

PRESS RELEASE

The great outdoors

01 September 2014, Johannesburg: As the world modernises more rapidly by the day, so people are turning to nature for stability, balance and restoration. So says Ryan Beattie from South Africa's leading seating manufacturer, Alpine Lounge: "We are seeing this trend worldwide, and it's definitely a sign of the times we live in. It's only natural to turn to Mother Nature for some relief from the stresses of everyday modern life – there is nothing quite like a peaceful walk in a park or along the beach, or just admiring a pretty view for example, to calm the nerves. And it is logical that people want to bring the serene calmness of nature into their home."

Ryan is a firm believer in using top quality natural materials to do this: "By including natural materials in your home, you can include some of Mother Nature's treasure in its appeal. Leather, for example, is a great natural material to use indoors – it provides exceptional durability, excellent levels of comfort, and luxurious good looks, while also adding natural harmony to any space it graces."

Time will tell

"Nature is ever enduring, coming back resilient and proud time and again. Nature moves slow and steady, producing the most marvelous results, and it's this that inspires us at Alpine Lounge. We take inspiration from Mother Nature by using its resources to make beautiful seating, as well as taking time to design and create quality furniture pieces that will stand the test of time, so that people can cherish them rather than just dispose of them for the next best thing," nods Ryan.

For this reason, he notes that although furniture made from natural materials, such as leather and wood, might be more expensive on the onset, it is a worthwhile long-term investment: "Well made furniture made from high-quality natural materials will last longer – they won't go out of style and physically, they are able to withstand decades of wear and tear."

Tough as old boots

Leather upholstery is a prime example of a natural material that is timeless and durable, often becoming heirloom pieces that get handed down from generation to generation. "It is true – leather is very durable, but like anything in life, it requires the right care in order to maintain its longevity," explains Ryan, who offers the following advice on how to best maintain leather furniture:

- Avoid placing your leather furniture piece very close to fireplaces or in a spot that gets direct sun, so as to avoid cracking and fading.

- Although leather is hardy, it tends to scratch easily, so refrain from bringing sharp objects close to it. If it does get scratched, gently buff it with a clean chamois to remove the marks.
- As leather is a natural porous material, it absorbs dyes and stains easily. So avoid eating meals or drinking red wine on your leather sofa.
- Never use soap, cleaning solvents, detergents, or ammonia to clean stains.
- When treating a spill, never wipe it or soak it, rather dab it with a clean dry cloth to mop up the spill and to avoid spreading the mark.
- Apply a good leather conditioner every 6 to 12 months. Ensure that the conditioner is suitable for the specific leather type your furniture is covered in.

A natural beauty

“For a different take on a timeless classic, why not try genuine Gemsbok leather – not only is it hard wearing, but it has a luxurious raw texture created by its visible hair follicles,” affirms Ryan. He believes this unique indigenous material is perfect on a special armchair, as it gives it an unusual twist to a furniture piece that captures the raw essence of southern Africa’s natural landscape.

Turn over a new leaf

We can all take a lesson from nature by looking to the amazing forms, textures and colours that it produces. Fabric designers for example, are turning to old botanical illustrations to create nature-inspired prints, but today, it has a modern twist with larger scales and vibrant colours for a more updated appeal. “Think bold florals, over-scaled leaf motifs, birds and branches,” suggests Ryan, cautioning that it can become addictive to just keep adding more and more layers from nature into your home’s decor. “Be sure to create harmony by balancing your organic patterns with geometric shapes, such as repetitive stripes and natural textures.

“Rustic pieces are all the rage at the moment – we’re seeing reclaimed wood being repurposed into striking décor items, such as benches or lamp bases, natural fibres, such as sisal and jute used on floors, grass cloth for wallpaper, and a plethora of hand-woven baskets for clever storage solutions,” points out Ryan, who believes that rough edges and imperfections are making their way into our homes as design drifts increasingly more towards a natural, no-frills approach that’s simply down-to-earth and perfect in its imperfections.

Visit www.alpinelounge.co.za or phone 021 951 7150 (ask for sales) to find a retailer closest to you.

ENDS

Released on behalf of Alpine Lounge (www.alpinelounge.co.za) by The Line Communications (www.theline.co.za, ant@theline.co.za).