the room. When you're making the big decision on wall colour, take your inspirational item with you to the paint store and ask for advice. With the myriad colours and textures available, there really is a perfect colour for your walls.

When selecting fabrics for your bedroom, consider these insider tips: Group opposing fabric patterns whenever possible – this eliminates fabrics competing for visual attention. Each individual fabric should look more pleasing when placed alongside another item than it does when seen in isolation. For example, use large patterns with small ones, or a pattern next to a solid colour. Mix stripes with florals, or place small, fine prints next to larger geometric patterns.

You will be amazed at how your

INSPIRATION

The Master Suite: A Stylish Sanctuary

Reminiscent of the great country manors and hunting lodges of Europe, this master suite blends a sense of rural, equestrian charm with distinctly contemporary amenities. A heavy brocade bedspread in ivory ties together the complex barley twist four-poster bed, intricate chandelier curves, and lushly textured carpet. By choosing non-identical bedside lamps and tables, there's a sense of evolution — a feeling this room has changed and developed its unique personality over time. French doors leading to a private balcony overlooking the gardens add a further touch of Old World ambience and compliment the coved ceiling with its rich, deep crown molding.

In the ensuite, an antique, claw-footed bathtub with exposed plumbing fixtures comfortably rubs shoulders with a sleek, 21st-century glass and marble shower enclosure boasting multiple showerheads. The angular look of random floor tiles in three shades of earthtones are offset by the curvaceous, abstract florals of a circular scatter rug. And, in this suite's sole concession to technology, a flat-screen plasma television is discreetly suspended above the double doors — perfectly positioned for viewing from the tub, otherwise virtually unnoticeable and non-intrusive.



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personal style will naturally emerge as you experiment with colours, designs and shapes.

Also, select contrasting surface finishes to enhance visual interest. For example, pair light-reflecting fabrics, such as silks, with matte-finished cotton blends. Or select heavy textures to accent smooth-surfaced ones (e.g., nubby, cozy chenille is a great visual contrast alongside smooth, soft satins). When choosing fabrics for your bedroom, remember that everything, including the drapes, should be tactile and inviting to touch. Finally, since draperies, bedding and upholstery have practical requirements, make sure your fabric choices are appropriate to the application.

Floors and walls

Floors and walls play a significant role in creating a mood for your room. For example, a deep, dark floor anchors a room and evokes a sense of security, while a light floor offers a feeling of relief and space. Similarly, darker walls embrace while lighter shades soothe. Creating mood with your floors and walls is a powerful way to add beauty to your bedroom.

Light options

Lighting is a very important compo-

nent of the bedroom – it has the power to create ambience in the room while also meeting the practical needs of day-to-day life. Relaxing, reading and dressing all have different lighting requirements, so it's important that bedroom lighting be flexible.

Think of lamps and fixtures as an opportunity to accessorize while providing for each functional need in your bedroom.

Choose a fixture with character and then try putting it on a dimmer switch.

Live with layers

Layer your window treatments. Blinds that feature a sheer component, or drapery sheers, give you the option of enjoying daylight while retaining an element of privacy. Layering also helps you achieve more versatile levels of darkness based on your sleeping needs and the changing seasons. Finally, layered window treatments impart a sense of luxury to a bedroom.

Dressing it up

Accessories have the power to transform a plain bedroom into an inviting space filled with warmth and charac-



ter. When “dressing” your bedroom, place accessories as if you were merchandising your room for a presentation. Before you begin, look at the space and identify several focal areas. Try these ideas:

- Hedge in the bed with lamps, artwork and accent throw cushions;
- Surround a draped window with framed photos, or

add wall sconce lighting;

- Accent an armchair with a throw, small table, plant and lamp.

When grouping multiple objects, make sure each cluster is composed of an odd number of items to achieve an eclectic look.

Know yourself

You don't have to be a professional designer to know your own tastes. If you're willing to put in the time to identify an inspirational object and you follow these professional tips, you'll have your own beautiful bedroom in no time. Providing beauty in this most personal space of your home will influence your frame of mind and create a sense of well-being every day. □

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INSPIRATION

The Ensuite: A Luxurious Retreat

Light and airy, this bathroom is inspired by the timeless beauty of a white-on-white colour palette with subtle earthtone accents. Brimming with sunshine and natural light, a two-person tub becomes the focal point of this personal retreat, its marble step meticulously echoes the shape of the wrap-around bay window that provides panoramic views of the surrounding meadows. Elegantly unpretentious window treatments form a perfect balance to the richness of the marble flooring and heavily detailed cabinetry.

Blurring the distinction between indoors and out, a matched pair of floral arrangements in ornate glass vases are surrounded by candles for the ultimate romantic ambience. Mirrors, placed not only above the sink where one would expect to find them but also tucked between the windows, create the impression of a room filled with blossoms and further enhance the sense of open spaciousness.



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