PRESS RELEASE

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

01 August 2014, Johannesburg: Do you love colour, but don't know how to incorporate it into your home? Anton Odendaal, from leading furniture retailer, Rochester, believes that whilst bold splashes of bright colours are exciting and playful, it can be challenging to get the mix just right for a successful overall décor composition. "Look around you – colour is everywhere, it's like visual music in our environment, and let me tell you, life would be pretty bland without it. However, it is not always easy to use it successfully in your decor," nods Anton. He shares his know-how on how to effectively decorate with bright colours, without overwhelming the space in question:

Colour therapy

We all gravitate towards colour, and there are some colours that we like more than others. "Have you ever thought about how colour has such a powerful influence over us," asks Anton, "Our colour preferences affect the clothes we wear, the cars we drive and the homes we live in. But why do we like the hues that we do? It all boils down to psychology – a clear blue sky and a crisp green apple generally have positive connotations, and as a result, we are drawn to their blue and green tones. Thus our positive or negative experiences with certain objects determine our colour preferences.

"Most of us are pretty clear about which colours we prefer, but are we conscious of the effects that they have on our mood? It's important to consider these subtle colour effects before decorating your home, so you don't end up making a mistake that you have to live with," he advises. He provides a simple breakdown of the how colour might affect us emotionally:

- **Reds** get the heart rate up, as it's an invigorating colour associated with passion, energy and danger. Upholster your dining room chairs in a vibrant red to stimulate appetite; paint an entrance hall red for a dramatic welcome; or simply fill a vase with red roses to add some passion to the space
- **Blue** is a popular choice for a bedroom or bathroom, as it's soothing, synonymous with hygiene, and encourages sleep. However, it works equally well in a study or home office, as it also aids concentration. Associated with the sky and water, go for blues with warmer undertones if your room receives little light to avoid it from feeling cold or clinical.
- Cheerful **yellow** is bound to lift your spirits and add warmth to a space. Synonymous with sunlight, energy and joy, too much yellow can also cause anxiety and fatigue. Opt for softer buttery yellows in rooms with little light, or create a statement piece, such as a painted cabinet or upholstered armchair, in a bright yellow to jazz up a monochromatic scheme.

- A combination of blue and red, **purple** is peaceful and meditative, but also energizing and creative. Adding white to purple creates a soft pastel effect that is great for children's rooms, whilst richer eggplant or beetroot tones are ideal for living rooms and bedrooms.
- **Green** is associated with nature and represents growth, renewal and harmony. A combination of green hues are suitable in almost any room of the house as it's both optimistic and calm, providing balance and stability in these stressful modern times.
- **Orange** is a naturally energetic colour as it's a combination of yellow and red, making it ideal for a gym or playroom for example. It encourages mental activity and social interaction, but it can become over-stimulating so be sure to use it in small doses, such as scatter cushions, throws or rugs, or try to use more toned down shades such as peach or terracotta for example.
- Warm and comforting, **pink** is closely linked to femininity. It is ideal for a child's room as it soothes and nurtures, and will add subtle warmth to a south-facing room due to the fact that it is a tint of red.

Living bold

"Bright colours play a fundamental role in your home décor," notes Anton. Here are his practical tips on how to inject bold shades to transform your home's décor from dull to vibrant:

- Look to existing colours in your décor as a starting point, or colours that bring back fond childhood memories.
- Consider the amount of natural light your rooms receive to help you choose the correct colour and tone. Darker rooms require warmer tones, whilst brighter rooms can get away with cooler palettes.
- Not ready to take the leap and introduce bright pops of colour throughout your whole house? Then why not start with using it in a smaller room so it's easier to amend if you change your mind.
- Build up your confidence by integrating small doses of colour with accessories, such as a vase of flowers, scatter cushions, throws and artwork.
- Give your bedroom a lift with patterned wallpaper behind your headboard, creating a sensory focal point that's not too overwhelming.
- Get your DIY juices flowing by reviving an old piece of furniture with a lick of fresh paint in a vibrant hue.
- Use neutral tones, such as white and grey, as well as natural textures such as wood and stone, to ground bright colours.
- Once you get the hang of using colour in your home, try break the rules a little for the "wow" factor by creating interesting colour combinations, such as mint green and coral with black for example.
- Use relaxing colours in rooms meant for relaxation, and vibrant colours used in rooms filled with energy and used for entertaining.
- If all else fails, draw inspiration from nature – it always provides the perfect colour combinations to draw from.

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