

PRESS RELEASE

Sophisticated simplicity

9 June 2014, Johannesburg: A stylish and balanced, yet cosy living room is not always easy to create. It requires planning and maintenance to keep it clutter-free and streamlined, as well as some creative flair to effortlessly combine creature comforts in a pared down way. "I've noticed how I'm personally gravitating towards a more minimal interior, where less is more," says Sue Scott from leading manufacturer, Grafton Everest. She says that when it comes to décor, she takes inspiration from a quote from Leonardo da Vinci: "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication." Here's Sue's guide on how to create a no-fuss space, filled with a touch of glamour, without compromising on comfort:

Cut the clutter

Visual clutter creates mental clutter, so the first thing you should tackle for a fuss-free space is all that unnecessary stuff that is lying around. "The simplest rule is: 'If you don't use it or love it, then get rid of it,'" says Sue, who believes that one is less inclined to distractions if there's less unnecessary junk lying around, allowing you room to breathe, think, relax and create. "Going back to the bare essentials is key to achieving a stylish, yet snug look," points out Sue.

Timeless appeal

"Opt for classic furniture pieces that are functional and timeless, rather than simply decorative," suggests Sue, who recommends a more minimal approach to decorating. Simple modern designs have effortless symmetry and balance with regards to both shape and colour, making them look good no matter the era or style of your home. So even if your tastes change over time, your modern furniture pieces will still work. "You don't want to be stuck with outrageous furniture that you once loved, but now looks dated and tired," nods Sue. She believes refined classic furniture pieces will help create a pure minimalist base that you can build on to create a comfy, yet refined interior.

A fine balance

Rethink your existing room layout by drawing up a floor plan to get a better idea of the space in question. "We can all probably improve on the layout of our rooms, and living in a space for a while allows us to really get the feeling for how we use the different areas," says Sue. She suggest that working with your lifestyle patterns in mind, will help you to place furniture in a functional and balanced manner for an inviting mood.

However, don't forget that comfort isn't merely a sense of overall harmony, but also something tangible that can be felt whenever you kick your feet up in a seat that adapts to your body's needs. "For optimum style and comfort, motion furniture is the answer. The new i-Move range from Grafton Everest for example, isn't just something that will simply look stylish in your living room, it's also undeniably the most comfortable way to unwind and relax in the comfort of your own home," smiles Sue. The range has a variety of customable features, including:

- **i-Swivel:** The i-Move alternative to the traditional armchair that swivels 180 degrees, from side to side.
i-Rock: Unlike squeaky spring rockers, the i-Move range has an option of a unique gliding mechanism.
- **i-Rest:** Sit down, adjust the handy lever and your chair gently eases your feet off the ground with the option of a lay-flat mechanism.

- **i-Tilt:** High quality Leggett & Platt mechanism can comfortably accommodate up to 136kg and ease you into a wide range of comfortable positions.
- **i-Comfort:** i-Move armchairs sport gorgeous Nordic styling, imported maple hardwood armrests, sumptuous leather and deep comfort cushioning.

Classic colours

“There’s no denying that a simple muted scheme is the key to a chic modern interior,” explains Sue, “The key lies in working with a neutral colour palate and adding small pops of colour to create accents. Take your cue from nature and use a few key colours to create a serene atmosphere. Warmer shades are great for winter, as they are welcoming, cosy and invite cocooning, whilst cooler tones are more refreshing and tranquil, making them ideal for summer. “Whatever hues you go for, be sure to keep them within a close range of each other, to ensure that they don’t detract from the overall look. Rather create interest by introducing various textures and interesting patterns,” suggest Sue. She loves to layer with contrasting textures such as wool, fur, cotton, leather, wood and glass: “The emphasis is on simplicity, relaxation and timeless style. Varying textures and patterns can be used to great effect to add some visual interest, while still maintaining a simple and sleek overall décor composition.”

Scale down

The old adage of “the bigger the better” rings so true when trying to achieve maximum comfort in your living room. But how do you achieve that without overwhelming the space? Sue advises: “Be selective when choosing furniture and décor accessories for your lounge, opting for a few key items that tick all the boxes. And be sure to consider how the pieces will relate to each other and the surrounding environment in terms of scale and proportion.” A busy focal wall filled with your TV and artwork for example, can be juxtaposed by a sumptuous sofa parallel to it, creating balance on both sides of the room. Or a plain wall can be offset by an armchair upholstered in a vibrant pattern that co-ordinates with your colour scheme, creating contrast and character whilst not overpowering a minimal scheme. Also, be sure to keep proportion in mind – it is no use investing in an oversized sofa, if your lounge area is compact and small – it will completely overwhelm the space. Similarly, for very large rooms, the larger furniture will do better, as small, delicate pieces will feel lost in the space.

“Finding that quiet place amongst the chaos of daily life is not an easy endeavor, but by simplifying your space and focusing on key creature comforts, you can focus on the things that really matter,” smiles Sue.

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Released on behalf of Grafton Everest (www.graftoneverest.co.za) by The Line Communications (www.theline.co.za, ant@theline.co.za).