Home Zone: Come to your senses

by Maggie_Reed

It's the end of a long day. You're stressed.

Noise. Dirt. Stale air. Traffic. Tension. Stress.

LET THE GOOD LIGHT SHINE IN - Silhouette window shadings from Hunter Douglas can transform the light in a room from harsh to soft while still providing UV protection and a view. CNS Photo courtesy of Hunter Douglas. CUSTOM FIT - The new 'Octavia' from La-Z-Boy allows consumers a total of eight custom recliner designs along with hundreds of fabrics and leathers to choose from. CNS Photo courtesy of La-Z-Boy.

And, it's time to go home. Finally!

Relax. Unwind. Let your senses take over.

Hunter Douglas, manufacturer of custom window fashions, polled leading spa directors to find their tips for bringing the spa-life home to help you.

"There are different aspects in design that affect our senses and it is the combination of these that contribute to a sense of well-being and conspire together to create a mood, an ambience and an atmosphere," said Sean O'Connor, spa manager for the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group.

Bringing in your fundamental senses is key. Here are some tips from the pros who know:

LIGHT

An abundance of studies prove just how important natural sunlight is for our health. To help with that, get rid of fluorescent lighting and put all lights on dimmers. Also, while natural sunlight is best, ultraviolet rays can be damaging not only to your skin but to furniture and artwork.

Hunter Douglas provides an array of window fashions that allow you to regulate light, privacy and view. Silhouette window shadings have two sheer fabric layers with gently curved fabric vanes between them enabling you to transform the light in a room from harsh to soft while still providing UV protection and a view.

Luminette Privacy Sheers are similar to Silhouette but have a vertical orientation making them perfect for sliding glass doors.

COLOR

You've set the mood with light, now set it with color. Want passion? Choose red. Need to calm down? Choose blue or green.

"For home, selecting a color that appeals to you is a strong factor in promoting a sense of well-being," said Alison Howland of Aveda, manufacturers of beauty care and various other home products.

She suggests people should look at a wide range of colors and write down how each color makes them feel. "This exercise will help a person to understand how they relate to color and what choice will promote

harmony," Howland said.

SCENT

Every smell has a story, so it goes. "Our olfactory system is the most primitive sense that we, as human beings, have. Did you know that we remember everything we smell and we associate a memory with that smell?" Howland said.

And, of course, we want our homes to elicit pleasant memories for ourselves and our guests. For instance, citronella gives a feeling of peace and security; peppermint invigorates; lavender soothes and calms.

Yet scent is also very personal so don't be afraid to experiment.

TEXTURE AND TEMPERATURE

Touch is experienced through the largest organ we have, our skin. Think about how wonderful it feels to get into a soft, comfortable bed at night. Don't scrimp on your bedding.

As for temperature, one square inch of skin has 13 sensory apparatuses for cold and 78 for heat. So even if you have the most comfiest of beds, if you are too hot or too cold you won't be sleeping well.

To help keep temperatures where they should be as seasons change, Hunter Douglas offers the new Duette Architella Collection featuring a honeycomb construction for the utmost in energy efficiency and beauty at the window. They can also help reduce heating and cooling bills by 25 percent.

For more information, visit www.hunterdouglas.com, www.aveda.com and www.mandarinoriental.com.

SIT BACK AND RELAX

Customization is key to comfort. With that in mind, La-Z-Boy offers the "Octavia" recliner that takes personalization to the next level.

"Today's abundance of do-it-yourself decorating shows has everyone wanting to be a designer, and 'Octavia' is perfect for those looking to bring a touch of customized style to their home," said Jennifer Sievertsen, vice president of brand marketing for La-Z-Boy.

Customization starts by selecting from two recliner back styles, contoured or channeled. Arms are offered in round or tapered. The recliner seat can be chaise or pillow-top.

That done and said, there are three different reclining options to choose from. The Reclina-Rocker offers smooth rocking and full reclining ability; the Reclina-Way Wall Recliner allows the chair to fully recline just inches from a wall; and the Reclina-Glider Swivel Recliner has full recline and a relaxing glide and swivel motion.

Add to these options hundreds of fabrics and leathers, and each recliner is as unique and stylish as its inventor. For more information, visit www.lazboy.com.

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