

Decor Score: Landscaping lights extend your scenic outlook

by *Rose_Bennett_Gilbert*

Q: We bought a house in the country with a great view - it overlooks the lake and hills beyond. It's wonderful by day, even though the glare is sometimes a problem. But at night the windows are just big, black rectangles. Should I put up curtains for use at night?

A: That's one answer. Curtains that can be pulled out of sight by daylight **HIGH, WIDE AND HANDSOME** - Beautifully furnished with natural materials, this mountain house cherishes its view, by day and night. CNS Photo courtesy of Lindal Homes. will certainly cozy things up by night. You might also investigate shades that stack on the windowsill and can be raised from the bottom up. For that, check out a major manufacturer such as Hunter-Douglas at www.hunterdouglas.com.

Another thought involves investing in outdoor lighting. A good landscaper can help you arrange low-voltage lights and spotlights that will extend your scenic outlook into the wee hours. Exterior lighting can bring the outdoor scenery right into your living space, which will be especially effective if your interior space also features natural materials, like the soaring board walls and stone fireplace in the sitting room we show here (borrowed from Lindal Cedar Homes' 2007 edition of "Living Dreams."

Oh, about the glare - consider having a window film installed on the panes. You'll need a pro to do it right. The film's virtually invisible - you won't see it at all, except in your diminishing squint lines. One source to check out is www.vista-films.com.

Q: Can you help me choose the correct lighting over a bathroom wash basin? My bathroom has the standard light fixtures from the builder. I've replaced the regular incandescent bulbs with spiral halogen bulbs (I think they are halogen) in an effort to be economical and "green." The resulting light is terrible. Now I want to replace the fixture and bulbs.

A: The quick answer to bathroom lighting is make it as bright as possible and be sure the illumination completely envelops the sink area, so you can see your face from all sides. To achieve this "surround" lighting, you'll need fixtures above and on both sides of the sink. Also, needed is a fixture in the center of the ceiling for walk-around safety lighting. And a lot of designers are adding crystal chandeliers and wall sconces, just for the

bling of it.

You'll want to choose warm white light - avoid ghoulish fluorescents that give you a greenish cast you don't need first thing in the morning. Also add a dimmer switch on that ceiling fixture so you can lower the light to spa-like levels when you need extra pampering.

For more info on home lighting than you may want, click on The Illuminating Engineering Society's Web site at www.ies.org. This is where the pros go for their bright ideas.

Q: We have a tiny foyer in our apartment, just a step-through, really. I don't know what to do with it. Should we just paint it to match the living room and kind of ignore the space?

A: A ringing "never!" All space is valuable, especially in an apartment. Treat that foyer as if it were an important space ... and it will be. For example, if you paint it brilliant crimson - ceiling, too - no one will ever ignore it again. Or you can hang overscaled, extroverted wallpaper, something with a strong pattern and bright colors, so passing through becomes a sensory experience.

You could add an area rug, a wall-hung shelf, however tiny, and set a small lamp in there, too, and a basket to drop your keys and such, and - presto - the foyer has become a room of its own.

Â© Copley News Service

Decor Score: Landscaping lights extend your scenic outlook by Rose_Bennett_Gilbert