

Summer Livin'

Interior Designer Doreen Chambers Shows Us How To Brighten Up Our Homes For Summer

It is officially summertime! Flowers are bloomin' and birds are chirpin', but you may not be feeling the spirit of the season inside of your home. It's Ok. According to interior designer Doreen Chambers of Florida and New York's Doreen Chambers Interiors, letting the sunshine into your living space for the next few months is not only easy, but is guaranteed not to break your bank!

First things first: have a clear vision of the look you want to portray. "Look through current shelter magazines for ideas and develop a plan," Chambers advises. "This will also help prevent random



shopping." True, many home magazines display elaborate set ups that you may not be able to recreate or afford. Don't fret! Allow your newfound inspiration from the magazines to guide you when buying accessories; revamping the living space that you already have.

"Accessories are the quickest way to bring summer into a space," asserts Chambers. She suggests throw pillows, area rugs, slip covers, bowls of fruit and unarranged fresh cut flowers. The possibilities are endless, especially when shopping at Target, HomeGoods, Pottery Barn, Ballard Designs, and West Elm where the stock of options is plentiful and the prices are cheap!

Now, when shopping for new home accessories, it is easy to lose your head and purchase funky, artsy pieces that, although eye-catching, don't serve much of a purpose. Bad idea. According to Chambers, concentrating on pieces that are functional is best. "Focus on items that are not only beautiful but practical," she says. "For example, a crystal bowl looks beautiful on its own and can also contain fruits, candles, etc." Oh, and don't go overboard. "A sofa doesn't need an abundance of throw pillows," she explains. "Two or three that coordinate are usually enough."

Alright, so we've got our plan and our accessories, yet we still don't feel as if we've brought summer into our living space? A splash of fresh paint may do the trick.

"Well, paint is a great and inexpensive way to change the season or mood of a room. Less than perfect furniture can be sanded and painted in neutrals of cream, pale green, soft yellow or classic. Linen and sheer drapes will also give a room a light, summer feeling."

So you are not one to shop for pillows or whip out a paint brush? Not a problem! Bringing summer into your home can be as simple as selecting some fragrances. However, when doing this, you may want to loosen your purse strings.

"My favorite things at the moment are diffusers, which come at every price point, but this is where I would suggest investing a little more. Aromatic oils are expensive to produce and the less expensive ones are generally overwhelming or too astringent. Voluspa.com has several to choose from, which are subtle, not overwhelming. Candles are always great. Again, it pays to spend a little bit more."

For more information on Doreen Chambers, please visit her website at www.doreenchambers.com.

-Holly Clay

