



I've Got a Feeling

Design Secrets for Creating Rooms with Mood



B. CLAESSENS, INSIDE, JUPITERIMAGES

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freshHOME SUMMER



Like a work of art, a room has the power to evoke any emotion, be it calm, excitement, romance or even creative energy. “There are combinations of colors and shapes that all human beings have an emotional response to,” explains Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz, founder of BNODesign (bnodeign.com) and author of the book *Emotional Rooms*. Do you want your rooms to speak more to people’s hearts and emotions? Here are his and other experts’ secrets.

feeling Elegance

White, brown, gray and black are the colors of structure, authority and reassurance, and when assembled in the right ratios, create a feeling of luxurious comfort, even when used in a small home or apartment.

Antiques, whether refined or rustic, also add to the mood: they make a room feel timeless.

Use large design pieces, such as mirrors or armoires. However, don’t overfill the room. Space creates a sense of luxury; note how far apart the couches are!

Finally, well-dressed windows spark strong emotions. Add curtains with textural fabrics and deep colors, such as maroon, eggplant or deep blue.



feeling Calm

Everyone needs a relaxation room, a place to decompress after a long day. For this kind of space, here are the core rules of design:

Repeat one color as much as possible. "It has a more soothing effect than mixing things," says Noriega-Ortiz. Neutral colors are an obvious choice, and so is a pacifying shade of blue.

No hard edges. Everything here should be shaped or rounded; nothing hard or angular. For example, choose a sofa with a curved back and shapely arms. The advice applies as well to rugs—avoid square or rectangular shapes, and use either rounded rugs or wall-to-wall carpet.

Think cushy, stuffed chairs and cushions. You want furniture that envelopes and pampers you.

Natural light is always nice, but gauzy blinds over the windows will make it soft and diffuse. Also, avoid overhead lighting in favor of shaded lamps.



SOFT EDGES



REPEATED COLORS



SHADED LAMPS



STUFFED CHAIRS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JUDY TERIMAGES; LISA ROMERIN; BOTANICA; H&L/M. GREEN; INSIDE, WENDELL WEBBER; BOTANICA; H&L/M. GREEN, INSIDE



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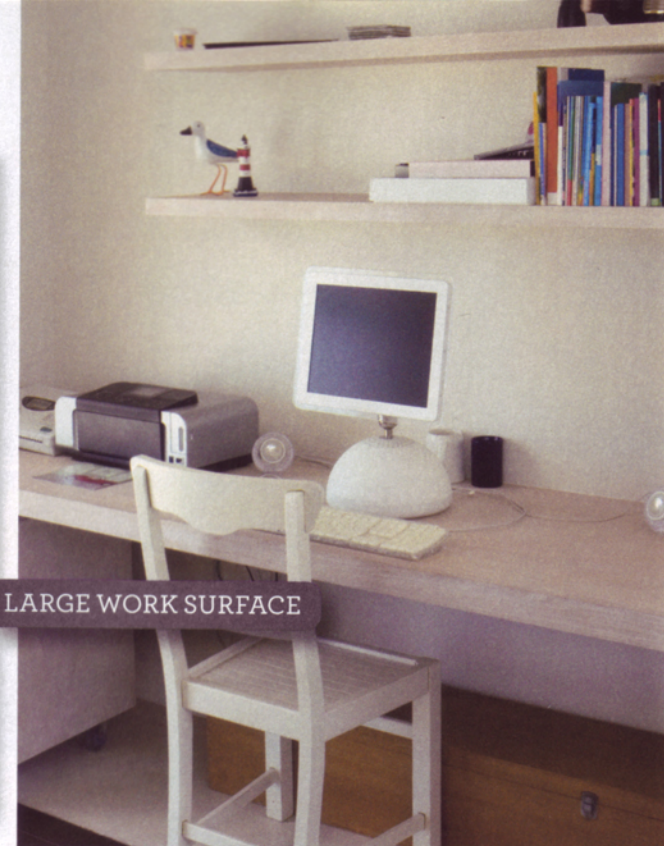
Five-Sense Design

When you're designing to inspire a mood, you want to appeal to as many senses as possible. But most of us focus on just two: *sight* and *touch*. For a more authentic emotional experience, you also need to appeal to the other senses: sound, smell and taste.

For *sound*, the answer is music, of course. Any mood-inducing space needs a stereo, even if it's just a small iPod docking station. You can create playlists for your different moods—your favorite love songs; happy, upbeat tunes; understated instrumentals that won't compete with the conversation.

Then there's *scent*. Candles are an obvious choice, but for something different, get an aromatherapy diffuser. These affordable (and often decorative) receptacles are designed to fill the room with the evocative scent of whatever essential oil you drop into it—jasmine, patchouli or gardenia for a romantic room; tangerine, lemon or bergamot to energize you; lavender or cedar to calm your mind. You'll find aromatherapy products in most natural food stores or online at places such as dreamingearth.com or diffuserworld.com.

