

PRESS RELEASE

Small space, big style

Just because your space is limited, does not mean that your choice of sofas needs to be limited as well. Theo van der Hoven from Alpine Lounge offers some tips on how to choose the perfect sofa for compact living areas.

16 October 2013, Johannesburg: As urban living increases in popularity, so does the average residential home decrease in size. Says Theo van der Hoven from leading furniture manufacturer, Alpine Lounge: "With the increase in popularity of townhouse living, modern homes are becoming smaller and smaller. As a result, furniture design has had to cater for this growing trend. Alpine Lounge for example, has spent lots of time and money designing and developing scaled-down furniture that is suitable for smaller spaces, without compromising on quality, functionality or style."

Otherwise known as "apartment sofas", sofas that have been designed for more compact quarters display a number of similar design features, including small or no armrests, the addition of a chaise section, modular design, exposed legs, general lack of bulk and an über streamlined and sleek shape. Says Theo: "When decorating a small space, it is advisable to avoid overstuffed sofas, as they seem to be larger than they actually are. Sofas with extra deep seating are also not a good idea, as they tend to take up loads of valuable floor space. Sofas with bold prints are also a no-no, as they can visually overpower the space. Rather opt for sofas with small, compact dimensions, preferably with upholstery in a uniform tone."

Theo offers the following pointers on things to consider when shopping for sofas for a smaller living room:

The visual weight: Choose sofas with a visually lightweight design – sometimes a sofa will boast compact measurements, but its design will make it look bigger and bulkier than it actually is. Light-coloured furniture with petite legs takes up less visual space than sofas with dark upholstery and a boxy shape for example.

Neutrals rule: Using light, nature-inspired neutrals throughout is a great way to make a room seem larger than it actually is. An entirely neutral palette allows the eye to roam freely, which creates the illusion of a more spacious room. Keep your colour choices soft and light for optimum spaciousness.

On occasion: Rather than sticking to the traditional 3-2-1 lounge suite, why not opt for a sleek 3-seater, accompanied by two petite occasional chairs instead. This way, you can still offer seating for five, but in a far more space-efficient manner.

Play with proportions: It is pivotal to take the proportions of the room into account and choose furniture that is to scale with these measurements. For example – if your living room is long and narrow, then it would be best to invest

in a long, narrow sofa. If on the other hand, your room is wide and short, then a 2-seater or a corner unit would be a far better choice.

Get yourself cornered: Corner sofas are a great choice for open-plan living areas, as they visually distinguish the living area from the kitchen and dining area beyond, without creating too much visual obstructions. This keeps the space open and airy, which creates the illusion of it being bigger than it actually is. For really compact open-plan areas, a sofa with a chaise is a very good choice, as the chaise section doesn't have any backrests or arms, and therefore lightens the visual weight of the piece.

Be moved: Gone are the days when including a recliner into your décor scheme meant compromising on aesthetic attractiveness. Now, popular motion furniture brands, such as La-Z-Boy for example, are launching recliners that boast truly elegant good looks and streamlined design lines. Alternatively, you can opt for an incliner rather than a recliner, the difference being that an incliner when in motion moves forward and not backwards, allowing the chair to be placed as close as 7cm to the wall.

The ottoman empire: Ottomans are very versatile pieces of furniture and great for small spaces. A large upholstered ottoman is very versatile and can double as a coffee table or it can provide extra seating, act as an extra side table or a footrest when required.

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