Finally, there's *taste*. It's dangerous for your waistline to leave treats throughout your home, but for when the moment is right, be sure to place mood-inducing nibbles in all the right places: jelly beans in a fun room, chocolates in a romantic room, slices of tropical fruit in a room for inspiration and creativity.



LARGE WORK SURFACE

feeling Inspired

You don't need to be a painter or a musician to want a room that brings out your creative side. This can be the perfect place for someone who wants to immerse herself in a hobby or some other creative pursuit. Here's what to do:

Keep it minimal. "I see a lot of open space here," Noriega-Ortiz says. Open space in a room gives a sense of freedom, both physically and mentally.

If you have a hobby where you need a work surface, get a large, light-colored table for one side of the room.

Use natural textures—woods and leathers—for a simple, clean look. Keep that in mind particularly when picking furniture.

Don't overload walls and shelves with personal art, photos or items. While the intention is good to surround yourself with motivating images and objects, often they tie you more to the past than inspire you to be creative in the present.

Don't cover the windows—let in as much natural light as possible.

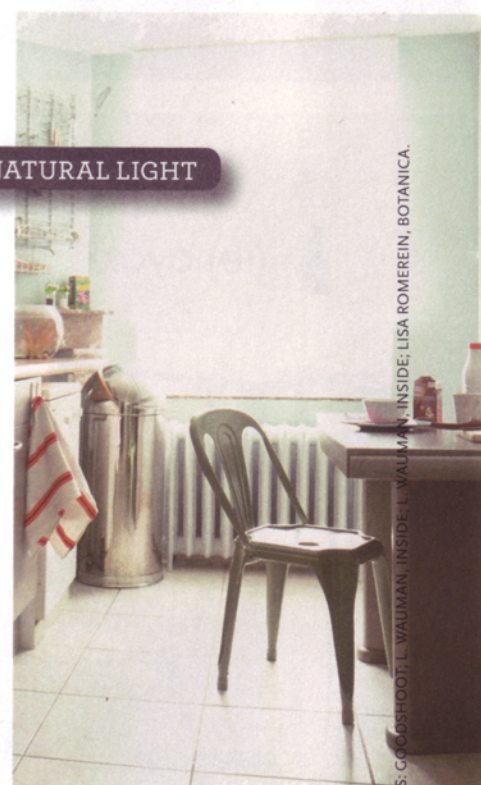
Use swivel lamps and halogen or LED lights directly over work spaces that might otherwise be in dark corners.



SWIVEL LAMPS



NATURAL WOODS



NATURAL LIGHT

TOP TO BOTTOM: JUPITERIMAGES; GOODSHOOT; L. WAUMAN, INSIDE; L. WAUMAN, INSIDE; LISA ROMERIN, BOTANICA.



feeling Social

Some rooms are meant for people to linger, chat, share thoughts and ideas. To that end, you want it as comfortable and inviting as possible.

Choose cheerful, light colors—muted oranges, yellows, limes or browns. The right shades create a sense of warmth and comfort, as opposed to the cold formality of white or the heaviness of a dark maroon or gray.

"I think of furniture as sculptural, but that doesn't mean it can't be comfortable," Noriega-Ortiz says. Go with a nice long sofa, but instead of planting a coffee table in front of it, use an ottoman. "If you want friends to stay and chat, you want to make them as comfortable as possible, to have a place where they can literally put their feet up," he says.

Put end tables near the sofa and chairs so folks will have a place to put their drinks.

If at all possible, have a fireplace in the room.

Use a large circular rug. "I love the shape for this kind of room. They bring people together," says Noriega-Ortiz. "It's a very natural shape for human beings. I mean, before we even had houses, what did early man do when they came together? We gathered around the fire. We gathered in a circle."



FIREPLACES



MIXING FURNITURE



CHEERFUL COLORS

feeling Romantic

Never mind the overdone idea of a room decked in reds with heavy drapes and mirrors. We're talking about a sensual space, one that inspires passion without being garish and tawdry.

For color, Noriega-Ortiz chooses purple, no doubt about it. "This is a passionate color. It's suggestive and seductive without being overtly sexual," he says.

Mix hard, emphatic furniture with pieces that have an appealing softness. "An example might be a bed frame of dark wood or something in a Spanish Colonial motif, but coupled with lavender sheets and lots of pillows," he says. "You're looking to balance the ying and yang, the masculine and the feminine."

Lighting? Candles are a timeless statement of romance. Avoid using strong overhead lighting in a romantic space; instead, place handsome, artistic lamps that throw off filtered light.



PURPLE!

Fabric Magic

Some tailors do far more than hem trousers and skirts. Creative ones will turn your fabrics into one-of-a-kind curtains, duvet covers, pillow covers, window seats or even table cloths. Some tailors even reupholster furniture! If you find the vintage fabric of your dreams, show it to a tailor you trust and see what he or she can do with it. Chances are, having a tailor turn your favorite fabric into a pillow will cost less than buying a mass-produced pillow at a high-end furniture store.



ARTISTIC LIGHTING